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A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Volume VII

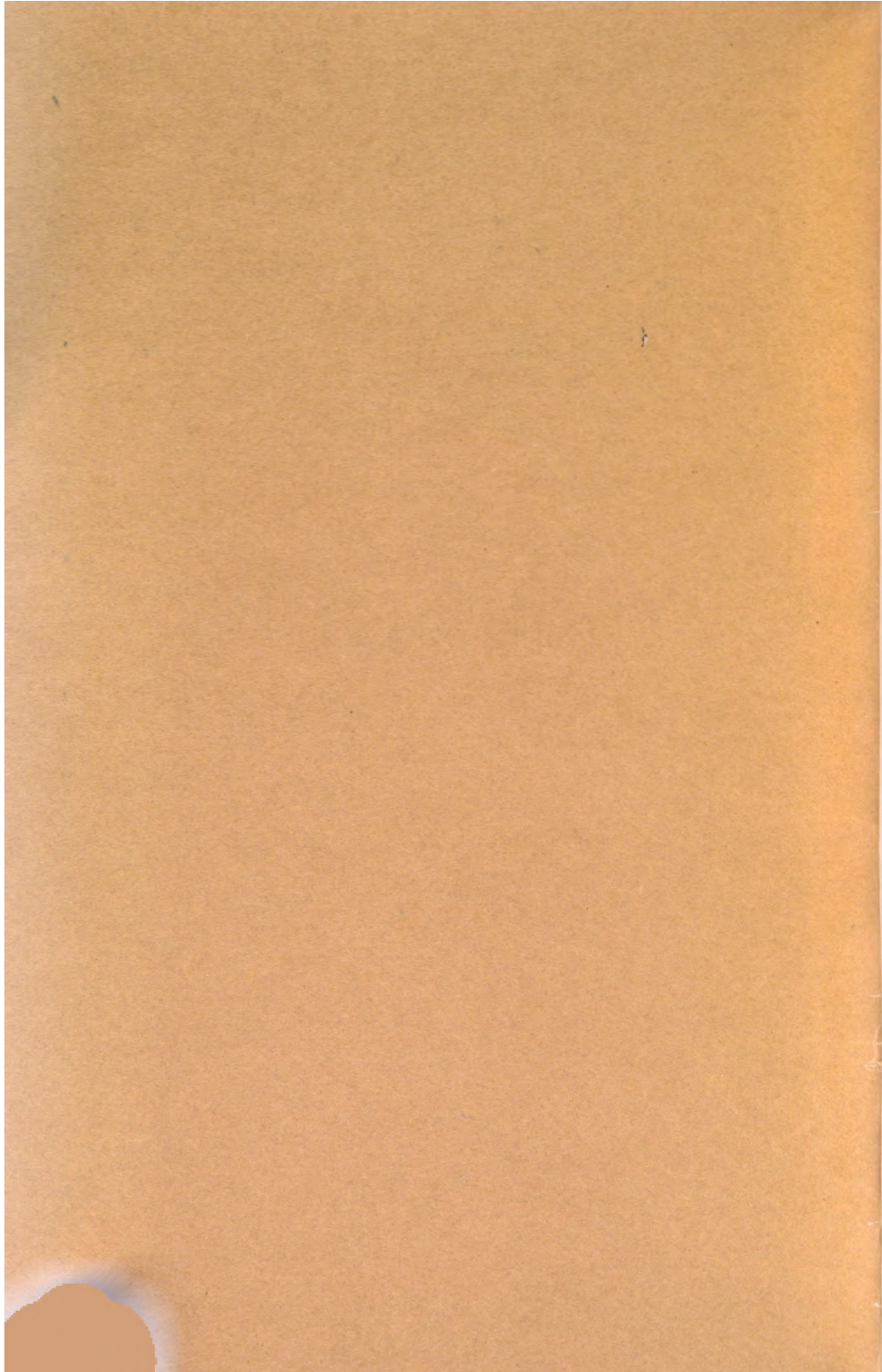
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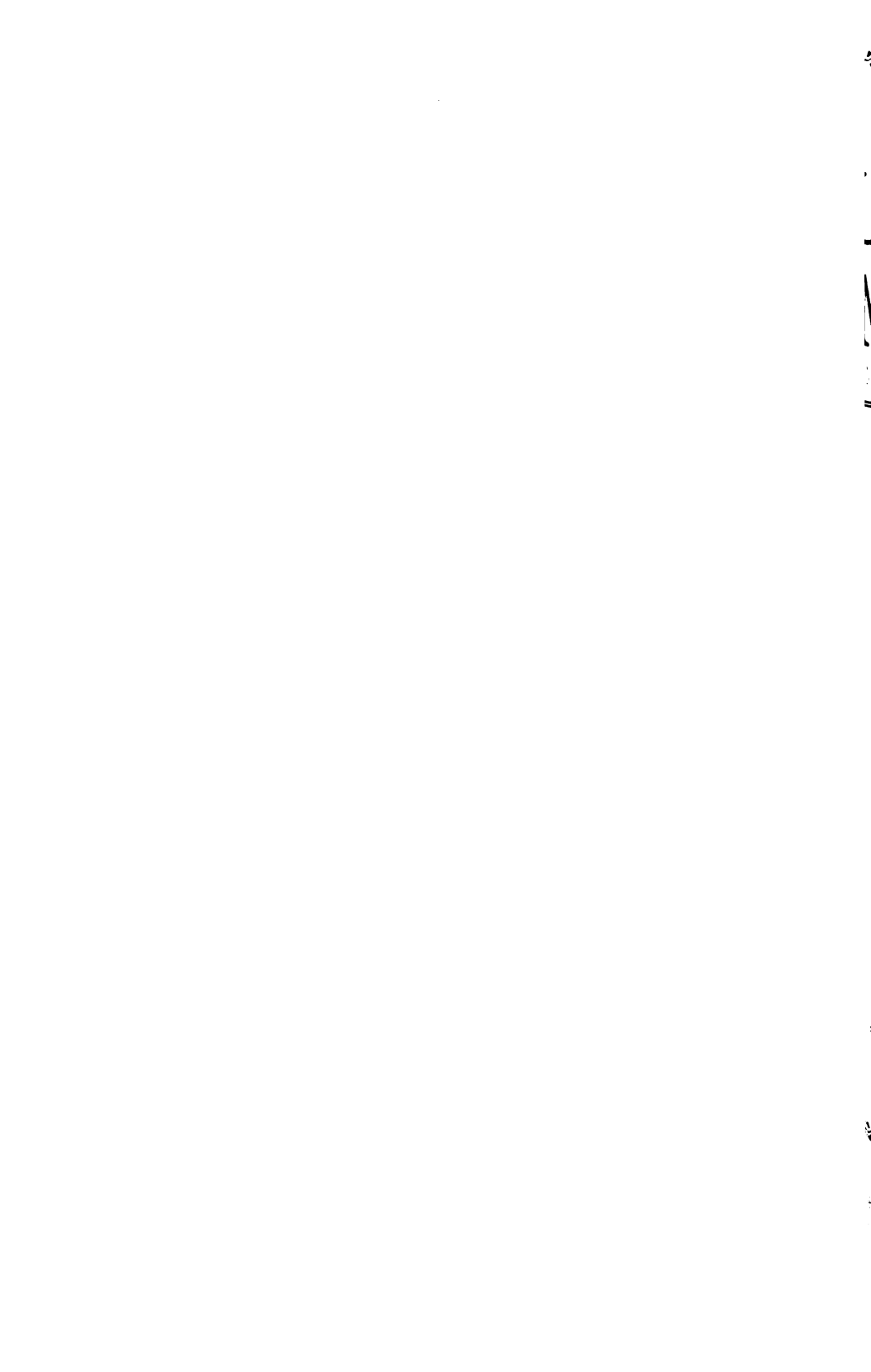
DECEMBER

1925





# THE LABOUR MONTHLY







THE  
LABOUR  
MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

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Volume VII  
JANUARY  
TO  
DECEMBER  
1925

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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - -	Page	3
<i>THE TURNING POINT</i>		
The Empire and the Proletariat - - -	”	13
<i>By M. N. ROY</i>		
The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald	”	23
<i>By "U.D.C."</i>		
“The New Machiavelli”: or, The Soft-Headed Communists and the Thick-Headed Ones - - - -	”	28
<i>By M. PHILIPS PRICE</i>		
On the Road to Insurrection — IV. The Freedom of the Press - - - -	”	35
<i>By V. I. LENIN</i>		
What the Theatre could do for the English Labour Movement - - - -	”	38
<i>By HUNTLY CARTER</i>		
The I.L.P. “Programme of Work” - - -	”	44
<i>By FRED LONGDEN</i>		
The World of Labour - - - -	”	52
<i>Germany—The United Front</i>		

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 67

*THE RESTORATION OF EUROPE*

Trade Union Unity and the Class Struggle - „ 79  
*By R. PALME DUTT*

The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald „ 104  
—II.  
*By "U.D.C."*

Diddling them with Dawes - - - - „ 118  
*By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD*

The World of Labour - - - - „ 121  
The United Front

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 131

*THE GOLD STANDARD*

Two Deserters - - - - „ 151

*By* KARL RADEK

On the Road to Insurrection—V. The Bogy  
of Civil War - - - - „ 157

*By* V. I. LENIN

The Political Defeat of the Working Class - „ 172

*By* C. H. NORMAN

Some Questions for J. R. Clynes - - „ 180

*By* MANABENDRA NATH ROY

Loyalties - - - - „ 184

*By* J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

The World of Labour - - - - „ 189

Italy

Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 195
<i>THE LABOUR PARTY OUTLOOK</i>		
Indian Political Exiles in France	- -	„ 205
	<i>By EVELYN ROY</i>	
On the Road to Insurrection—VI and VII	-	„ 210
	<i>By V. I. LENIN</i>	
The Trust of Empire and Mr. MacDonald a Trustee	- - - -	„ 222
	<i>By M. ABDULLAH</i>	
The Unemployed	- - - -	„ 227
	<i>By E. STANLEY</i>	
The World of Labour	- - - -	„ 234
	International—France—Esthonia—Hungary—Poland	
Book Reviews	- - - -	„ 249
	A Study of Dramatic Art in the Workers' Republic M. E.	
	The Twilight of Trotsky W. N. E.	

Notes of the Month - - - -	Page 257
<i>FACTS, PROTOCOLS, AND —?</i>	
Lord Curzon - - - -	„ 270
<i>By KARL RADEK</i>	
The Failure of the <i>Daily Herald</i> - -	„ 275
<i>By "OUTPOST"</i>	
Sun Yat Sen's Life and Work - - -	„ 283
<i>By TANG CHIN CHE</i>	
The Labour Situation in Western Canada -	„ 288
<i>By SCOTT NEARING</i>	
The Roy Case : a Protest - - -	„ 294
<i>By HENRI BARBUSSE</i>	
On the Road to Insurrection—VIII and IX	„ 296
<i>By V. I. LENIN</i>	
The World of Labour - - - -	„ 304
<i>Trade Union Unity—Germany—Italy</i>	
Book Review - - - -	„ 314
<i>Trees and No Wood !</i>	<i>M.H.D.</i>

Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 321
<i>THE WAGE WAR</i>		
Problems of the Labour Movement	-	” 332
	<i>By P. BRAUN</i>	
The Red “Plots”	- - - -	” 347
	<i>By W. N. EWER</i>	
The New War in Morocco	- - -	” 354
	<i>By JACQUES DORIOT</i>	
The Great Retreat	- - - -	” 357
	<i>By M. PHILIPS PRICE</i>	
The I.L.P.—Past and Present	- - -	” 364
	<i>By MARGARET COLE</i>	
Trotsky and His “Friends”	- - -	” 373
	<i>By W. N. E.</i>	
Book Review	- - - -	” 376
	<i>“Mirrors of the Kremlin, By A Comrade with a Duster.”</i> <i>R. P. D.</i>	



Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 385
	<i>BRITISH FASCISM</i>	
	With a Postscript— <i>THE WORKERS' ALLIANCE</i>	
Indian Politics : An Analysis	- - -	„ 399
	By CLEMENS DUTT	
The Problem of the Hour—Is Unity Possible?	- - -	„ 410
	By A. J. COOK	
The Writing on the Chinese Wall	- - -	„ 412
	By W. N. EWER	
Art and the Labour Movement	- - -	„ 420
	By HUNTLY CARTER	
On the Road to Insurrection—IX. The Approaching Catastrophe	- - -	„ 426
	By V. I. LENIN	
The World of Labour	- - - -	„ 436
	China—Trade Union Unity	
Book Review	- - - -	„ 443
	The Great Boyg Gets Panicky. G. A. H.	

Notes of the Month	- - -	- Page 449
<i>THE MINERS' FIGHT FOR LIFE</i>		
The Strategy of the Miners' Struggle	- - -	„ 465
	<i>By HERBERT SMITH</i>	
“Face Pidgin” — The Chinese Struggle	- -	„ 474
	<i>By TIEN SEN SHIAO</i>	
In the Light of Marxism	- - -	„ 482
	<i>By STUDENT</i>	
The Riff War of Independence	- - -	„ 489
	<i>By ALLEN HUTT</i>	
The World of Labour	- - - -	„ 497
	China—Denmark—Germany—India—Poland	
Book Review	- - - - -	„ 508
	Italian Co-operation	L. W.

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 513

*THE FIRST ROUND*

The Burning Question of International Unity „ 524  
*By A. A. PURCELL, M.P.*

The Capitalist Offensive and the Mining Crisis „ 530  
*By R. PAGE ARNOT*

Hatching a War with Russia - - - „ 538  
*By W. N. EWER*

The Empire Labour Conference - - - „ 548  
*By MAURICE SPECTOR*

Independent Working Class Education - - „ 553  
*By A. M. ROBERTSON*

Capitalism, Labour and the Press- - - „ 560  
*By WILLIAM PAUL*

The World of Labour - - - - „ 570  
*Bulgaria*

Notes of the Month	- - - -	- Page 577
<i>THE LABOUR PARTY CHOICE</i>		
Problems of Trade Unionism	- - - -	„ 586
	<i>By WILLIAM DOBBIE</i>	
The Twenty-one Points of the Second International	- - - -	„ 591
	<i>By G. VALETZKI</i>	
The Scarborough Conference	- - - -	„ 601
	<i>By HARRY POLLITT</i>	
The Industrial Crisis and the Co-operators	- - - -	„ 606
	<i>By J. HARRISON</i>	
The Far Eastern Tangle	- - - -	„ 617
	<i>By R. PAGE ARNOT</i>	
Language and the Labour Movement	- - - -	„ 622
	<i>By HUNTLY CARTER</i>	
In the Light of Marxism. II.	- - - -	„ 628
	<i>By STUDENT</i>	
The World of Labour	- - - -	„ 633
Poland—France		

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 641

*AFTER LIVERPOOL*

Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism ? - ,, 659

*By L. TROTSKY*

Scarborough and Liverpool - - - - ,, 667

*By P. BRAUN*

Getting Mosul into Perspective - - - - ,, 679

*By W. N. EWER*

The Drive into the Factories - - - - ,, 692

*By J. T. MURPHY*

The World of Labour - - - - ,, 699

International—Trade Union Unity

Notes of the Month	- - - -	- Page 705
<i>VIOLENCE AND WORKERS' DEFENCE</i>		
R. Palme Dutt : A Personal Statement	- „	716
India under British Rule	- - - - „	717
	By KARL MARX	
Locarno and Aix-la-Chapelle	- - - - „	729
	By W. N. EWER	
Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism ?	- „	736
(Concluded)	By L. TROTSKY	
Labour Research	- - - - - „	749
	By MAURICE H. DOBB	
The World of Labour	- - - - - „	755
Germany—India		
Index to Volume 7 (1925)	- - - - - „	762

# THE LABOUR MONTHLY

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VOLUME 7

JANUARY, 1925

NUMBER 1

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - - -	Page 3
<i>THE TURNING POINT</i>	
The Empire and the Proletariat - - -	” 13
<i>By M. N. ROY</i>	
The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald	” 23
<i>By “U.D.C.”</i>	
“The New Machiavelli”: or, The Soft- Headed Communists and the Thick-Headed Ones - - - - -	” 28
<i>By M. PHILIPS PRICE</i>	
On the Road to Insurrection—IV. The Freedom of the Press - - - - -	” 35
<i>By V. I. LENIN</i>	
What the Theatre could do for the English Labour Movement - - - - -	” 38
<i>By HUNTLY CARTER</i>	
The I.L.P. “Programme of Work” - - -	” 44
<i>By FRED LONGDEN</i>	
The World of Labour - - - - -	” 52
<i>Germany—The United Front</i>	

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*A New Period—Bourgeois United Front—Workers' United Front—  
The Evolution of Continuity—Coming Struggles—Britain as the  
Centre—In the Labour Party—In the Trade Unions—A  
Revolutionary Process—Mass Campaign Needed—  
International Trade Union Unity—The Breaking  
of the Storm*

**A**T last a definite step has been taken towards a break with the old order. The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee is the first positive move since the war to break the chains that hold the Western workers from the Revolution. It is a challenge to the whole Capitalist Restoration in Europe, to the Second and Amsterdam Internationals which have been the instruments of that Restoration, and to the Dawes system of financial enslavement which has been their policy. It is the signal of new forces; and, taken in conjunction with the open declaration of opposition to MacDonald in England, it heralds the revival of the will to struggle. Whether this first effort may succeed or fail, whether the men involved in it prove strong enough to maintain their stand in the face of all the forces that will be let loose against them, the step they have taken is already a giant stride of revolutionary development, and the beginning of a process which will overcome all the obstacles in its path. The period of MacDonald, with his roseate liberal phraseology covering a policy of shameful surrender and servitude, is over. MacDonald may have served to bring in the Dawes Report: other methods are needed to apply it. To-day the black reaction of Capital is open in every country. The workers are compelled to unite, and to fight. The new period is the period of the gathering of the forces of the international working class, and, therefore, of the strengthening of the forces of class struggle in every country.

**A**LREADY the bourgeoisie is preparing the United Front against the working class. Chamberlain as his first act visited Paris and Rome to win over Herriot and Mussolini to an alliance, in which every Continental newspaper reported his

principal line to be *the* common front against the Revolution. The alliance with France and Italy is a reversal of British foreign policy and it is a reversal most heavily dictated by the desire to build up a powerful force to maintain the existing system, both against any German resistance and against the Soviet Union and the danger of Communism. The growing strength of Communism in Germany (where the most violent persecution on record and the imprisonment of 10,000 leaders has not been able to prevent two-and-a-half million Communist votes at the election); the extraordinary growth of Communism in France (where the recent Government celebration of Jaurès actually became transformed into a Communist demonstration of 200,000 workers); the discrediting of MacDonald and the emergence of new forces in England; and the spread of colonial revolt in North Africa and the Near East—all these have given alarm to the bourgeoisie and determined them to apply the strongest repression. Trials, expulsions and persecution have become the order of the day in every country. The renewed capitalist offensive on wages and hours, inaugurated by the Dawes Report, is already in full swing in Germany and has begun in England. Against this the one policy of the working class is to establish their own United Front. International Trade Union Unity is not a luxury, but a necessity. Those who oppose it in the Amsterdam International and the Second International are only carrying out the logical sequel of their own support of the Dawes Report. To achieve the United Front will need for the working class a determined struggle against those who have always lived by the splitting of the workers.

**I**T is three years since the slogan of the United Front was first put out by the Communist International after the collapse of the Western Labour movements in 1921. It is seven years since the Russian Revolution sent out its call to the Western workers. During all this time the dominant leaders of the Western movements have obstructed these calls to prevent them to be heard, have denounced the Russian Revolution and told the workers to follow their Capitalist masters in the bloodshed of the war and the miseries of the peace, have preferred to keep company with Wilson and

Versailles, with Morgan and Dawes, have led their followers to defeat in the economic field, and have revealed the fiasco of their own promises of socialisation and social democracy. To-day their quiver is nearly spent. It has been a long fight, and the campaign of the United Front has been subjected to every kind of attack and sneer and calumny; but the beginnings of victory are in sight. Every phase of the career of social democracy against the Revolution has been exposed in the hard light of facts. The original armed counter-revolution against the workers has been exposed in all its ugly outlines in the trial of Savinkov and the Memoirs of Scheidemann. The nightmare pictures and denunciations of Russia have been exposed by the steady peaceful progress of the Soviet Union, where alone in Europe the workers have advanced in conditions, no less than by a gathering cloud of witnesses, including the Secretary of the Amsterdam International (who was promptly expelled for his pains) and now the Chairman (who probably will be if they can do it). Their own ideal alternative of Pacifist Democracy and Evolutionary Socialism has been exposed in practice in the fiasco of the MacDonald Labour Government with its manifest bondage to Finance Capital. The workers of Western Europe are beginning to look elsewhere for their direction.

**W**HAT is the "Evolutionary Method"? MacDonald himself has made this clear in his first statement since his handing over of the Premiership. It is significant that that first statement was made in a Conservative journal, the *Spectator*, and consisted of a defence of the principle of Continuity of Foreign Policy. But the manner of the defence is even more significant. MacDonald writes:—

The general policy of continuity has a broad scope of usefulness . . . *Continuity and the Evolutionary Method* are normally the appropriate method for applying conflicting Party principles to the imperfections of the world. The character of the *Revolutionary Mind* are to be studied in their evil effects in *far more subtle manifestations than riots and civil war*.—*Spectator*, December 6, 1924.

The cat is out of the bag. The "Evolutionary Method" means Continuity of Foreign Policy. The writings of the conventional apologists of the Labour Party, the endless declarations of Clynes, Thomas and other well-known pacifists, contrasting the "evolu-

tionary " and " revolutionary " methods as a contrast of " peaceful " and " violent " methods, are exposed by MacDonald as a piece of impudent claptrap to terrify the workers into supporting the treacherous policies of Thomas and Clynes under the impression that they are supporting orderly progressive methods against fanatical devotees of bloodshed. The real contrast, as MacDonald correctly says, is " far more subtle " than a question of " riots and civil war." It is the contrast between Continuity of Foreign Policy against a change in Foreign Policy, between Continuity of Home Policy and a change in Home Policy, between, in short, Continuity of Government Policy and a direct change. But what is the previous policy with which MacDonald wishes to be continuous? The previous policy is bourgeois policy. Thus the position is clear. The Continuity of Policy for which MacDonald stands by is the continuity of Bourgeois Policy, and that is what he understands by the " Evolutionary Method." Here at last is the contrast " far more subtle " than " riots and civil war "; here, and not in the hypocritical cant about peace and bloodshed (Clynes and Thomas were ready enough to yelp for blood when it suited them), is the real meaning of the " Evolutionary Method." Continuity of Bourgeois Policy, Continuity of Bourgeois Foreign Policy, Continuity of Bourgeois Imperialism, Continuity of Bourgeois Wars, Continuity of Bourgeois Exploitation, and Continuity of Working Class Servitude—this is the real meaning of the " Evolutionary Method," and it is the attack on this that is the real " evil " of the " revolutionary mind." Small wonder that the working class begin to look elsewhere than to such an " evolutionary " leadership.

**A** BIG change and a big battle is preparing in the international movement. The old leaders of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals will fight to the last to maintain their stranglehold on the Western workers, which is the basis of the power of post-war Capitalism in Europe. They will denounce the United Front as Red Ruin. They will proclaim the whole campaign a Russian Manœuvre. They will explain away Fimmen as " one who is steadily losing all strength of character; that is the sad truth " (so Adler, Secretary of the Second, has declared); and Purcell and

his colleagues as "instruments of Communist propaganda" who "have lost their sense of responsibility" (so that eminently fair and impartial journal, the *Manchester Guardian*). They will claim their own International as the only rightful International, because it was founded under the sacred ægis of the Versailles Conference and the International Labour Office, with Messrs. Gompers and Appleton for parents, and can, therefore, demand the allegiance of the working class and insist that unity shall only be permitted under its yoke. On this plea of unity they will oppose a united World Conference. They will use every influence they possess to unseat, remove or undermine the opposition. They will play every game of tactics to delay any achievement. If the Conference becomes inevitable they will strain every exertion to secure the representation in their own hands and prevent the presence of rank and file workers or the direct election of representatives from the districts and workshops. All this the workers must be prepared for, and be prepared to meet: for the future of the World Conference, and with it of the International working class, is at stake.

**I**T is a big struggle, and the centre of this struggle is going to be in Britain. This is the most important fact for us to realise, for it throws a tremendous duty on the Left. The issue that is raised is an issue of the whole International, but it is an issue that can only be fought out in Britain. Britain, as the centre and mainstay of European capitalism after the war, has necessarily also been the centre and mainstay of the capitalist "Labour" Internationals. They have been financed with British money and manned by British officers. But the policy has been the policy of Continental Social Democracy, *i.e.*, of rabid and unscrupulous hatred to the Revolution. This is an accurate reflection of conditions in the Continental countries where the revolutionary issue has developed far, and Social Democracy is openly sold to the bourgeoisie. But it is not an accurate reflection of conditions in Britain, where the issues are still unfought, and only the topmost leaders are in touch with modern Social Democracy. The dominant leaders in Britain are hand in glove with their Social Democratic colleagues and endeavouring to introduce their methods in Britain. They write in the bourgeois press in denunciation of Communism and the class

struggle in the exact terms of the bourgeois campaign, repeating every phrase and lie of the bourgeoisie (and even their forgeries). They are trying to introduce the Continental methods of expulsion. But it is not yet clear that they will succeed in controlling the movement. The exposure of MacDonald has led to a tremendous revulsion and ferment. Britain, the centre of the Second International, the centre of the MacDonald Labour Government, is also inevitably the centre of the process of transition in the Western working class. Will this transition be effected in the period immediately ahead, before Social Democracy has sabotaged and split the movement through and through? Are the conditions sufficiently developed, are the lessons of the past sufficiently learnt, are the forces of the Left strong enough and clear enough of their task, to be equal to the struggle in front? That is the question of questions in Britain during the next two years.

LET us begin by taking the events that have happened at their lowest estimate. The revolt of the members of the Parliamentary Labour Party was essentially a revolt of the "upper strata" of the Labour Party, not so much on any basis of broad political issues (though the rumblings against the Dawes Report are beginning to be heard) as on the mishandling of the Zinoviev letter episode and its consequent disastrous effects on their electoral chances. It was in fact (like all inner Labour politics to-day) a palace revolt, and not a broad mass issue. The *Daily Herald* leader writer could argue, in his ingenuous, but illuminating, way:—

Whatever criticism there is of Mr. MacDonald's leadership is confined to a small circle who *follow events closely and know something of what goes on behind the scenes.*

And the official leader writer could continue to plead that Mr. MacDonald must be retained because "the mass would be hurt and angry" if he were suddenly changed. Such an impudent argument is only possible because the opposition have never made their issue a mass issue. Again, the groups of the opposition were unable to unite, and to this Mr. MacDonald was able to owe his re-election. Even of the actual Left elements the division is significant. Lansbury was nominated to stand against MacDonald,

but he refused to take the responsibility of leadership, and thus failed the workers, leaving them in the hands of MacDonald. Maxton and Wallhead, who had at any rate the courage to make an open stand and proclaim their faith, were not ready with any alternative when Lansbury failed them, and did not go through with the challenge. Finally the actual issue, which alone moved the majority of the Labour M.P.'s, is the most characteristic and the most humiliating. Imperialism, armaments, reparations, all had been allowed to pass by without effective protest; MacDonald might do what he liked to Indian and Egyptian workers, or for the enslavement of the German workers, and drag the name of British Labour in the mud: no interest was aroused. Only when his own stupid over-reaching of himself in his anti-Communism led to a loss of votes did the voice of opposition suddenly become strong.

**W**HAT of the Trade Union side? It may equally be urged that Unity is the traditional diplomatic method of the British Labour bureaucracy for smothering conflict by veiling opposition, and, indeed, corresponds to the classic British bourgeois policy of liberal tolerance; that enthusiasm for foreign revolutions is no new British phenomenon, and may well prove misleading to those not familiar with it; that some at any rate of the delegates have held very different language indeed on other occasions and may well do so again; and that the tie drawing together the British and Russian trade unions is economic and not revolutionary. It may be pointed out that the Hull Congress contained a good deal of window-dressing, and that the programme there adopted has not yet emerged from paper. So far from there being any conscious and coherent Left Movement, it may be noted that Robert Williams, commonly supposed to have been working with Fimmen, can be used by the Labour Party Executive to send a congratulatory message to *Vorwärts* and the German Social-Democrats in direct counterblast to messages from Purcell which *Vorwärts* had refused to print. And finally and above all (of which the case of Williams is only an immediate example) it can be urged that there cannot be any question of any fundamental divergence of policy between two such essentially identical bodies as the Trades Union General Council

and the Labour Party Executive, and that to count on a living new movement to arise from some differentiation between the two is to follow a will-o'-the-wisp.

**A**LL this is true. And yet, when it is all said, it is far removed from the real truth. For the real truth lies, not in the surface events on top, but in the force which gives rise to them. This event and that event may be accidental, limited, personal. But it is impossible not to see in the combination of events now taking place the mass pressure from below, the slowly gathering forward pressure of the working class which is the all important factor in Britain to-day. The movement is still slow and uncertain of direction. It gave MacDonald a long and patient chance. But to-day no one can deny that MacDonald and all that he stands for is heavily discredited. The class struggle became too strong for MacDonald and squeezed him out of office. MacDonald departed in a mist of expostulation and prevarication that earned him the contempt of all. No doubt there may have been only a few who knew the details of his treachery behind the scenes. But it did not need the eye of an expert to see in him only the strutting servant of Finance, with no policy of his own, and at every turn the tool or dupe of the ruling class. MacDonald was discredited: the demand came for new expression. The younger Trades Union Congress leaders came to the front. The I.L.P. officiously hurried forward with little denunciations of the Labour Government after the event. The *Daily Herald* discovered that most of the things that the Labour Government had done were wrong, and that its principal task, the Dawes Report, "won't work." The torrent of inner discussion is so great that the official Press is compelled to open its pages. At the same time all the leaders and official Press became suddenly nervous about Communism, and disprove it daily with tireless effort. Communism, declares Thomas in *John Bull*, is a cancer that must be cut out of the trade unions by an operation: the class struggle must be dropped. And just at this point comes the news that the official General Council delegation in Russia has established a Unity Committee with the Russian Communist Trade Unionists to organise the international working class on the basis of the class struggle. Is it difficult to see in all this that the British



working class is entering on a new period, and that a tremendous process has begun, of which it is not yet possible to see the immediate outcome, but which can only end in the revolutionising of the working class ?

**W**HAT is needed now ? The first need is that the issues now raised must become mass issues. Let us remember our limitations. We are only at the beginning of our task. The agitation and propaganda of the class struggle has never been consciously carried out through the British working class. The growth and development that there has been has been a great instinctive growth—of strikes, of tenacious combination, of instinctive solidarity with the Russian Revolution—but without any basis of conscious understanding or programme. The first need of the Left is a conscious campaign throughout the working class. International Trade Union Unity will remain an issue on the surface, a division of higher officials, not reaching the mass—just as the opposition to MacDonald was kept confined to the Parliamentary Party—unless it is brought right out of this atmosphere into open agitation. The first need of the Delegation on its return is a campaign throughout the country. Such a campaign should explain the whole position of the working class in Britain, the world situation, the issues in front, the lines of the Hull programme and the action to be taken. A campaign of such a character, of the leaders of trade unionism returned from the Soviet trade unions and working in unity with them, raising living issues, frankly recognising and facing weaknesses and failures, openly upholding the class struggle, would sweep the working-class movement and make a genuine revival such as no artificial “Back to the Unions” campaign could accomplish. Unless this is done, the Right Wing wins; for in technique and machinery the Right Wing rules. International Trade Union Unity must become a mass issue or fail.

**W**HAT is International Trade Unity ? It is something more than a question of organisation and abstract unity and something more than a question of trade unionism. It is a living issue of the present moment and the concrete situation of to-day: the desire of the workers to come together to defend their

common interests against the attack of capital. And, therefore, it is a beginning which contains within it the whole future of the working class. If the possibilities that are contained within it are followed up, the face of history can be changed. The path is open towards realising for the first time the full international force of the working class. The defeats and failures of the past years can be wiped out. A power can be created from this starting point that can drive back Dawes and the assault of Anglo-American finance, that can lead the way to the United States of Europe, that can rally and organise the millions of workers of Asia and Africa, and that can prepare the army for the final struggle with world Capital and for the victory of Socialism. For this, and nothing less, is involved in the struggle for International Trade Union Unity. International Trade Union Unity, if it is once realised in fact on a basis of struggle, cannot be confined within formal limits. Not the abstract formula of International Trade Union Unity as a conciliation of opposites (which may or may not be achieved in form), but the living coming together of the strongest forces of the working class on a basis of common struggle—that is the real meaning of the new development, of which the first signs are appearing to-day. 1924-25 is witnessing an historic turning point in the development of the International working class.

**A** BEGINNING has been made. That is the great thing. It is for all to follow up this beginning. Through the oppressive intrigue-ridden heaviness and suppressions of British official Labour politics the storm has at last begun to break. The solid rocks of West European "Socialist" reaction are in break up and confusion. Many familiar landmarks may disappear before that storm has ended.

R. P. D.

# THE EMPIRE AND THE PROLETARIAT

By M. N. ROY

**S**PEAKING at Baku, several weeks ago, Mr. A. A. Purcell, the head of the British Trade Union delegation, declared that on returning home the delegation would organise a "Hands off Egypt" movement, to prevent British Imperialism from throttling weak and defenceless Egypt. This attitude taken on behalf of the militant proletariat contrasts remarkably with the official view of the Labour Party on this grave question. The Labour Party wants the Anglo-Egyptian conflict to be referred to the League of Nations. It appears that even this view will not be pressed much. In fact, judging from the lukewarm speech of Mr. MacDonald, the Labour Amendment to the King's Speech will only "express regret at the way His Majesty's Government is handling the Egyptian situation." The scrapping of the 1922 agreement and grabbing of the Sudan are a *fait accompli*. The Baldwin Cabinet has not left any room for doubt that the suggestion of League arbitration will not be heeded. In these circumstances it matters very little how the Labour amendment is worded. But the official Labour Party attitude cannot be very exigent, because Mr. MacDonald's stern refusal to place the dispute before the League, as proposed by Zaghul Pasha, is too recent to be forgotten. The uncomfortable knowledge of their own complicity in the imperialist aggression in the valley of the Nile does not permit the Opposition Front Bench to voice the feeling of the working class, as was done by Mr. Purcell.

Whatever may be the official attitude of the Labour Party, the seriousness of the Egyptian question is undeniable. Egypt groans under the iron heel of Imperialism. The semblance of national self-government, grudgingly conceded to cope with the dangerous revolutionary crisis of the post-war years, is brushed aside. Lord Allenby rules in Cairo. The formidable military might of Britain is turned upon a weak and defenceless people. The Government, headed by the "Father of the Egyptian people," is turned out

because it dared take exception to some of the atrocious demands of Imperialism. Egypt is placed in a state of siege. The annexation of the Sudan is complete.

As long as Egypt is subordinated to a foreign military dictatorship, she will claim the right of rebellion. The right of the Egyptian people to complete independence is undeniable. The recognition of the right of a particular people to determine its own political status definitely rules out all outside interference under any pretext. Since the Agreement of 1922 terminated the British Protectorate only in name, it could not deprive the Egyptian people of the historically recognised right of rebellion against foreign or native oppression. We should consider it superfluous to prove that the sole object of the conquest and protectorate of Egypt was not altruistic. Nor was the "sacred responsibility" of protecting the Egyptians and safeguarding the Sudanese "accidentally" thrust upon Britain, as the imperialist historian, Seely, would argue. Nevertheless, a brief recapitulation of facts will be useful.

Until the 'fifties of the last century, British merchants, side by side with the French and Italian traders, penetrated the valley of the Nile. The growth of commercial interests whetted their appetite for political power. The indebtedness of the Khedive Ismail Pasha to the French and British bankers grew to the amount of two and a half milliard francs. Ismail extended the Turkish suzerainty up the Nile to Nubia, and built Khartoum and other cities. These "civilising" efforts of Turkish Imperialism were financed by the European bankers. Presently the latter thought it would be much more profitable to eliminate the intermediary and let "civilisation" march under the insignia of the Cross instead of the Crescent. The Christian Shylocks demanded their money or their pound of flesh, which was to be a mortgage on the sources of the State revenue. Ismail refused the terms of financial capitulation. In order to remove this obstacle from their way to political power, the Franco-British Debt Commission engineered a "revolt" against Turkish suzerainty. (By the way, if the Zaghlulist Government fomented the anti-British movement in Sudan, as it is accused, for its own political purpose, it learnt these tactics from the European imperialists.) Ismail was deposed and succeeded by Tewfik Pasha—a nominee of the Anglo-French creditors—who accepted uncondi-

tionally the terms of financial capitulation. The tale sounds very familiar. Under the aegis of Imperialism in the backward countries history repeats itself remarkably. The drama staged at Cairo sixty years ago is being enacted all over again to-day.

Under the pressure of the Debt Commission, the new Khedive dismissed a large number of army officers and government employees whose loyalty to him and his Anglo-French masters was open to doubt. This was done on the pretext of economy. The traders were taxed heavily to increase the revenue, which was mortgaged to the Debt Commission. Discontent against the new regime, openly acting under the dictation of Anglo-French banks, became widespread. The Egyptian Nationalist Party was organised. The following passage is found in the first manifesto of the Nationalist Party, published in 1868:—

“The British Lion has a voracious appetite. But it does not kill its prey. It lets them live, to relish their blood and flesh bit by bit. The treatment meted out to our brothers in India awaits us. Poor Egypt is doomed. Better death than such a life. Let us rise, we the Servants of God. Egypt for the Egyptians!”

This does not sound like the voice of a happy people, gently led on the path of “civilisation.” Obviously it was the frantic cry of those led to the slaughter. These backward barbarians have no sense of gratitude. They are still speaking the same language. Fifty years of fleecing could not make them appreciate the benefits of civilisation.

Among all the innumerable boons conferred upon Egypt by Britain is counted the abolition of slavery. In 1874, the Britisher Gordon was appointed Governor-General of the Sudan. In those days, the principal trade of that country was that of ivory, coming from the wild regions of Central Africa. Gordon declared the ivory trade a state monopoly; consequently he had to declare the abolition of slavery, which was connected with the ivory trade. Italian and French merchants were competing with the British in this trade. By abolishing slavery, the competitors were deprived of practically costless labour on the one hand, and the declaration of a state monopoly, on the other hand, diverted the entire trade to Cairo, there to fall exclusively into British hands. There was a third and more insidious motive. This was to drive the Sudanese

slave-owners and ivory-traders to revolt, so that British intervention could take place. All these sordid motives of the "saintly" Gordon were realised. The discontented Sudanese established relations with the Egyptian Nationalist Party, headed by Col. Arabi Pasha. The situation, carefully prepared, came to a head. The time was ripe for military intervention and occupation.

In 1881 the Nationalist revolt broke out in Egypt. Simultaneously, the Sudan rose in revolt under the leadership of the Mahdi. British and French fleets bombarded Alexandria, in May, 1882. A joint note was presented to the Khedive, demanding the resignation of his Cabinet and the exile of the Nationalist leader Arabi. But popular demonstrations, on the contrary, forced the Khedive to appoint Arabi as Minister of Defence. The rebels were outnumbered by the invaders; Arabi's forces were defeated, and he was taken prisoner at Tel-el-Kebir.

Egyptian soldiers refused to join the expedition to reduce the Sudan, where the whole country was in revolt. Gordon was besieged at Khartoum. So the Egyptians did not want the British invaders to conquer the Sudan for them. Gordon died not for Egypt, but in the attempt to suppress the revolt of the Sudanese against the British invaders. Neither in Egypt, not in the Sudan, has England, therefore, any right but that of an invader, who conquered by means of dirty intrigues and clever stratagems. It is this right of might that is being defended to-day by the Tory Government, and which yesterday was also defended by the MacDonald Cabinet. It is this clear issue between the victor and the vanquished, exploiter and the exploited, that the Labour Party urges should be referred to the League of Nations, while the League by its very constitution (the Wilsonian Covenant) is pledged to leave these "internal" issues of Imperialism outside its scope. Not only has the British Government roundly rejected all suggestion of League intervention, but the League itself has washed its hands of this thorny problem. Once more it has proved itself the "organised impotence" it really is. What does the Labour Party propose to do now?

British domination acquired in the valley of the Nile by all means, fair or foul, over a period of half a century, was by no means abandoned by the agreement of 1922. Not an iota of British

authority was conceded. The "independence" granted to Egypt by that agreement was utterly inadequate. This camouflaged form of Imperialism could not be legalised until the approbation of Zaghul Pasha was secured, after the attempt to set up several dummy governments had failed. Zaghul and his party accepted the "independence" only as the basis of further negotiation. Had they not kept the fundamental questions of military evacuation and the Sudan open, they could not have carried the people with them in this compromise. But the policy of following a line of evolution with the agreement of 1922 as the basis created an ambiguous situation which could not continue indefinitely. The political career of Zaghul was staked on his problematical ability to win complete independence for Egypt and the revindication of the Sudan through amicable settlement with Britain. No government in Egypt could permanently hold the forces of National Revolution in control which was not able to secure satisfaction on these points. If anybody in Egypt was at all in a position to attempt this impossible task, it was Zaghul, owing to the enormous popularity and unlimited confidence that he enjoys. Had not the professions of the British bourgeoisie and of the Labour Government for an amicable settlement of the Anglo-Egyptian conflict been hypocritical, the Zaghulist regime would have been supported. But, on the contrary, egged on by insatiable imperialist greed, it was the Labour Government which finally rendered the position of Zaghul untenable.

The revolutionary wing of the Nationalist Party, which since the days of Arabi has worked for the overthrow of British Imperialism, did not approve of Zaghul's compromise with Britain. But their faith in the sincerity and ability of the veteran leader induced them to let Zaghul try his policy of conciliation and gradual acquisition of power. The latter is too shrewd to ignore the precariousness of his position. The advent of the Labour Government was seized upon by him as a possible way out of the predicament. But Mr. MacDonald did not permit the reminiscence of personal friendship with the Egyptian leader to interfere with imperial stakes. His treatment of the Egyptian question could hardly be improved upon by Lord Curzon. The Labour Government sowed the seeds of the Chamberlain Ultimatum. Sitting on the Opposition Bench, the official leaders of the Labour Party are not absolved from the crime

against the Egyptian people—a crime which they share equally with the present Tory Cabinet. The rupture of his conversation with Mr. MacDonald exposed the bankruptcy of Zaghul's policy of peaceful national evolution within the frame-work of the British Empire. If even a Labour Government, with all its professed regard for self-determination and democracy, could summarily dismiss the proposal of military evacuation of a country presumably "independent," and of an appeal to the League of Nations, how could the policy of reconciliation be maintained? The alternatives were clear before the Egyptians: either to submit themselves to perpetual British domination, thinly disguised as "independence," or to fall back upon a permanent state of warfare, suspended temporarily to give the Zaghulist policy a chance. It is hypocritical for the official Labour Party leaders to demand, in their capacity of His Majesty's loyal Opposition, the submission of the Anglo-Egyptian conflict to the League of Nations while, in office, they refused to take a similar step, and thereby wrecked all the possibility of constitutional advance.

If the attitude of the Labour Party in the Egyptian question has been so hypocritically ambiguous, as regards the Sudan it has been frankly imperialist. Even to-day the official leaders of the Labour Party are not prepared to oppose the British annexation of the Sudan. It is argued that the Sudan is not Egypt, the Egyptians have no claim on that country. But have the British capitalists anything more to do there than the Egyptians? If conquest is the foundation of right, the Egyptians, who conquered the Sudan much earlier than the British, possess the benefit of priority.

But the question of the Sudan rests upon entirely different ground. A huge amount of British capital has been invested in the Sudan, which is expected eventually to make the Lancashire textile industry independent of the American cotton ring. The Mkouar Barrage on the Blue Nile alone has cost £13,500,000, which was raised in the London market with the guarantee of the Government. Britain is determined to stay in the Sudan in order to protect this huge vested interest. All talk of protecting the Sudanese from Egyptian aggression, of rescuing them from chaos and of bringing them the blessings of civilisation, is hypocritical. Expansionist interests of British capital demanded the pacification—



a plausible term for subjugation—of the Sudan, which was done mainly at the cost of Egyptian lives and Egyptian money, ostensibly on behalf of Egypt. Gordon, Kitchener, Cromer and the innumerable others who carried the banner of British Imperialism up the valley of the Nile were supposed to be conquering the Sudan for Egypt. Thus, the sovereignty of Egypt over the Sudan was clearly recognised from the beginning. But this academic recognition is repudiated as soon as it even slightly conflicts with the monopoly rights of British capital in the Sudan.

This ticklish question of cotton supply is cleverly manipulated to make the interests of the British working class appear identical with those of Imperialism. Taking their cue from the imperialist-economists, trade union bureaucrats, like J. H. Thomas and J. R. Clynes, have of late been holding before the workers the terrible disaster that will befall British industry if those parts of the Empire which supply the metropolis with raw materials and food break away. The moral of this is that the proletariat must give fullest support to imperialist expansion and, consequently, to the policy of militarism and coercion like that in the valley of the Nile. So the Labour Government "firmly" handled the Egyptian question, not because it was a minority government, but because the official leaders of the Labour Party are convinced of the necessity of maintaining imperialistic domination over Egypt and the Sudan.

Normal economic security of the British proletariat does not depend, as Mr. Clynes would maintain, upon the maintenance and expansion of the Empire. The British working class will derive no profit from the cotton-plantations of the Sudan. As far as the life and prosperity of the Lancashire textile industry are concerned, it can be said that if the cotton required could be up till now bought from America, there is no reason why it cannot be bought from Egypt and the Sudan in future, if necessary. If the dependence of Lancashire upon American cotton did not necessitate the British conquest of the United States, free access to the actual and potential produce of the Sudan does not necessarily demand the military occupation of the valley of the Nile and political subjugation of the Egyptian people. It is argued that British evacuation will throw the Sudan back into disorder. That is only an hypothesis. There is absolutely no reason to believe that the peoples subordinated to

imperialist domination for decades will not follow a steady and normal course of development if all foreign interference ceases. Besides, to secure the provision of cheaper cotton, which will increase the profits of Lancashire industry, is no justification for the outrages committed against weak and defenceless peoples.

Apart from political and historical reasons, economically Egypt is inseparable from the Sudan. If a union of peoples on economic grounds is desirable for the evolution towards the Co-operative Commonwealth of the World, the union of the entire valley of the Nile into one economic organism is much more reasonable than to hold the Sudan perpetually as a source of raw materials for the Lancashire cotton industry. The Egyptians have more than enough reason to look upon the British invaders with distrust. Their contention that from the Sudan, British Imperialism can strangle the economic life of Egypt, is not altogether groundless. It has been borne out by the decision to extend unlimitedly the scope of the Gezira Irrigation. In fact, this irrigation work, which constitutes the pride of "civilisation" introduced in the Sudan by Britain, is a standing menace to Egyptian agriculture. The enormous volume of water that will be held up by the gigantic barrage, to irrigate 400,000 hectares of desert, will undoubtedly reduce the flow of the lower Nile, on which Egyptian agriculture depends.

The disquiet of the Egyptians on this score cannot be pooh-poohed, while Britain feels the same disquiet about the Gezira irrigation. Measures have been taken that the water supply of the barrage will not be cut off higher up in Abyssinia. Already in 1902, Britain signed a treaty with King Menelik, binding the latter not to permit any construction on the Blue Nile or its source, the Lake Tsana, which might affect the flow of water. The question was again raised in 1921, in view of the events in Egypt and of the growing French influence in Abyssinia. Britain's new demands approximated to serious encroachment on the sovereignty of Abyssinia. The latter, under French inspiration, retorted by applying for admission into the League of Nations. Some agreement is supposed to have been reached, at least temporarily, when last summer the Abyssinian Regent, Ras Tafari, visited France and England. Mr. MacDonald was the custodian of British imperialist interests in

those days. Did he prepare the way for the eventual annexation of another small country to the Empire ?

British domination in the valley of the Nile is of much greater importance than to safeguard the local capitalist interests, which by themselves are enormous. Egypt is the strategic centre of the Empire. This point was bluntly made by a number of noble lords during the debate on the King's Speech in the Upper House. Certainly it is. But here again, how does this consideration, vital for the master class, concern the proletariat ? India is becoming more difficult to govern every day. The Moslem peoples of the Near East find in the Union of Soviet Republics a staunch supporter of their relentless resistance to imperialistic aggression. Young China, also inspired by the Russian Revolution, challenges British supremacy in the Far East. The Empire is indeed in danger. Therefore, imperialist interests demand that in this fateful moment the half-way house of Egypt should in no way be shaken. This is the paramount consideration that indicates the policy of a " firm hand " in the valley of the Nile. The eventful necessity of crushing a revolution in India, or of sending a " punitive expedition " to recalcitrant China, or of keeping the Turks within " reasonable " bounds of nationalist ambition, is no inducement for the British workers to shed their blood on the deserts of Africa, or to sanction that the taxes paid by them shall be squandered in a military adventure. The benefit of the Empire is no less a myth for the British proletariat than for the subjugated peoples. The doctrine of carrying the blessings of civilisation to the backward peoples is a blatant lie. The theory that the disruption of the Empire will ruin the British working class is an economic fallacy.

Not only is the Empire of scant benefit for the British workers; it is a veritable bondage for them. Firstly, they have to pay for its conquest and maintenance in men and money. Secondly, the Empire only consolidates the power of capitalism at home. The beggarly share in the colonial plunder, in the shape of unemployment pensions (which the capitalists would have ceased to pay long ago had they not been in a position to draw enormous super-profit from the colonies), and the shameful glory enjoyed by the treacherous leaders " who sit by the King," are poor compensation for the working-class support of Imperialism.

The question of Egypt and the Sudan embodies the entire question of Imperialism—of the right of colonial expansion at the cost of the liberty of the so-called backward peoples. The British proletariat must approach and solve this question as such. Once and for all, they must decide whether it is their duty and responsibility to support the perpetuation of the Empire. An economic union of the countries now forming the British Empire cannot be realised within the capitalist system, unless the union is to be a capitalist union to oppress and exploit the working class. The Empire must first be broken up. Then such a union will be possible on a Socialist basis. The desirable preservation of the present industrial organism, freed from capitalist ownership, is dependent on the ability of the British proletariat to win the confidence of the subject peoples. The desire to transform the Empire into a voluntary economic commonwealth will never be realised so long as the political and racial distrust bred by imperialist aggression remains. All talk about the "Commonwealth of Free Nations" is justifiably distrusted by the subject races. How can British Labour convince the colonial peoples of its good intentions if it fails to give unconditional support to their demand for freedom, even to the extent of breaking altogether away from the Empire?

Therefore, it is neither the half-hearted demand of the official Labour leaders for a reference to the League of Nations, nor hypocritical resolutions of the I.L.P., that express the verdict of the proletariat in accordance with their objective interests. Mr. Purcell's pledge to organise direct action against imperialist violence in the valley of the Nile indicates the way the British working class should follow.

# The DIPLOMACY of MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD

By "U.D.C."

**I**T was the vote of the I.L.P. and the Left Wing of the Labour Party which made Mr. MacDonald Leader of the Opposition and so, when the time came, Prime Minister of Great Britain.

It was their support which enabled him to add the Foreign Secretaryship to the Premiership and so to become for nine months the uncontrolled controller of the Foreign Policy of this country.

In the days of Cabinet making there were many rumours from many sources. But it was from the new Premier himself that there came confidentially to the ears of some of the I.L.P. and U.D.C. leaders word that a certain Trade Union leader, regarded by them as a reactionary and an Imperialist, was peremptorily demanding the seals of the Foreign Office. They took swift alarm, and equally swift precautions. They begged MacDonald to take the office himself. The *Herald* urged him to do so. The *New Leader* urged him to do so. And graciously yielding to the will of the party, he consented.

The U.D.C.-ers were relieved. They were more than relieved. They were enthusiastic. For nine weary years they had preached their gospel. And here, by a heaven-sent opportunity, one of their own most trusted leaders was to put their principles into practice. Whatever came of the Labour Government, they thought, this at least was certain, that there would be a revolutionary change in our foreign policy, a break with the follies of the past, a transvaluation of diplomatic values, a reformation of diplomatic machinery.

I have said that the U.D.C.-ers expected this. But indeed the expectation was shared by practically the whole of the Labour Party, save for a few impenitent Imperialists on the Right and for a few cynical Communists—or "near-Communists"—on the Left.

It was a big task. It called for a firm grasp of principle, an equally firm grasp of detail, for knowledge, cool judgment, inflexible will and tremendous courage. For it was plain that the Minister

who attempted it would have no help, but all possible hindrance, from all officialdom and all the *ancien régime*.

But with that after all a Labour Minister must reckon. And MacDonald was clearly the Jack for this Giant, the David for this Goliath.

So they thought. And it has taken them a year, with the crowning humiliation of the Zinoviev affair at the end of it, to realise how woefully they had miscalculated the fighting capacity of their Giant-Killer.

They had been deceived, as many others had been deceived, by the histrionic ability of the man. For MacDonald, whatever his faults, is a first-class actor. The handsome presence, the deep eyes, the splendid voice, the dignity of the man caught the senses and anaesthetised the judgment. Only those who obstinately remembered, not the martyr-in-spite-of-himself of the war years, but the petty intriguer of the years before the war, shook their heads and predicted trouble to unwilling listeners.

For this egoist was to prove at bottom as weak and unstable a man as that one of whom Mrs. Elphinstone said, "He has a leg." "He had a leg" will serve for MacDonald's epitaph. His inevitable Abbey statue will, one trusts, show him in court dress.

Rarely indeed in history was a statesman so disproportioned to his task. It called for the highest and toughest qualities. And this was a weak, irresolute man : a man with a vague mind incapable alike of hard thinking and of clear thinking : a man with no grasp of principles, no equipment of knowledge : a man susceptible to flattery and intolerant of criticism : at once domineering and sycophantic : a man of an amazing vanity and a boundless conceit : an actor who was his own perpetual and admiring audience.

This MacDonald, by irony of Fate and the stupidity of the Labour Party, was sent to a great task. Perhaps it is to his credit that he did not attempt it. This Saint George, having no stomach for fighting, did not attack his dragon. He courteously shook hands with it and explained that so far from being a dragon killer he felt that he and the dragon could get along splendidly and co-operate in perfect loyalty. In fact he was a bit of a dragon himself. And having exchanged his armour for a dragon make-up, from the nearest costumiers, he proceeded for his nine short months to strut

about as a dragon. Very creditably he did it too. For, be it said again, he is an admirable actor. And—he has a leg.

Let us pass to consider some of the more significant features of this nine months' dragonnade.

First, because the final scene is fresh in mind, let us take the Russian question.

The Labour Party expected of its Foreign Secretary the immediate recognition of the Soviet Union, the immediate despatch of an Ambassador to Moscow, the immediate extension to Russia of the provisions of the Exports Credits Scheme, the establishment of really friendly relations with the Soviet Government and the conclusion of a satisfactory Treaty of Amity and Commerce.

Now of these the first, it is true, was done within ten days. But it was done only under pressure from outside. The party looked for a decision by the first Cabinet meeting. Nothing happened. The rumour ran that there was opposition inside the Foreign Office and that MacDonald had consented to delay. Protests began. Neil Maclean opened the ball in the *Herald*. Others followed. Duncan Carmichael warned the Government that the London Labour Party was preparing a protest meeting. Such a scandal before the Government was a week old was alarming. Nor had MacDonald yet yielded entirely to the persuasive flatteries and cajoleries of his new environment. He gave way, and recognition was accorded.

Thus far but no farther. An Ambassador should have been sent at once, as a French Ambassador was sent at once. MacDonald before taking office had decided to do so. He had offered the post to O'Grady, in a letter written in his own handwriting. O'Grady was to go "when we recognise the Soviet Government." But nothing happened. On a flimsy excuse MacDonald crept out of his promise and paid reparation later with the Governorship of Tasmania. Month after month went by and no Ambassador was sent. Now none may be sent for five years. It was the first abject surrender to the new influences at work on that feeble will and unstable mind, a surrender involving the breaking of a written promise to an old friend and loyal supporter.

No Ambassador was sent. Nor was Russia brought within the ambit of the Exports Credits Scheme. A stroke of the pen would

have done it. MacDonald was pledged to that stroke of the pen.

"A Labour Government," he had said only a month or two before, "would take *immediate* steps to begin trade in Russia by . . . granting what aids are legitimate, *including guarantees under the financial scheme for encouraging exports.*"

The pledge was broken. Nothing was done. Vague excuses were made to protesting Labour deputations. Russia is still—as far as Export Credits are concerned—a pariah country.

Nor was any step taken to establish really cordial relations between London and Moscow. The preliminaries for negotiations were begun. MacDonald wrote letters to Tchitcherin and Rakovsky. But they were pompous letters. The actor was getting into his part and already copying the style of his predecessors in the rôle.

Sometimes, as novices will, he over-acted. There is one amazing letter in which he expresses his hope that a settlement would be reached, "satisfactory to the people of Russia and to *us and our subjects.*" It is a matter for wonder that he never began a note "We, James Ramsay, By the Grace of God."

He presided at the opening meeting of the Conference, and earned the plaudits of the Tory Press by the "firm" tone of his speech. He made it evident that his chief desire in the negotiations would be to safeguard the interests of the British capitalists and bondholders. He emphasised in sonorous phrases the difference between the British and Russian systems of government. He complained—with a peevishness which was already growing on him—of personal criticisms of himself by Zinoviev and others. He delivered a homily on the wickedness of propaganda. Not in a single phrase did he take note of the fact that this was the first negotiation between two working-class Governments. Not a word did he use which might not have been used by a Tory or a Liberal statesman. The exuberant and almost fawning cordiality of his approaches to M. Poincaré was replaced by a frigid and haughty correctness. He made it plain that this was to be not the beginning of a warm and friendly co-operation between two workers' Governments, but a hard business deal entered upon only because it was economically necessary.

Let it be noted in passing that during the whole tenure of his



office he did not attempt to establish any friendship or any personal relationship with the Soviet representatives. Invitations to Chequers were reserved for M. Poincaré, M. Herriot and "Allied" statesmen. Rakovsky was kept at a distance, a man with whom one did business, but with whom one did not necessarily associate.

Fortunately for the Russian negotiation, MacDonald then retired and left it in the hands of Mr. Ponsonby. Nor did he effectively meddle in it again. The story that, when the deadlock came, he rose at five in the morning and addressed a personal letter to every delegate urging a resumption of negotiations is a pure myth, invented and circulated by someone anxious to take the credit of that day's work from Morel and his fellow bank benchers and to secure it for the Premier.

One gains indeed the impression from his Derby speech in September—the famous speech in which he spoke of "a Mr. Rykoff" as a man not of "real political authority"—that he had very inadequate knowledge of what the treaty was all about. His speech to the Cabinet in support of Ponsonby's plan for a guaranteed loan—a mere wordy exhortation to consider the necessity of restoring peace to the world—corroborates this impression. But then a grasp of detail is not one of his strong points.

In the making of the Treaties then he had no hand. In the wrecking of them he played a leading rôle. What devil of personal vanity wounded by past bitter words from Zinoviev, what devil of play-acting folly urging him to out-Curzon Curzon, lured him to the folly of penning that pompous Note to Rakovsky, we can surmise. What suicidal mania led him to pass it into the hands of men who promptly and joyfully used it for his destruction is a greater puzzle. As to the subsequent alternate sulkings and hysteria, they are not worth discussing. They are phenomena familiar to those with experience of neurotics and are especially associated with cases of acute egomania.

Enough of Russia and of that unpleasant Zinoviev episode, which is a matter rather of pathology than of politics. In a further article I propose to examine MacDonald's handling of the problems of the Western Front, his handling of Egypt, Mexico and one or two minor questions, and—in some ways most significant of all—his dealings with the Foreign Office.

# "THE NEW MACHIAVELLI"

or

## The Soft-headed Communists and the Thick-headed Ones

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

"He would think it madness to declare open hostilities against rivals whom he might stab in a friendly embrace or poison in a consecrated wafer."

—LORD MACAULAY ON MACHIAVELLI.

**I**T is something to be able to discuss the Dawes Report, the degree of stability and instability of capitalism and the prospects of revolutionary social changes throughout the world with one like Comrade Radek, who can reason, and who does not see in every critic of the outlook of the Russian Communists a base charlatan and traitor. But even he, it appears, cannot always keep the decorum of debate. Although I have nothing to complain of in his remarks about me, I must protest most emphatically against his besmirching of the character of Walter Newbold, who has from my intimate knowledge acted in his relations with the Communist Party with the same motive as I have acted.

It is a pity that Comrade Radek did not manage to leave us one relic of the achievements of the Labour Government by getting a passport to England this last summer. If he had, I think he would have learnt better by this means than through the reports which are sent to him by some friends here about the difficulties that face Socialist work in these older Socialist countries. He would, I think, have derived less pleasure than he appears to derive at present from bashing his head against a brick wall by a policy of pure denunciation and destructive criticism of the Dawes Report. As one who has met and spoken on the doorsteps with hundreds of English working-class families in the past two years, while canvassing at elections, I make bold to make the assertion that these tactics never cut any ice here. Comrade Radek may say that I am one of the soft-headed ones, who cherishes the integrity

of his pate. Comrade Radek is apparently one of the hard-headed ones. But hard-headedness seems to degenerate very easily into thick-headedness. And this thick-headedness seems to characterise all the Communist International's criticism of the policy of the Labour Party on the Dawes Report.

The article of mine which has apparently roused the ire of Communist International writers is the one in the *Plebs* last summer in which I pointed out that, dangerous as the Dawes Report was from the point of view of the workers throughout Europe, I saw no other practical policy before the Labour Government, having regard to the relationship of class forces in this country, France and Germany, than to let it go through under protest and to rely on time and the industrial action of the workers on an international scale to show that it is unworkable, except at the price of slavery. And this perfectly mild and I should have thought even orthodox remark has called down on my innocent head the ban of excommunication and is regarded as a sin against the Holy Ghost. I suppose an empty denunciation of MacDonald as a traitor would have been regarded as a sign of a true believer. Once when I was travelling in Mongolia fifteen years ago I saw the Buddhist Lamas turning their prayer-wheels in the monasteries. That was an easy way to placate the Deity, who was appeased if plenty of prayers were said. The Communist International has discovered a new form of imprecation. To be steadfast in the faith one does not need to turn prayer-wheels. To personally abuse Labour leaders is the way to salvation.

If the Labour Government ought to have resisted the Dawes Report and ought to have attempted what will one day be carried out—namely, the throwing in one form or another on the capitalist class of England, America, France and Germany of the burden of the war-debts—then it is obvious that it should have ridden for a fall early in the summer. It should have adopted a *non possumus* attitude at the London Conference and have gone to the country in August. Now I have never in any public utterance on this period of contemporary politics refrained from criticising MacDonald for not having made it clearer to the workers of this country and of France that the Labour Party should regard the Dawes Report as a capitalist attempt to stabilise the economy of

Europe, and should only let it go through because it is not strong enough to prevent it. MacDonald's argument, of course, that if he had done that he would have wrecked the whole scheme, does not cut any ice. The Anglo-American bankers would not have spoiled their chances because of a little propaganda on the part of British Labour leaders. But if one may criticise MacDonald for not having used his opportunities to show up the Dawes Report as he might, his policy is as that of a Socrates compared with the policy of Bedlam which characterises the Communist International on this point. If MacDonald had smashed up his Government on the Dawes Report and had had a General Election in August, the Russian negotiations would have gone by the board, and we should never have got the one great concrete achievement of the Labour Government, which I do not think even the Communist International will deny was something, namely, the initialled treaty between the first Labour Government in England and the first Workers' Republic in the world. And on this there was obviously more chance of rallying the masses of this country than on the Dawes Report. This MacDonald, with all his later blunders, did, and that amount of credit is due to him. We are never going to get a big mass movement going in this country on a dull subject like the Dawes Report. One day, when South Wales mines and the engineering shops of the Midlands are standing idle because of General Dawes, we shall be able to get a move on. But till then the indifferent worker's mind is much more likely to be roused by a treaty with Soviet Russia which gives him a chance of employment than on a 138-page Government Blue Book with a mass of statistics. Moreover, and this seems to me the most important step in popularising the idea of a Socialist State in Britain, the worker's mind must be educated to look to the Russian republic as the country from which it can receive material assistance when it refuses to tolerate any longer the dictation of Pierpont Morgan and the Anglo-American bankers. However little he may have understood what he was doing, MacDonald was right in refusing to wreck the London Conference and in fighting on the Anglo-Russian Treaty.

What would Comrade Radek have had MacDonald do? Perhaps he would not have had MacDonald go into office at all.

But I remember the *Workers' Weekly*, when the question arose a year ago, if Labour should form a Government, declaring in favour of this, provided that a real working-class policy was followed. Is this what is meant by a real working-class policy, when you look about for a line of action which will be certain to bring overwhelming defeat in Parliament in the debate on the King's Speech without the slightest chance of rallying the rank-and-file even of the trade unions, much less of the unorganised workers, for a street demonstration, let alone think of a strike? If this is the policy which Comrade Radek thinks the Labour Party should have followed, then I can only assume that he believes in what I have called before “cheap Machiavellianism,” which, however, I will here rechristen in the title of Wells's novel, “The New Machiavellianism.” I can only presume that the theory advanced in Moscow, which is the present interpretation of the “United Front” resolution of the Third World Congress, is that the Labour Party is to be provoked stealthily into accepting an impossible position, where it will prove itself politically bankrupt. It must be helped to get into this position, and having been helped there, it must be attacked from within and shown up as a party of charlatans. And that is called having a revolutionary policy! As a matter of fact, it is neither revolutionary nor is it what it appears to profess to be, namely, Machiavellian. In the words which I quote at the top of this article Macaulay shows what the essence of the Italian prince's statecraft really was. Machiavelli was at least thorough. In order to undermine the power of the foreign rulers of Northern Italy he simulated affection for them, but worked against them on the quiet. His “united front” was a genuine one on the surface and was not punctuated with outbursts of open denunciation of the people he was working against. That would have given the game away. And Machiavelli's policy is certainly explicable, indeed excusable, having regard to the circumstances in which his city and country were living. If the Communist International intends to pursue this line, if it intends to try to entice the Labour Party leaders into situations where it thinks they will make fools of themselves, then it should be logical, and not, after supporting the Labour Party's proposal to go into office, then publicly declare: “We knew you were a lot of rotters and would betray the British

workers at the first opportunity, but nevertheless we advised the British workers to support you." If the Labour Party was to go into office, any fool could see that in the circumstances it would be limited in what it could do, and it certainly could not prevent the Dawes Report from coming into operation. If also the Communists were in favour of the Labour Party taking office under these conditions, the workers, here, in France and in Germany have a right to expect that the Labour Government should not be abused if it fails to stop the passage of the Dawes Report, but should be criticised on its merits for what it did not do to make propaganda use of the situation, as I explained above. If I err in this estimate, I err in good company; in no less a company, in fact, than that of the respected writer of the article in last month's LABOUR MONTHLY criticising me, namely, Comrade Radek himself. I have before me the German edition of the *Inprekor* reporting his speech at the last Congress of the Communist International. Replying to Zinovieff and Ruth Fischer on the question of the "United Front" between the Communists and the French and German Social-Democrats, Comrade Radek said: "We shall weaken the effect of our policy of showing up the Social-Democrats if we state from the first, 'We never intended, really, any loyal support, we are only concerned in showing them up!' But the whole object of our United Front tactic ought to be that we really and honourably declare ourselves ready to go a part of the way at least with any working-class party which really wants to fight. We should trample under our feet the interests of the working class if we did not honourably and without any hidden thoughts work for the unity of the working class along all the stages of the struggle."

I must, therefore, assume that Comrade Radek is not one of the New Machiavellian school in Moscow. The differences between him and me narrow themselves down to an estimate of whether or not the MacDonald Government did betray the workers in not, so soon as the question of the Dawes Report came before the Cabinet, at once running to Buckingham Palace and coming back with the writ for dissolution. I have given my reasons above for believing that this would have been fatal from the point of view of mobilising the masses for a struggle. And because I say this,

I am accused by Radek for being one who believes that "the Dawes plan means the end of the world revolution." If he means by world revolution an acute period of the class struggle, which will end in a few years in a complete victory of the proletariat throughout the whole world, then I plead guilty, and am proud of it. I should have thought that any Marxist with a knowledge of history would have seen that changes from one social order to another, while accompanied at times by acute struggle, and sometimes by the use of force, are processes which extend over decades and even over centuries. And I believe that the Dawes Report is a sign of a backwash in the revolutionary wave, which may last some years. The acute phase has temporarily at least passed in Germany. The best proof of this is the new Reichstag elections. Even if one leaves out of account the fall in the Communist vote, on the grounds that it has been caused entirely by the police persecution of the Communists (although I am inclined to doubt if that has caused it entirely), there is the collapse of the Fascists and the Hitler crowd to explain away—the bitterest opponents of the Dawes Report on the other side. It is clear that there are strong illusions among millions of German workers and small bourgeoisie still as to the effect of the Dawes Report. It is still regarded as a means of salvation. This only proves my contention that if anyone imagines that the coming into force of the Dawes Report is going to lead to an immediate sharpening of the class struggle and to an acute revolutionary situation, he is engaging in a dangerous game of political adventure not warranted by the material basis of capitalist economy in Germany. I do not believe that the tribute of the bondholders on Germany will make itself felt all at once. The bondholders and all those who draw fixed rents from communities are not like profiteers and speculators in war-time and in inflation periods. They manage to create an atmosphere of stability in the country whose blood they are sucking, and that makes their exploitation all the more difficult to upset. The rule of the speculator is blatant and smells to Heaven, it arouses resentment because of its crudity, as well as for the burdens which it imposes upon the community. A wise tactic would, therefore, not assume that we are going to have violent outbursts in the near future in Germany against the Dawes Report. The

process of clarification of the minds of the German and British worker is going to be long and tedious, and it will not be encouraged if the Communist International mistakes its own emotions for the world revolution !

In Radek's estimate of the possibilities of a new era of Imperialism resulting ultimately in conflict between British and American capitalism in Asia, I agree, although whether that conflict may take the form of open war it is difficult to say. The British ruling class have always been brave in fighting against weaker peoples, but when it comes to standing up to America it always discovers that it is bound to Wall Street by ties of blood, language and friendship. I am convinced that if the five great British banks and Pierpont Morgan with Wall Street's henchmen in the City maintain their hold on the British Government, there is more likely to be a world financial consortium for the exploitation of Asia than an open struggle between the City and Wall Street. If, however, the industrial chiefs, armament makers and raw material speculators in the City break down the control of the bondholders and get some influence over the Conservatives, then we may easily drift into a state of acute Imperialist conflict with America, which would speedily breed revolutionary situations. Marxists, and particularly the Russian Communists, ought to understand the different shades of interest in the capitalist camp, the difference between the bondholder and the speculator which gives rise often to conflict, and which replaces one set of capitalist rogues for another. One is too apt to assume that changes of bourgeois governments are fakes put up to divert the attention of the workers. In actual fact they are often due to deep-seated differences of economic interest. The Communist International does not seem to have examined this aspect of modern capitalism, and much of its interpretation of events in Western Europe is consequently crude. It is time that it woke up to the fact that while the Labour and Socialist parties of Western and Central Europe can learn from the Russian revolution, *it* has got much to learn about the problems which face the Labour and Socialist movements in the West.



# On the Road to Insurrection—IV

## ON THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

By V. I. LENIN

[TRANSLATION COPYRIGHT]

PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 18, 1917

**T**HE capitalists (and in their train, either through stupidity or crass ignorance, numerous Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks) define "freedom of the Press" as the suppression of the censor and the power for every party to publish newspapers as they please.

In reality that is not freedom of the Press, but freedom for the rich, for the bourgeoisie, to deceive the oppressed and exploited masses of the people.

There is no doubt about this. Take, for example, the newspapers of Petrograd or Moscow. You will see at the first glance that from their circulation the *Ryetch*, the *Birjovka*,<sup>1</sup> the *Novoye Vremya*,<sup>2</sup> the *Russkoye Slovo*,<sup>3</sup> and so on and so forth (for their name is legion) have an undoubted preponderance. On what is this preponderance based? One could not say that it was based on the will of the majority, for the elections show that in the two capitals the majority (and the vast majority) is on the side of the democracy, that is the Social-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks. These three parties comprise from three-quarters to four-fifths of the total poll<sup>4</sup> while the number of copies of their newspapers equals only a quarter or even a fifth of those belonging to the whole bourgeois Press (which, as we know now and see now, defended Kornilov both directly and indirectly). This is because the publication of a newspaper is a capitalist enterprise in which the rich invest millions and millions of roubles. "Freedom of the Press" in bourgeois society means the power given to the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Stock Exchange Gazette*, journal of information without any precise political tendencies, but supported by finance.

<sup>2</sup> *New Times*, a thoroughly monarchist paper, nationalist, anti-Semitic, though it hides these tendencies at the moment.

<sup>3</sup> *The Voice of Russia*, the Moscow paper with a very wide provincial circulation.

<sup>4</sup> In the municipal elections of Petrograd on August 20, the Socialist parties altogether obtained 154 seats, against the Cadets' 142.

rich of systematic, unceasing, daily, million-sale perversion and deception of the poor, of the exploited and the oppressed masses.

This is the simple self-evident truth of which everybody is well aware, but of which hardly anybody dares whisper a word.

The question before us is : Is struggle against such an appalling state of affairs possible and, if so, how can it be carried out ?

There exists a very simple method and a perfectly legitimate one which I indicated a long time ago in the *Pravda*, one which it is particularly opportune to remember on this memorable September 12.<sup>5</sup> The workers ought never to lose sight of this means because it is almost certain that they will be compelled to make use of it when they have the power.

This method is the State monopoly of newspaper advertisement.

Glance at the *Russkoye Slovo*, the *Novoye Vremya*, the *Ryech*, &c., and you will see a large number of advertisements bringing in enormous returns, which represent the clearest source of profit of the capitalist publishers of these papers. This is how they enrich themselves while they poison the people. This applies to every bourgeois newspaper in the whole world.

In Europe there are newspapers of which copies are printed equal to a third of the inhabitants of the town where they appear (for example 12,000 for a population of 40,000) ; and which, though they are distributed free to every house, nevertheless give an excellent income to their publishers. These newspapers live on advertisements paid for by individuals, and free house-to-house delivery is the best way to assure the success of this form of publicity.

Why is it that a democracy, calling itself revolutionary, cannot carry through a measure like newspaper advertisement monopoly (for the profit of the State) ? Why can it not forbid the printing of advertisements except in papers published by the Soviets in the provinces, or by the Central Soviet in Petrograd for all Russia ? Why must the revolutionary democracy tolerate the fact that only the rich, the partisans of Kornilov, who scatter lies and calumny against the Soviets, should make themselves still richer by private advertisement ?

This measure would be indisputably a just one. It would give

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<sup>5</sup> The day of the summoning of the Democratic Conference.

enormous advantage to those who print the advertisements as well as to all the people, particularly to the most oppressed and the most ignorant portions of the peasant class, who would then be able to receive for a very small price, or even gratis, the Soviet newspapers with special supplements for the countryside.<sup>6</sup>

Why not carry through this measure? Solely because the right of private ownership and inheritance is a holy thing to these capitalist gentlemen.

Strange that at the time of our second revolution men who recognise the sanctity of this right dare still to call themselves revolutionary democrats of the twentieth century!

All that is nonsense. This monopoly would restore and extend the freedom of the Press, the possibility of printing freely all the opinions of *all* the citizens. What do we see now? At present it is only wealthy men or the large political parties that prevent this monopoly. Whereas if big Soviet newspapers were published all advertisements could appear solely in them and it would be possible to guarantee expression of opinion for a much larger number of citizens, for example, for every group which had collected a certain number of signatures. Freedom of the Press, thanks to this transformation, would become much more democratic and incomparably more complete.

But where are the printing works or the paper coming from?

We shall see! That has nothing to do with the "Freedom of the Press." It concerns the holy proprietorship of exploiters over the printing establishments and the stocks of paper which they have procured.

For what reason should we workers and peasants recognise this sacrosanct right? In what way is this "right" to publish false information better than the "right" to own serfs?

Why is it that during the war commandeering of all kinds—houses, apartments and vehicles as well as horses, cereals and metals—was allowed everywhere, while the commandeering of printing works and paper is not allowed?

No, you can deceive the workers for a time by representing these measures as unjust or hard to accomplish, but in the long run truth will triumph.

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<sup>6</sup> One of the first decrees of the Soviet Government of November 8, 1917, proclaims the insertion of advertisements to be the monopoly of the State carried out in the *Izvestia* of the Soviets.

# WHAT THE THEATRE COULD DO FOR THE ENGLISH LABOUR MOVEMENT

By HUNTLY CARTER

**A** FEW months ago I lectured to certain Labour organisations in the Midlands on the subject of the organisation of a Labour theatre in this country. I found that there is a strong desire on the part of the working class to have a theatre of their own, but they do not know how to begin to establish one. I knew already, of course, that there is a Labour movement in this country, the object of which is to overcome the gross evils of capitalism and capitalistic industrialism, and to replace the present industrialism which is designed to devitalise and enslave human beings by a new industrialism designed to produce a new society, a new way of living, to give workers the full value of their output of energy by transferring ownership of bodies and means of production from capitalist to worker, and capable of being assimilated for human advancement and put to the best uses of science.

Was any attempt being made by the workers, for example, to put the new industrialism on the stage and by exhibiting its actuality and possibility to make it clear and intelligible to themselves and to the nation? I found that no attempt was being made. The only form of propaganda I could discover was that of increasing the membership of the I.L.P., by encouraging middle-class people to join, in the hope of gradually assimilating the middle class, of swallowing this strange mixture as the fish swallowed Jonah. This seemed to me a very dangerous method on the part of Labour and their representatives of explaining their movement and making it intelligible and attractive to their fellow-creatures. It was indeed a harmonising

intention which gravely under-estimated the extent, power and resources of the class to be swallowed and assimilated. Instead of the fish assimilating Jonah, Jonah was more likely to assimilate the fish. The fact is that the middle class—the class which the leaders of the Labour Movement, or the harmonising part of it, propose to assimilate are engaged in a similar game—that of swallowing Labour—with far more chances of success. They have a monopoly of all the institutions, especially the cultural, in this country. And they use them openly for middle-class propaganda and for capturing the mind of Labour.

To-day there is a strong drift towards strengthening the middle-class monopoly of public institutions.

Look, for example, at what is happening in the English theatre. Look through the capitalist newspapers and periodicals and you will see article after article announcing the rapid spread of interest in middle-class forms of drama. Turn to the advertisement columns and you will see the same thing reflected in the increased output of published plays and books on the theatre and drama by middle-class writers. Everywhere in the news and correspondence columns you will read facts on the prevailing tendency. You will read about the repertory revival, increase of repertory theatres, community companies, village players and so on—all middle class. You will read about the widening interest of amateurs in the drama as shown in the growth of a huge unorganised, but affiliated network of amateur dramatic societies throughout the country—all middle class. You will read this and much more of the nation-wide quickening of the English theatre. But it is a middle-class movement. It is a movement designed to make middle-class ideals and ideas accessible and attractive to the nation. It is a movement that opens the door on the thought and activities of one class and closes it on those of another. In short it is not meant to tell Labour anything about themselves. Neither its plays, nor its players, nor its settings do anything to express the true inwardness of the working-class soul. The English theatre as it is organised and worked exalts the middle-class ideology where the Labour ideology should be.

What is Labour doing about it? Do its leaders recognise that the theatre is the most powerful instrument of expression which any class can possess? Look what the theatre has done for

the working class in Russia where, ever since the Revolution, it has played a magnificent part in strengthening the hand of the Government and promoting the culture of the new industrialism by giving the workers a free hand to express themselves. Look what it will do in Italy if Mussolini carries out his intention of nationalising it and using it to strengthen and support Fascism.

Then look what it is doing in England for the Labour Movement. Absolutely nothing.

Yet the theatre can be made the most powerful instrument of class expression. There is no instrument more popular, wider or more effective. And English Labour have not got their foot even on the threshold of the theatre. *English industrial workers have no theatre of their own.*

Some people quite rightly think that we are best without a Mussolini at the head of our theatre. All the same, the English theatre is a stronghold of Fascist propaganda of a sort. It is held by reactionaries.

Some people quite rightly think that it is not possible for the English theatre to produce results similar to those of the New Russian Theatre. It would be necessary to have a revolution in England to enable our theatre to give similar results. The New Russian Theatre, which to-day is a true working-class theatre and the only one in the world, is the direct outcome of the great Revolution of 1917. It has undergone three distinct stages of development. Soon after the Revolution all the theatres in Russia were nationalised and thrown open free to the people for the purpose of working-class education, agitation and propaganda. The unified theatre, which was the result, became a forum where the pros and cons of the Revolution were discussed in dramatic form. That is, the Revolution impressed itself upon everybody, set loose a flood of burning ideas and practically took possession of the stage. Next, as the worst effects of the Revolution, civil war and blockade began to disappear, the workers established a theatre of satire, which served for revolutionary criticism of the old Tsarist order and of the capitalistic world outside Soviet Russia. And then came the period of constructivism when all in the theatre began to construct a working model of the new civilisation with its new industrialism in which the machine was to be no longer master but slave.

Throughout, everything has been done to attract the immense working-class population to the theatre and to encourage it to express the meaning and ambition and native genius of Labour.

The theatrical situation in Russia which has risen out of the Revolution is that the Theatre, composed of a multitude of theatres, has been organised to interpret working-class ideology. The theatrical situation in England arising out of middle-class monopoly is that the Theatre, composed of many theatres, capitalistic and amateur, is run entirely for the purposes of profiteering and interpreting middle-class ideology.

Do the leaders of the Labour Movement in England propose to capture the English Theatre and put it to Labour uses? I have put this question to many responsible labourites. Their answers may be analysed as follows:—

- (1) A Labour theatre is desirable.
- (2) Such a theatre would put an immense power of self-expression in the hands of Labour.
- (3) But it must not and cannot be run on Russian lines.
- (4) It must not rest on class war.
- (5) There is no money to establish such a Theatre.
- (6) There are no suitable Labour plays.
- (7) There is no present means of organising this Theatre.

My comments were as follows: (1) and (2) Agreed. (3) Absolute nonsense. The New Russian Labour Theatre can give an English Labour Theatre many things without coming under the ban of the Foreign Office. It can offer a model of practically a new Labour theatre that will serve the Labour Movement by making it known, intelligible and attractive to all. That will lead all thought from the opinion that the theatre is a place of idle entertainment and profit to the conclusion that it is a place of service. It can offer a method of clearing away the conventional middle-class theories of play-making, acting and setting, all the paraphernalia of the theatrical shop-keeper and profiteer. It can offer a system of voluntarism and economy which will remove the crushing tax put upon the theatre by professionalism, and the overwhelming expense attached to organising and working the conventional theatre. (4) My comment on this is that class war seems inevitable whether in or out of the Theatre. Look at the strange spectacle

presented by the present attempt at trade-unionisation of the theatrical profession. Here we have the middle-class theatrical profession engaged in civil war. The Actors' Association, who represent the rebels, are not engaged in kicking out the capitalist and handing over the playhouses to a professional trade union. They are engaged in bullying one section of the theatrical profession into accepting a set of rules made by another section of the same profession, which, in effect, leave the entire profession as much at the mercy of the big theatrical financial trusts as ever. (5) Practically no money is needed to establish a Labour Theatre. Such a Theatre can be established by goodwill, voluntarism and a full understanding of its aims, scope and method. (6) There is a very rich field of comedy and drama of true industrial working-class life waiting to be opened up by Labour itself. And the method of opening can be similar to that adopted in Russia where an important repertory of plays by working-men authors has been formed. (7) This overlooks the power of theatrical organisation latent in Labour. It assumes that because Labour has done nothing, is doing nothing, it can do nothing in this direction. The same sort of argument was used about women at one time. They had never voted, they had never sat in Parliament or on local bodies, and could do nothing if they did. What was the use of giving them the vote?

The great experiment in Russia tells another tale. There Labour has formed a great network of theatrical organisations of a voluntary and self-supporting character. It would occupy too much space to describe the method of organisation in full. Let me say here it is collective or group organisation. Groups are formed of workers, peasants and their friends. The members of each group meet and select suitable ideas concerning their own lives and labour for plays. Each idea is discussed in turn, and so the framework of a play emerges. Performances are given at which the framework is gradually filled in by the working-class actors. Gagging we call it in England. And so gradually each play reaches a fixed form and passes into the repertory. All the work necessary in the production and presentation of the plays is done by the members of the groups, their wives and families. For example, the wives and children make costumes when the players do not wear their own workaday clothes. The settings are generally of an industrial



character—field, factory and workshop structures and implements such as the players use daily.

This method could easily be followed in England. Instead of Labour using their clubs for billiard and draught playing purposes let them turn these places into little theatres. Let all these little theatres be affiliated and bound together by Labour aims. Let the method, like the aim, differ from that of the established theatre. Instead of middle-class dope, let there be an expression of the science and art of the industrial workers' mind and life. Instead of the morbid pathological analyses of the physical and mental states of middle-class degenerates, let there be Labour criticism of the horrors of the old life and a vision of the new one. As in Russia, gymnastics and sport will provide the foundation for a system of acting based upon physical health and agility necessary to express action with which to replace a system of inertia required to give effect to a torrent of words. The establishment and growth of an organisation of this kind would have the effect of undermining the capitalistic theatre which lives by money alone. And there would be other effects.

What are the likely results? What could this theatrical foundation do for Labour and their movement?

Provide the vast theatreless industrial population with a theatre for their own use. That is, a theatre which will develop on working-class lines and entirely apart from and independent of the middle-class commercial theatre and its influence.

Offer means of free self-expression in working-class dramatic representations and interpretations.

Provide a basis of associative unity in centres where Labour could tell people what they are, what they are doing, what they are going to do. Where they can express their mind, their memory, their aspiration, their work, their every-day heroism, their gigantic struggle for freedom against the individualistic forces of which they are the victims.

Exhibit Labour as an instrument of Truth and Justice.

In short it would be a field wherein could be scientifically organised an industrial theatrical army, so to speak, for the interpretation of the reclaiming of the body and soul which Labour has lost.

And what could Labour do for the Theatre?

Regenerate it.

# THE I.L.P. "PROGRAMME OF WORK"

By FRED LONGDEN

*(Rather more than six months ago the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P. issued a "Programme of Work" intended to give an immediate practical lead to the Labour Movement in the task of alleviating unemployment. Our contributor, who is a member of the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P., disagreed with the main lines of this "Programme" and therefore submitted a memorandum to the N.A.C. which we print below with the omission of one or two unimportant phrases.*

*The present position is that since the fall of the Labour Government no signs of a change in official policy on unemployment have become evident. We have to assume that the policy of the I.L.P. is still that laid down in the "Programme of Work." Labour in opposition is to be burdened by the fetters assumed while Mr. MacDonald's Government was in power.*

*Our contributor's proposals for an alternative policy are open to serious criticism, in our view, because they are out of relation to the forces that would oppose such a policy and the forces that could be roused to press it through. Even if in control of the land, mines, railways and banks a Labour Government of the future could not hope to establish and conduct successfully the "people's industries" outlined unless it was fully supported by a vigorous working-class movement throughout the whole of industry, whether socialised or in private hands, with the definite aim before it of working-class control of all economic power.*

*But it is the function of THE LABOUR MONTHLY to give expression to every serious effort to study Labour's policy in the light of the needs of the working-class movement as a whole, nationally and internationally. As a contribution to this end we print this memorandum.*

—EDITOR, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.)

**T**HE I.L.P. is forced to take up a dual attitude to unemployment at the present time. On the one hand, the Party has to do its utmost to support the Labour Government in finding a programme of "immediate work." On the other hand,

there is an urgent need to find a formula for the Socialist basis of "finding work," in the senses both of providing employment *now* and of making it secure and lasting.

On such grounds it might be submitted that, before rushing blindfolded into "educative" propaganda throughout the country, the rank and file ought to have been given an opportunity to utter a verdict upon a "Programme" which lends itself to the view that in the main the ideas it contains are wrongly inspired and the very antithesis of Socialism.

In order to ward off what might lead to universal derision of I.L.P. foresight and I.L.P. Socialism, I submitted, at the N.A.C. meeting of June 29, a motion (that found no seconder) to this effect:—

That the "Programme of Work" be referred back to the Unemployment Committee, and held up for a time if need be for a reconsideration of certain proposals, the character of which suggest:—

- (a) Subsidisation of tottering private enterprise, and
- (b) No guarantee either of decent wages or "immediate" or lasting employment.

The points of concern might be taken *seriatim*.

With regard to the giving of *assistance* to Russia *in order to gain* reciprocal advantages, the I.L.P. Committee would use the "sums standing in British banks to the credit of Tsarist and Provisional Governments" only if the "City" impose "unacceptable conditions." So long as terms be "acceptable" to the money-lords, therefore, the I.L.P. membership is advised to re-establish and develop Russian trade on behalf of unearned-increment takers as against a definite undertaking between the two governments.

But if you place trade upon its feet, says the Committee in effect, then you find "immediate work." Is that so? The provision of work is a mere incident—a bye-product, as it were—of lending and borrowing. It may or may not guarantee more work and security for the workers of Russia and Britain. The lenders will have much to say regarding the diversion of trade, the application of the moneys, and the proportion of "saving" to "spending" even for immediate purposes. Considerable parts of the loan will never see productive enterprise; and it will begin to bear interest as soon as it is lent. More surpluses diverted into the pockets of the idle

classes do not imply a proportionate amount of employment for the workers. A little work may be found to-day; it will collapse to-morrow.

The more sensible thing to do, even for present needs, would be for the State to guarantee credits to Russia *directly*. *The State, in the hands of a courageous Labour Government, could just as easily use its credit in its own interests as in the interests of the "City."*

The Committee recommends an extension of powers under the Facilities and Overseas Acts. But the only change suggested is that of "personnel" in the Advisory Committee! Surely we ought to demand that the State *itself* be responsible:—

- (a) For guaranteeing credit and safety for exchange of trade.
- (b) For protecting the common people by making provision to enforce a return of the moneys actually loaned in their name, and
- (c) For safeguarding the working conditions of labour.

*This is asking merely that the State should do for the people what it is now doing in the interests of private financiers.*

As a matter of fact under the Overseas Acts no loans are considered on behalf of a trader unless he can induce some bank to put forward his claim to the Overseas Department—a Department that works in secrecy—which promotes the "export of goods wholly or partly produced in Britain." The Trade Facilities Acts are concerned in granting loans when they are "calculated to promote employment in the United Kingdom"—as in the Sudan, Kenya or Mexico, perhaps!

*These Acts exist for little else but to guarantee private banks against losses they may incur in the course of their own banking operations. They contain no power to force any return to the State.*

State credit and security should guarantee State trading and returns. By the use of amounts equal to those lent to vested interests, the State, not being bent on mere profit-making, could provide more immediate continuity of employment and good wages than could private enterprise. That is, a given amount of money would "go further." And this would not mean the bolstering up of collapsing capitalism, as would an adoption of the "Programme."

As to the development of electrical power, the Committee is deeply concerned because the railway companies "are holding up large schemes." They are appealed to by a "Socialist" Party to "find work" in return for the £40,000,000 grant they received

from State coffers. In case of a refusal, then the Government is asked to "issue an ultimatum"—at which the Railway Companies could afford to smile in face of the "type" of Labour Government and the backing of the F.B.I. They would most likely demand a further grant—and get it!

The people are more apt to back up a demand for nationalisation of railways now than to understand a vague ultimatum; for are the railways not ripe? In any case, why *beg* work of the companies and probably lend more of the people's money in order to employ *some* of the people, fill up profits for the companies, entrench them for a much longer period, swell railway values by State "aid" and make "purchase" an unpardonable imposition of the kind that only a bloody revolution might be suggested as a means of throwing it off?

Even for "immediate" requirements, a general scheme of electrification should be an exclusively State obligation in every way. It should be built upon State credit, which, at one period during the great war, was worth £8,000,000 a day! Even if such "patriotism" were not forthcoming by request, then, as the *New Leader* said on June 20 (when discussing not "Socialist" methods, but what a Labour Government should do), it would be "fatal to let ourselves be paralysed by the fear of opposition."

*In addition, it does not follow that electrification would be a boon to the unemployed in the present regime at all.*

According to the *Daily Herald* of July 14, the Minister of Mines said: "Let there be no mistake—the greater the use of electricity under the existing social order, the greater the danger of unemployment." *There* lies the whole mistake of the I.L.P. Programme, wrapt in one phrase—"the existing social order."

Like inventions, new schemes of higher productivity need not benefit either employment or wages. Everything depends upon the ownership of the tools and the uses to which they are put. If the State assists the private employers to get cheaper power, it does not follow in the least that plant will be extended in order to lower prices, increase "effective" demand and "create" more employment. This is but the humbug used by capitalist economists. The newer methods are expected to result in economy in capital expenses, in materials, *in labour* and in the elimination of cut-throat

competition. The sole objective is to increase the return to the owners of fixed and circulating capital.

Yet the *New Leader* repeated the reactionary argument, on June 20, in discussing foreign railway improvements:—

“We shall find,” it says, “when at last the world’s demand for goods swells again, that our ability to supply it on competitive terms lags behind that of rivals, because we have delayed in this essential of a modern equipment . . . Cheaper production may be a necessity,” it concludes, “and the best defence for our present standard of wages may well be a national scheme which would provide industry with cheaper transport and cheaper power.”

So we are asked by the I.L.P. Programme-makers to struggle to provide private employers with cheaper methods of production, that they may compete against “our rivals” on the old lines of *laissez-faire* Liberalism! State aid is wanted to put Capitalism on its feet again without any corresponding guarantee of a decent standard of life for the workers. Exploitation may go on apace!

Really, is this “national scheme” to be a privately owned large-scale “syndicated industry” on approved American lines? If so, it might not cheapen freightage on goods any more than a syndicated Post Office would. “Modern equipment” on up-to-date capitalist lines may enable “our” industrialists to fight others more successfully, but it may not, after the initial spasm is over, prevent that “economy” which means more railmen out of work, longer hours, lower wages and rigged prices under a syndicated monopoly established by State aid.

The Socialist method would be for the State to use its own credit in building publicly owned and controlled generating stations all over the country, with localised distributive depots, guaranteeing a lasting control of the people’s money, and its return to establish further state enterprises, and to provide maintenance for workers who may be displaced by the changes and not immediately absorbed in other occupations.

This repetition of the I.L.P. Committee’s plea for Government “aid” for private enterprise is very distressing. It is not a jot different from the loaning of State funds to the Alkali Company of Kenya or the Sudan Plantation Company. There is no guarantee that the people will be rewarded by a more abundant supply of goods. The people’s wealth is “lent” in order that private enterprise may exploit the workers to greater effect. The same

applies to the giving of financial support for waterways, Channel Tunnel, docks and so on.

What Herbert Morrison, M.P., is reported to have said in the *Daily Herald* of July 12, in respect to Lloyd George's Report on *Coal and Power*, is applicable equally to the I.L.P. Report. "By State aid," says Mr. Morrison, "private capital is to be encouraged to develop on a national scale," which is much more than what he dubs a "compromise with capitalism." It is a matter of supporting vested interests that cannot stand upon their own legs.

*It is a stabilisation of capitalism!*

*It does not look towards Socialism.*

Next, we find that a "great loan" is to be floated to carry the programme on the "bold lines" necessary. This is but the National Liberal view: not a bold levy on property of some kind: a "bold" loan: another profit-coining incubus on the toilers. "The money ought not to be difficult to find," says the *New Leader* of June 20. The National Debt is cut down £40,000,000 a year by the sinking fund. Since this money is invested "mainly abroad," we learn, "the wiser course, as Mr. Keynes has argued, would surely be to provide alternative forms of investments which would employ their capital at home." Here we have the I.L.P. Report and its official organ in full harmony with the Liberal economist, Professor Keynes, and the National Liberal politician, Lloyd George. To set the wheels of the broken-down waggon of private enterprise going round again, we must look about for "alternative fields of investment" or see capital "go abroad."

The fallacy behind all this is the supposition that the State needs but to encourage and bolster up private enterprise in order to "find work." In the same way, the Government is mostly concerned about making safe the returns to those who contribute to the £40,000,000 loan to Germany, under the Dawes Report, in face of the preparedness to use German workers like "coolies" to meet reparations account and keep British workers on the streets.

Summarised, my criticism amounts to this: That the I.L.P., in its eagerness to satisfy the demand for "immediate" work, has produced a "Programme" that is the very antithesis of Socialism and lends itself to the entrenchment of a system that is naturally dying and is out of date.

It is a programme which *cannot* secure more immediate or future employment for the workers than direct *State* enterprise. It does not guarantee that, after State "aid" has more firmly established private monopolies, prices and wages would become more favourable to the dispossessed than at present. It leads mostly to the provision of "alternative safe investments" for bondholders when their own shekel-making system is beginning to fail them. It makes more difficult the task of "buying out" private monopolies that have been entrenched by State "aid." It does not recognise the fact that in providing work for the abnormal million of unemployed, it is the system and not the abnormality that is at fault.

And this Programme means that whilst the present phase of capitalism has collapsed and is quite incapable of re-entrenching itself, a "Socialist" party is making every effort to rehabilitate the system on the great and new lines of privately-owned octopus-like syndicates.

In a word, Socialists are lighting the way to the "slave state" through the darkness of capitalist breakdown and incompetence.

The Socialist alternatives previously indicated might be summarised also:—

(1) Instead of subsidising capitalism—whether as to the Sudan, or Railways, or Reparations—the State itself might find more lucrative immediate work, for the equivalent of the moneys needed, than by expending them on "aiding" profit-making to last a little longer. The State could provide the means of building up peoples' industries, whilst guaranteeing what private enterprise *cannot*: good wages, fair prices, a return of State expenditure, and more security of employment.

(2) Mr. Baldwin's admission as to the need for State organisation and command of wholesale imports from the Dominions might be developed. A beginning might be made by the setting up, for example, of State overseas trading departments in the Labour Governments of Britain, Russia, and Australia.

(3) A real State housing scheme, based upon war-time control of raw materials and ownership, itself well might absorb the unemployed. Such a scheme on a grand scale would spread employment throughout the industries of the country in a shortish time. The



same applies, in different degrees, to the land, mines and railways. Concentration on these monopolies will win universal interest more quickly than the smaller projects like Gretna, roadmaking and afforestation.

(4) The State could use its credit to a greater advantage by re-adapting the "Trade Facilities" Acts to the work of establishing undertakings on behalf of the people, rather than allowing them to exist merely to make investments safe for the profitmonger.

(5) If the Bank objected to being re-adopted as a completely State institution, then a courageous Labour Government ought to fight it. Particularly should the I.L.P. demand this *now*. The Swedish National Bank shows one way out of the morass. The Municipal Bank of Birmingham provides another. The war-time moratorium to private finance gives a further idea, and the Post Office Bank offers an immediate means to hand.

(6) In cases where workers are displaced by the re-organisation of industry, full maintenance should be provided when foresight has not provided alternative employment.

(7) And a decent maximum of hours and minimum of wages should be placed upon the Statute Book immediately. A readjustment of hours to a lesser number worked per man may not greatly increase the demand for labour. Workers would be absorbed in cases where shifts are worked and an increase in output is inconsiderable. But higher wages would increase "effective" demand.

It is with all due respect to my colleagues on the N.A.C. that I submit to them this memorandum.

# The World of Labour

	PAGE
GERMANY : Reichstag Elections .. .. .	52
THE UNITED FRONT : Anglo-Russian T.U. Relations ..	56
American Federation of Labour Counter-Mancœuvre .. .. .	60

## GERMANY

### Reichstag Elections

ON October 20, 1924, the Reichstag elected on May 4 of the same year was dissolved. This step had been precluded by a chronic governmental crisis, due to a peculiarly tortuous and long-drawn out series of intrigues, bargainings and negotiations between all the bourgeois Parties—including the Social-Democrats—in connection with the operation of the Dawes Plan.

The Social-Democrats conducted their election campaign by pretending that the great danger to the working class lay in the formation of a capitalist coalition Government, excluding the Social-Democrats—the so-called “Bourgeois Bloc” (*Bürgebloc*). Such a Government, they averred, would mean that the “distribution of the burden” of the Dawes Plan would fall most heavily on the workers. The Communist Party, on the other hand, pointed out that the acceptance by the Social-Democrats of the Dawes Plan, and the laws connected with it, made it inevitable that the burden should bear chiefly on the working class: they also remarked that it was none other than the Social-Democrats who had in fact so carefully prepared the way for the *Bürgebloc*, which they would certainly be eager to enter (as they entered the Great Coalition in 1923) if the capitalist Parties required them.

The Communist Party, basing its election campaign on an uncompromising opposition to the Dawes Plan, adopted as its own the “Gotha Programme” of immediate demands.<sup>1</sup>

A significant bourgeois comment on the rôle of the Social-Democrats was made by Herr Adam Roeder, an influential member of the Centre Party. He is reported as saying:—

The most elementary honesty compels us to admit that the Social-Democratic Party to-day is no longer the same as the old Party of Bebel. Neither its principles

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<sup>1</sup> For the full text of this programme, see THE LABOUR MONTHLY, December, 1924, Vol. 6, No. 12, pp. 756-7.

nor its tactics have anything in common with the ideas for which Bebel stood. By cutting itself off from the Communists it has confirmed the principle of the necessity of the State and of Property. Only a bourgeoisie so blind as the German could fail to see that the Social-Democratic Party is a conservative force in the social, political and economic fields.

During the election campaign the Communist Party was subjected to a reign of terror and carefully planned Governmental persecution which recalls pre-revolutionary days in Tsarist Russia, and of which it is difficult to write in cold blood.

Since May the persecution had been carried on, with increasing intensity through the election campaign, from mid-October onwards. A secret circular of the Minister of the Interior, Jarres, printed by the Berlin *Rote Fahne*, revealed the plan. This was, in effect, to cripple the Communist Party, not by formal suppression, but by using the existing State apparatus—the police, the courts, &c.—to imprison all the leading and active members of the Party, to close down the Communist Press, and so forth. Every day in the past months the German Labour Press has shown with what meticulous care this plan has been carried out.

In this task the two chief *aides* of Herr Jarres have been Herren Severing and Richter, the Prussian Minister of the Interior and the Berlin Prefect of Police. Both are Social-Democrats: and of the former a politician of the Centre is reported as saying:—

He has downed the Communists better than any Nationalist would have done.

In addition to this invaluable assistance from the State authorities the Social-Democrats also made great use of the semi-military, uniformed "Republican" volunteer force—the *Reichsbanner* (*Schwarz-rot-gold*), so-called from the Republican colours, black-red-gold—which has recently come into great prominence. This body is in effect a sort of Republican Fascisti: it has three million members, chiefly Social-Democrats, though it caters also for the other "Republican" parties, the Democrats and the Centre. Its direction is Social-Democratic: and one of its chief officers is the notorious General Daimling, who commanded the German expeditionary forces which completely annihilated the Herero tribes in South West Africa in 1904-1908.

Directly after the dissolution of the Reichstag, warrants were issued for the arrest of all the sixty-two Communist ex-Deputies: official denials of this were silenced by the discovery of the confidential *Police Bulletin* containing the photographs and descriptions of thirty-five of their number, including the outstanding figures such as Ruth Fischer, Thälmann, Rémélé, &c. Many arrests were effected, and those who escaped arrest were forced to remain in hiding and were unable to take part in open propaganda.

Further, the 8,000 political prisoners in Germany comprised many of the most active officials and propagandists of the Communist Party. The party itself estimated that, as a result of imprisonment and police persecution, some 10,000 of its best members were "immobilised" during the election campaign.

Moreover, the work of Communist agitation in the factories and workshops has been handicapped by wholesale victimisation, which has reached its height

since last May. Membership of a Communist nucleus or fraction, distribution of factory newspapers, standing on the Communist list for Factory Councils elections, are all grounds for immediate dismissal. Many local groups of the party, each with several hundred members, have no longer a single member in work. Many party districts have returned their membership still in work as only 30 per cent. of their total.

A few cases selected at random may serve to illustrate the workings of "class justice" in Germany to-day: it should be noted that they nearly all arose out of incidents during the revolutionary crisis of 1923—*i.e.*, workers arming themselves against the Fascist danger.

During the period from May to September the "Supreme Court for the Protection of the Republic," which sits at Leipzig, and three of whose judges are Social-Democrats, sentenced fifty-five revolutionary workers, including Communists, to 236 years' imprisonment, and fines aggregating 30,000 marks.

The same court awarded merely nominal sentences of one to two and a-half months and a small fine to the members of the most infamous of all the Monarchist White Guard terrorist units—the *Organisation Consul*. Most of the accused were immediately released.

Before the same court, at the end of September, eleven Communists from Württemberg were sentenced to thirty years' imprisonment, on the "evidence" of police spies alone.

In Hanover, where the provincial governor is the notorious Social-Democrat Noske, the "evidence" of one police spy was enough to award 110 years' imprisonment to thirteen Communists.

In Elberfeld eleven workers were sentenced to seventy-seven and a-half years' penal servitude for "disarming police"—in the revolutionary crisis of 1923—although the police themselves were unable to identify the accused: here again the "evidence" of a spy was sufficient.

At Essen ten women workers were sentenced to three months' imprisonment each, for having organised "Red Aid" soup kitchens during the miners' strike in the Ruhr in May, 1924.

On November 13 a monster trial of thirty-five Communists opened at Freiberg-in-Breisgau. The defendants were accused of "high treason"—*i.e.*, of arming themselves for self-defence against the Fascists in September, 1923. Judgment was not finally delivered till December 3, when the two principal defendants received sentences of eight and seven years' hard labour respectively, and the remainder sentences of five, four and three years.

Willy Münzenberg, the secretary of the Workers' International Relief, was indicted for "high treason"—the ground being a preface that he wrote three and a-half years ago to a book on the Red army.

A statistical computation shows that for the period from July 1 to November 25, 1924, 3,365 Communists were condemned to:—

Years	Months	
410	4	Hard Labour.
1,123	4	Imprisonment.
577	10	Detention in a fortress.
<hr/>	<hr/>	
2,101	6	TOTAL SENTENCES AWARDED

The Berlin correspondent of the *Observer* wrote (November 16, 1924):—

The Communists have nearly disappeared as an agitatory body, owing to the police keeping the brains of the Party under lock and key.

It is instructive to note that though during 1924 a total of 18,000 members of the Communist Party were proceeded against for political offences (and many convictions secured, as the above figures show), not one member of the Social-Democratic Party was proceeded against, much less convicted. In 1904, sentences of forty-three years two months' imprisonment were awarded against Social-Democrats for political offences: in 1911, twenty-six years one month.

Polling day for the Reichstag elections, as also for the elections to the Prussian Landtag, was on December 7.

The votes received by the principal parties were as follows (number of deputies in brackets):—

		1924 (December)	1924 (May) <sup>1</sup>
Communists .. ..	2,698,956	(45)	3,728,089 (62)
Social-Democrats .. ..	7,859,433	(131)	5,991,547 (100)
Democrats .. ..	1,915,187	(32)	1,661,425 (28)
Centre .. ..	4,117,481	(69)	3,901,087 (65)
People's Party .. ..	3,046,493	(51)	2,646,747 (44)
Bavarian People's Party .. ..	1,120,752	(18)	941,982 (16)
Nationalists .. ..	6,180,281	(103)	5,764,628 (96)
Völkisch (Fascists) .. ..	901,601	(14)	1,922,626 (32)

The Fascists are completely eclipsed: but the Communist collapse prophesied by the Social-Democrats has not materialised. To maintain 75 per cent. of the poll of last May, in face of persecution, of the prevalent illusions regarding the Dawes Plan, and of the apathy and indifference of the masses, coupled with a certain natural impatience with parliamentary shams, must be counted a great achievement.

After Bismarck's famous Anti-Socialist Law of 1878 the Social-Democratic vote slumped 36 per cent., as against the 27 per cent. slump in the Communist vote to-day. The figures were:—

1877 .. .. .	493,288
1881 .. .. .	311,961

The parallel is a sufficiently close one to be of interest.

The most considerable Communist losses were in the Ruhr and the Rhineland, where their gains last May were the most spectacular.

	Communists		Social-Democrats	
	1924 (December)	1924 (May)	1924 (December)	1924 (May)
Ruhr .. ..	155,390	267,018	317,410	204,513
Rhineland .. ..	407,204	545,461	559,909	323,099

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<sup>1</sup> For comparison with the 1920 results, see THE LABOUR MONTHLY, June, 1924 Vol. 6, No. 6, pp. 378-379.

The Communist Party still maintains an actual lead over the Social-Democrats in the important industrial areas of Upper Silesia, Prussian Saxony and Düsseldorf (East)—an important Rhineland centre.

	Communists		Social-Democrats	
	1924 (December)	1924 (May)	1924 (December)	1924 (May)
Upper Silesia	65,746	129,731	.. 36,238	26,009
Prussian Saxony	163,193	184,075	.. 134,568	111,295
Düsseldorf (East)	209,183	239,846	.. 153,690	109,865

In Berlin the results were as follows:—

	1924 (December)			1924 (May)	
Communists .. .. .	..	..	.. 216,856	..	225,082
Social-Democrats .. .. .	..	..	.. 367,720	..	238,666

Two districts in Berlin showed a Communist increase.

In Prussia as a whole, which includes all the most important industrial areas—except Saxony proper and Thuringia—the Communist vote was 2,143,000 to the Social-Democratic 4,419,000.

The elections to the Prussian Landtag—the first since 1921—showed a Communist gain and a Social-Democratic loss.

	Votes				Deputies	
Communists .. .. .	..	..	..	.. 1,762,467	47	previously 27
Social-Democrats .. .. .	..	..	..	.. 4,557,429	116	„ 136

## THE UNITED FRONT

### Anglo-Russian Trade Union Relations

IN July, 1924, the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress received an invitation from the Central Council of the Soviet Trade Unions to send a fraternal delegation to Russia. This invitation crossed with a reciprocal invitation from the Trades Union Congress to the Soviet Trade Unions, as a result of which a Russian fraternal delegation, headed by Tomsky, attended the Hull Congress in September.

On September 24, the General Council appointed its fraternal delegation—also by way of being a Commission of Inquiry—to the Sixth Congress of the Soviet Trade Unions. The delegation comprised A. A. Purcell (President of the I.F.T.U. and Chairman of the T.U.C), John Bromley, Alan Findlay, Ben Tillett, Herbert Smith, John Turner, and Fred Bramley (Secretary).

The Soviet Trade Union Congress was held from November 11-18. It was attended by over 1,000 delegates, representing 6,500,000 organised workers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the general business of the Congress, reference should be made to the full report published in a Special Supplement to the *Workers' Weekly* (December 5, 1924).

Zinoviev, speaking for the Russian Communist Party, emphasised the need for the unity of the Trade Union Movement in face of the new wave of reaction throughout the world.

His words were echoed by Purcell, who, speaking as the first British delegate, said:—

In conveying to your Congress the warmest greetings of the British Trades Union Congress, I congratulate you upon the colossal success of your work on behalf of the working classes of the whole world. I speak with personal knowledge of the magnitude of your success, as I was a member of the British Labour Delegation to Russia in 1920.

The appearance of the workers, their dress, their looks, all bear witness to the enormous change which has taken place. Comrades, you have carried through a mighty work. You are the directors of the Soviet Republic. You are the workers in the Trade Union Movement of Russia. You have carried through this work in the interest of the workers of the world. It is not easy to enumerate everything that you have done. May we live to see changes such as these in England ! . . .

I share to the full the opinion of Comrade Zinoviev that the time has come when the real unity of the Trade Union Movement on an international scale must be accomplished. The unity must be a real, and not merely a formal one. It must be based on the principles of opposition to capitalism. The first and the main thing, from the standpoint of the British trade unions, is to bring both parties together, in order that there may be a discussion, not to seek a formula, but to arrange a conference without any preliminary conditions.

To leave the Russian trade unions outside any international organisation would be like playing Hamlet without the chief character. . . .

Our sincere desire is to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Russian trade unions under one and the same international banner. There are not and there cannot be "foreigners" in the working class. It matters not where the working class may be, or under what condition the working class may live, our duty, our obligation, is to unite all our forces for the destruction of capitalism.

Ben Tillett and Fred Bramley followed, the former with a remarkable eulogy of Lenin.

The tenor of Purcell's speech was such as seriously to alarm the Right Wing clique in the I.F.T.U., more especially their chief support, the German Social-Democratic leaders. Indeed, the Berlin *Vorwärts*, the notorious central organ of the German S.D.P., at once declared that the report of Purcell's speech—of which the substance had been made public in England by the Moscow correspondent of the *Daily Herald*—was a "fabrication." Immediately Purcell, in a special message from Moscow, confirmed the accuracy of the report. *Vorwärts* being unrepentant, a full transcript, in both English and German, from the original stenographic report of the speech was dispatched direct to that journal. The transcript was signed by Purcell as a proof of its authenticity. However, *Vorwärts* contented itself with publishing merely garbled extracts from the report, adding the comment that there must have been mistakes in the shorthand.

#### Committee for International Trade Union Unity

Throughout the Congress conversations were proceeding between the British delegation and the Congress presidium: and the final agreement to

set up an Anglo-Russian Committee for International Trade Union Unity was communicated to the Congress in a special report by the chairman, Tomsky. The Congress adopted unanimously a resolution in the following terms:—

The Sixth Congress of Soviet Trade Unions considers it its duty to meet half-way the steps taken by the Hull Congress of the British Trade Unions, and is glad to realise that by its decision it will be satisfying the desires of the overwhelming majority of the British workers, according to the declaration of the delegation of British trade unionists at present in Moscow.

In order to co-ordinate the activities of the British and Russian trade union movements in fighting for unity, the Sixth Congress gives full powers to the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, after negotiations on this matter with the General Council of the British Trade Unions, to form an Anglo-Russian (U.S.S.R.) Commission.

The Congress proposes that the All-Russian Central Council should immediately set to work to carry this into effect, while taking into consideration the Congress's earnest desire that the said Commission should be formed not later than January, 1925.

Also the Congress charges the All-Russian Central Council to take all other steps which it finds necessary in the interests of the unity of the international trade union movement.

The Sixth Congress notes with pleasure the declaration of the British Trade Union Declaration at present in Moscow to the effect that it considers this step expedient, and that it will defend and advocate it before the British trade unions and their General Council. In such a co-ordination of the activities of the British and Russian (U.S.S.R.) trade unions for the attainment of unity, the Sixth Congress sees a guarantee of the success of the international unification of the trade unions, and of the strengthening of fraternal relations between the workers of Great Britain and the workers of the U.S.S.R.

The Congress holds that in following this example the trade union organisations of other countries will, on their part, manifest the necessary activity for the realisation of unity.

In his report Tomsky made clear the position of the Red International of Labour Unions. He said:—

Important as the coming together of the British and Russian trade unions, this *rapprochement* alone will not settle the business. We are fully aware of the fact that there can be no talk of genuine international unity of the trade union movement unless the German, French, Italian, Czecho-Slovakian, Polish and Austrian trade unions, and the trade unions of other European as well as non-European countries, are also brought to take up the fight for the establishment of unity.

I have to state also, on the basis of a personal letter received by me from the president of the British Delegation, Comrade Purcell, that they, likewise, conceive of unity as a unification of all trade union organisations, whether affiliated to any international, or standing quite apart from this or that international.

Our trade unions in the U.S.S.R are a basic part of the Red International of Labour Unions. It must be understood that our trade unions consider as binding on themselves all the decisions of the Red International of Labour Unions, which decisions are also ours. We are firmly convinced that real unification of the trade unions on an international scale can only come about at a world unity congress of trade unions convened by the Red International



of Labour Unions and the Amsterdam International on a basis worked out by both these organisations.

The problem of the unity of the international trade union movement cannot be settled by settling the mutual relationships between the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions and the Amsterdam International. Unity will only be possible when all organisations embraced by the Red International of Labour Unions take part in the formation of a new united Trade Union International.

That is why we, who have undertaken these measures for closer contact between the trade unions of the U.S.S.R. and those of Britain, cannot—and it must be distinctly understood that we cannot—forget for one moment our solidarity with those trade union organisations of Germany, France, Czechoslovakia, Italy, the Balkans, Poland and other countries which are struggling in complete agreement with our ideas.

Bearing in mind that the Red International of Labour Unions has often declared its readiness to dissolve, provided a world Congress of trade unions (at which the trade union organisations now affiliated to the R.I.L.U. and to the Amsterdam Federation were represented) be convened on a just basis, we in the name of the trade unions of the U.S.S.R. declare our complete solidarity with these declarations of the Red International of Labour Unions.

Losovsky, the General Secretary of the R.I.L.U., also made an important statement on the Unity Committee agreement:—

An actual *rapprochement* between the unions of these two countries (Russia and England) will be of tremendous importance in the creation of genuine unity on the world Labour movement. Why? Because the millions of the Russian unions are the basis of the R.I.L.U., while the British unions are the basis of Amsterdam. And when these two most important sections act together, it means a serious turn in the policy of the world Labour movement. It means the beginning of a new era, a new epoch, it means a starting point for the real creation of organic unity. . . .

This preliminary agreement, which is still subject to the ratification of the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress, is of tremendous significance, both from the point of view of principle and practice. It shows that where there is a will for unity, where there is a desire to join the various detachments of the working class, it can be achieved, despite all the lies spread by the Reformist Press against the Bolsheviks and against our revolutionary movement.

The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee represents a small step, but still a step in the direction of a real united International. We think of creating in the future other similar committees, we think of setting up a whole chain of similar committees to embrace and bring nearer to each other the workers of the various countries, to overstep the old boundaries, the boundaries of the State, the boundaries of the trade unions, to weld together the various sections formally belonging to different Internationals. We think of the creation of such committees and commissions of unity as a step towards the calling of a Unity Congress, where the workers of various leanings are represented, come out with their own points of view, and then declare: irrespective of who has the majority we remain within the united international, and submit to its discipline in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, reserving the right to conduct an ideological struggle and defend our views within the Labour Movement.

The British delegation has subsequently visited the Ukraine and Georgia. It has investigated the affair of the forged "Zinoviev letter," and has dispatched

two special messages to the *Daily Herald* reaffirming the falseness of that notorious "document." It has issued a statement supporting the Soviet power in Georgia and condemning the Menshevik counter-revolutionaries. Purcell is reported as publicly approving of the "Hands off Egypt" societies which have been started in Russia.

It is natural that the delegation should be attacked with some vigour in the bourgeois Press: and it is interesting that this attack should have been begun by the Liberal *Manchester Guardian*, whose Labour correspondent (November 25, 1924) wrote angrily of the "wild words" and "dangerous policy" of the delegation, which he ascribed to "vague sentiment," and declared that it would be "interesting to have the comments of Mr. Thomas, Mr. Clynes and other leaders of the great trade unions on the efforts of Mr. Purcell and his colleagues." The same writer took it upon himself to declare *ex cathedra* that there "can be no reconciliation" between Amsterdam and Moscow. The attack was pressed in the *Daily News* (November 28, 1924, and December, 13, 1924), which, quoting from official—*i.e.*, Right Wing—Amsterdam sources, sounded the alarm against these "sinister" proposals for a United Front. The *Daily Telegraph* was particularly disturbed by the delegation's protest against the present White Terror in Esthonia, which was apparently the culminating point in their (and especially Purcell's) "almost incredible record of treasonable mischief" (December 12, 1924). *The Times*, the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Mail* also joined in the chorus, the last-named reproducing in facsimile from *Izvestia* the signatures and messages of greeting contributed by the members of the delegation. Of course, the Social-Democratic organs abroad are at one with the British bourgeois Press in their attacks on the delegation.

Significantly enough, the *New Leader*, official organ of the I.L.P., is to be found in this same Liberal-Reactionary-Social-Democratic camp, for its Parliamentary correspondent has written (December 12, 1924):—

What is the General Council delegation really doing and saying! It is certainly creating incredible mischief on the Continent, where trade union and Socialist papers are referring to Mr. Purcell's "irresponsible and untimely statements" and to the necessity of "finishing with his doings." Anyhow, Ben Tillett, as the herald of the social revolution, is too funny!

#### American Federation of Labour Counter-Manceuvre

The Forty-fourth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labour opened at El Paso (Texas) on November 17, 1924. The following day, the Hearst Press correspondent at El Paso wired that in "private conferences" with the fraternal delegates from Great Britain, Canada, Germany and Mexico the leaders of the A.F. of L. were discussing plans for "co-ordinating the activities" of international Labour bodies throughout the world. Out of these conferences, it was stated, the summoning of a world Labour conference was expected to come, possibly during the present winter.

It was further stated that the establishment of some sort of a world union of Labour organisations under the guidance of the A.F. of L. was the achievement particularly desired by Samuel Gompers, the A.F. of L. President, before he retired from office.

Commenting on this news in the Chicago *Daily Worker*, Wm. Z. Foster, the well-known American Communist leader, wrote:—

This indicates that Gompers is finding it necessary, as a part of his regular programme of furthering the interests of American imperialism, to get into the European Labour Movement. This necessity arises from the fact that the invasion of Europe by American imperialism, of which the Dawes Plan is the first big step, requires that Gompers and Company, who stand at the head of the Labour department of American imperialism, throw their restraining influence into the European Labour Movement which is stirring with revolutionary ferment. . . .

It is unlikely that Gompers will form any new international. . . . But it is his first manoeuvre to re-enter the International Federation of Trade Unions, known as the Amsterdam International.

However, Gompers will seek before entering Amsterdam to drive it to the Right and to prevent the admission of the 6,500,000 revolutionary unionists of Russia. . . . He will seek to force Amsterdam to drop even its Socialist phraseology, and to adopt, as a concession to him, even more reactionary policies.

But once inside of Amsterdam, Gompers will have three objectives. First, to organise and strengthen the Right Wing against the growing Left Wing. Second, to prevent the admission to Amsterdam of the revolutionary unions of Soviet Russia and the unity of the Amsterdam organisation under the Red International of Labour Unions. Third, as a matter of customary adherence to the policy of the American Government, Gompers will make war relentlessly on Soviet Russia.

In a later interview with the special correspondent of the *Daily Worker*, both A. B. Swales, the first British fraternal delegate, and Herr Grassmann, German fraternal delegate, denied that such "private conferences" took place. Mr. Swales is further reported as stating that Amsterdam might drop some of its "objectionable features" in order to secure the affiliation of the A.F. of L., but he specifically refused to admit that one of these "objectionable features" was the affiliation of the Russian trade unions.

The speech of Mr. Swales, as British fraternal delegate, appears to have been much to the distaste of the Convention. He said:—

We have nothing to fear or lose from Russian workers. They are workers, the same as we are. I have faith they will solve their problems. We will help them and they will help us. We are going together for the advancement of Labour all over the world.

Another version of the speech substitutes, for the last sentences:—

We are coming together, not for Bolshevism, as parodied in the Capitalist Press, but for brotherhood.

The official organ of the Convention (the *El Paso Labor Advocate*) described the "bitter resentment" and "amazement" of the delegates at this speech, which "was the most unfortunate diplomatic blunder in a long time."

Mr. Swales also declared against the expulsion of Left Wing militants from the unions.

"We allow them," he said, "to come in and take their share in the movement. To expel them plays the employers' game, and would have hopelessly divided us."

Mr. C. T. Cramp, the second British fraternal delegate, praised the Labour Government and particularly the Snowden Budget. He attacked the Communist Party of Great Britain for promoting strikes that led to defeat and for causing "disruption." He declared that if the Communist ideal were realised :—

The world would be a human menagerie and brute law would rule.

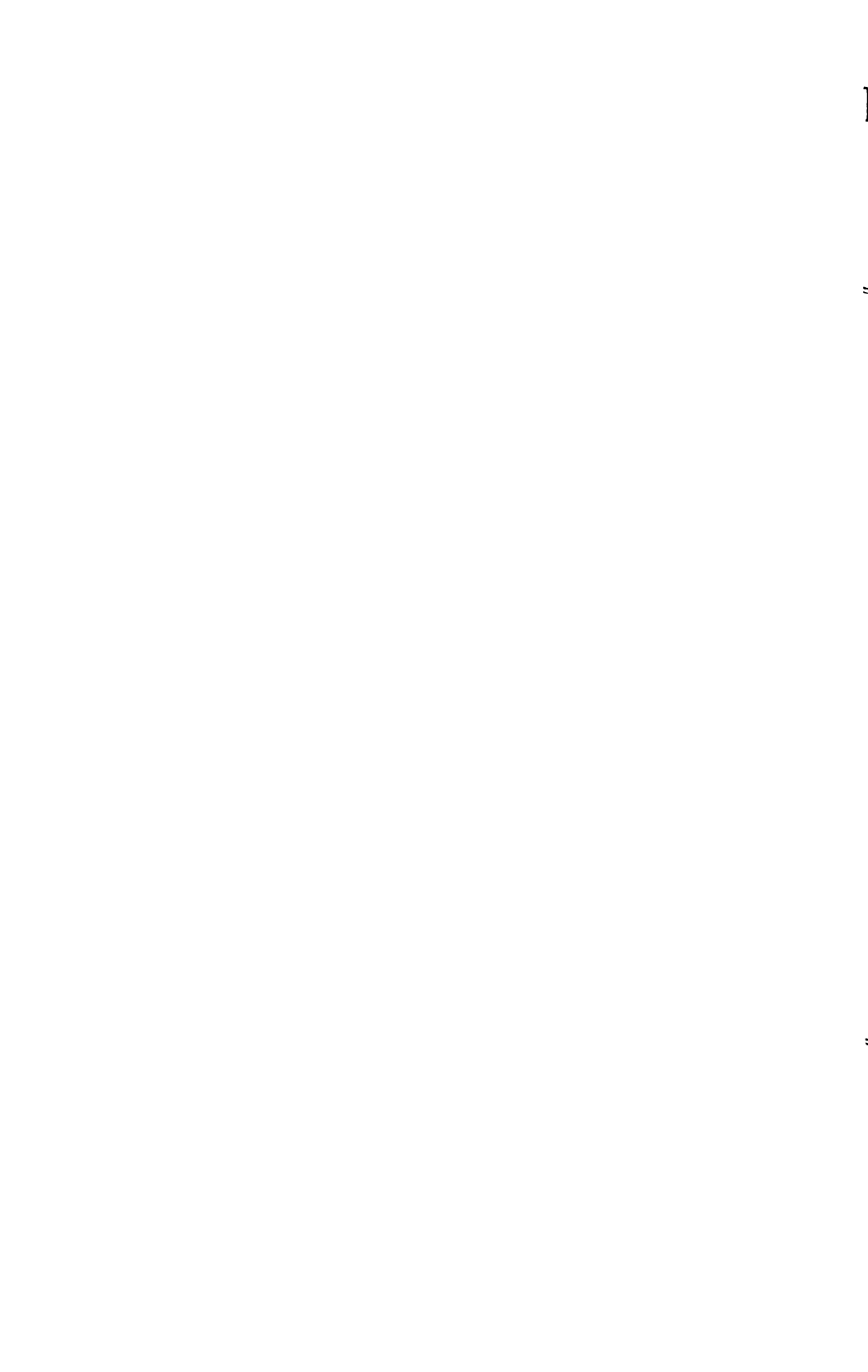
He also declared that "it is a servile mentality that worships a dictatorship," that Communism was "rapidly fading" and that "revolution, in order to justify itself, must make for national wellbeing and freedom," which the Russian revolution had hitherto failed to do. He supported the recognition of Russia.

The further developments of the reported move for the re-entry of the A.F. of L. into the Amsterdam International—now that Mr. Gompers' death has supervened—remain to be seen. The question has been referred to the Executive Council of the A.F. of L. for action. Herr Grassmann has invited the A.F. of L. to send fraternal delegates to the next Congress of the German Trade Union Federation (A.D.G.B.).

The Convention voted down a resolution on Russian recognition, reaffirmed the traditional "non-partisan" political policy and decided to support the new plan for the organisation of "citizens' military camps"—in effect, a form of universal military training.

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Three Years' Hard Labour.* An Address delivered to the Irish Society of Oxford University on October 31, 1924. By Kevin O'Higgins, T.D., Vice-President of the Executive Council and Minister for Justice of the Irish Free State. With a Foreword by Eoin MacNeill, T.D., Minister for Education. (Dublin, 6d.)
- The Case for Socialism.* By Fred Henderson. (I.L.P., 2s. 6d. ; paper, 1s.)
- Working-Class Education.* By F. J. and Winifred Horrabin. (The Labour Publishing Company. Cloth, 2s. 6d., paper, 1s.)
- Lettres aux Membres du Parti Communiste.—I. Avant le Congrès de Janvier. Quelques Documents.* (P. Monatte, Paris. 50 c.)
- Capitalist Combination in the Coal Industry.* By D. J. Williams. (The Labour Publishing Company, Ltd.)



# THE LABOUR MONTHLY

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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 67

### *THE RESTORATION OF EUROPE*

Trade Union Unity and the Class Struggle -    „    79  
By R. PALME DUTT

The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald    „    104  
—II.  
By “U.D.C.”

Diddling them with Dawes - - -    „    118  
By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

The World of Labour - - - -    „    121  
The United Front

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*New Europe—How Restoration Works—More Restoration—  
MacDonald's Peace—Is it Peace?—Who is Responsible?—  
Practical Foolishness—Chamberlain the Heir of Mac-  
Donald—MacDonald's Bootblack—United Front  
from Price to Baldwin—The Attack on the  
Revolution—Second International for  
Intervention—A Warning*

**"If such credits be obtained for more than temporary purposes, it would result in the economic slavery of Europe to the Western Hemisphere, and the ultimate end would be war again."**

HOOVER (now American Secretary of State for Commerce) in July, 1919, on the proposal to finance Europe by credits.

**I**F ever it was necessary to sound the alarm on the period ahead, that time is now. The work of the "pacifists" is completed, and the New Europe which they were the instruments to create is here. The workers of Europe have been drugged and tricked into accepting the Dawes Report and signing the document of their own slavery. The financial subjection and colonisation of Europe is half-way to completion. The world conflict of Britain and America is already coming into the open. After the successful chloroforming of the workers by the democratic epoch, the strongest reactionary Governments since the war are in power in every country. Only the Soviet Republic, where alone the workers have pursued consistently the line of the class struggle, remains unbroken in the hands of the workers. Therefore to-day all the capitalist forces are openly gathering and organised for the strongest concerted attack on the Workers' Republic. Now or never, they calculate, is their opportunity to end once and for all with the revolution. The supreme struggle against the workers in Russia, against the awakening masses in China and India and North Africa, is at hand. The workers of Europe are wholly unprepared. The Second International, which prepared the ground, is now actually assisting in the campaign. The British working class, whose unity with the Russian working class is the most hopeful

sign in the present situation, are not mobilised for action. The slogan of International Trade Union Unity has raised the issue: but the British Delegation has lost precious time by the delay of their report and by allowing themselves to be silenced. Meanwhile the military preparations proceed with fatal dispatch.

**T**HE Restoration of Europe was a noble phrase. It is still held up as the greatest work of MacDonald. To-day the meaning of that Restoration should be clear to all. From the outset those who opposed the policy of MacDonald argued that his Restoration was in fact a Restoration of Capitalism. To-day the Restoration of Capitalism in fact is manifest on the backs of the workers in every country. Two minor examples can be taken to illustrate the process that is universal. The first is Austria. Austria was the first country to be "restored" and "stabilised" by the beneficent intervention of the League of Nations amid general applause. The last report of the League of Nations Commissioner reports the following results: (1) large increase in unemployment; (2) cost of living "rising rather rapidly" and wages well behind; (3) exports "large increase"; (4) bank deposits "more than trebled." Thus lower standards and unemployment for the workers; big exports and profits trebled in a month for the bankers and foreign bondholders: this is the meaning of "stabilisation." To this it is only necessary to add reports from the recent Press of "corruption . . . financial scandals . . . widespread unemployment, suffering, suicides, clashes, strikes" to complete the picture of "Restoration" in a small country, where the larger international complications are absent.

**T**HE second example is Esthonia. Esthonia represents another aspect of the process of Restoration. Six months ago Esthonia was travelling towards closer relations with the Soviet, and the old counter-revolutionary rigour had diminished. Then a change took place. A Communist round-up was carried through (in Esthonia the working class, organised in the trade unions, is Communist); 149 were arrested and put on "trial," and the character of the trial was revealed by the fact that when one of the accused, a Communist deputy, protested in a single sentence against the character of the Court, he was on the spot

taken outside and shot for "contempt of court." This provocation succeeded in driving several hundred Esthonian workers to a desperate revolt, practically without arms and quelled in a few hours. The excuse was now established for an immediate military dictatorship, mass executions, arrests and imprisonments. The regime that has been established has been faithfully described by Miss Susan Lawrence in the *Daily Herald* (Miss Susan Lawrence did not add, however, that the Esthonian Social Democrats, section of the Second International, are Coalition members of the Government of White Terror responsible). What is behind all this? Two facts may be quoted. (1) According to a written answer of the Board of Trade, the following arms have been exported from Britain to Esthonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland between May, 1923, and October, 1924: 7,000,000 loaded cartridges, 339 machine guns, 35,000 military rifles and 19,640 swords, bayonets, &c. (2) The *Main*, of December 30, declares:—

The British diplomatic representatives are not idle. They are causing the Bolsheviks to be expelled from Albania, at the same time as they are inspiring in Jugoslavia a policy of violent repression against the Croat Peasants' Party . . . England will certainly achieve its aims, which are to create a solid anti-soviet barrier from the Black Sea to Poland. The British Legations have been equally busy in uniting the Baltic States. It is clear to all that small States such as Esthonia and Latvia would never dare to proceed to the mass executions of Russian propagandists if they did not feel themselves sustained by British promises and British squadrons.

This is another side of Restoration—complete even to the rôle of Social Democracy.

**W**HAT of the Dawes Report, the centrepiece of Restoration and the crowning work of MacDonald (which even Price accepts "under protest")? What is the Dawes Report? It is officially described as a means of extracting reparations from Germany. It is unofficially defended by the Labour Party as the best available means of settling the reparations conflicts between the Allies and of pacifying Germany. It is certainly none of these things. It is demonstrably unworkable as a means of extracting reparations: for it presupposes the payment out from Germany of £125,000,000 a year, which can only be

paid (since Germany lacks gold, foreign securities or colonies) by excess of exports to that value. But before the war, when German industrial production and foreign trade was at its height, Germany had an excess of imports of over £70,000,000. To-day, with the most-favoured-nation treaties on all sides breaking down barriers, the adverse balance of trade is shooting up: 59,000,000 marks in September, 244,000,000 in October, 405,000,000 in November—this last the equivalent of £240,000,000 a year. Finally, if even German production, by the sweating of the workers, could be forced up to the necessary height, the world market, so far from having room for more goods, is even incapable of absorbing existing production or power of production. But, indeed, the Report contemplates this, when it allows that the money may accumulate in Germany up to £250,000,000 for credit for the expansion of German industry. What follows from this? That the Report is purely and simply an instrument for establishing the control of foreign capital in Germany and subjecting the working class to intense exploitation. The German working class, which came near to revolution in 1923 alongside the Russian workers, is to be crushed and held down in chains. This is the only "pacification" of MacDonald (unless he claims as a triumph of pacification the temporary union of British and French Imperialism, which is to-day bearing its ominous fruits under Chamberlain). It cost 10,000 of the best German workers in prison or under arrest to establish the Dawes Report. It has tremendously strengthened the Nationalist forces, and produced a Monarchist vote of 13,000,000 at the elections. It means the certainty of tremendous internal conflicts in Germany, and of terrible repercussions on the conditions of British workers. The time is visibly at hand when the workers of England, France and Germany will curse the leaders who drew their necks into the noose of this Report, which is indeed the centrepiece of the Capitalist Restoration.

**N**OR has it brought Peace—the final fragment of defence of MacDonald and the pacifists for their actions. On the contrary, the conflict of the imperialist victors, of Britain, France and America, over the spoils, is all the more intense now that the victim has been scientifically laid prostrate. France is

concerned to dominate German heavy industry and build upon its union with her own the basis of her world power. It is not yet clear how far she has succeeded in her aims, but it looks as if the basis of the Franco-German Steel Trust is in fact already laid. Britain, on the other hand, regards any such possibility with alarm, and Lord Furness has already advocated the building of a British Steel Trust in opposition. The overtures for an International Steel Trust have revealed that, whether they succeed or fail, any such developments can only be the cover for the further counter-manceuvring of the rivals. Britain is apprehensive of the whole development of German industry, and anxious to use the provisions of the Dawes Report mainly for the shackling of German industrial development by heavy freight charges, the mortgage on all industrial enterprises, &c. From the British point of view the development of German agriculture (left conspicuously free from the burdens of the Dawes Report) would be the most desirable, leaving Germany as a market to be flooded with British manufactured goods under the favourable Trade Treaty. (A series of articles advocating this has appeared in the *Financial Times*.) Britain's stay at Cologne represents the maintenance of her stake in the scramble so long as possibilities are still dangerous; and the official German Press has openly declared that the British campaign against German armaments is simply the cover of a campaign against German manufactures. But British hostility to German industrial development is directly contrary alike to the policy of France and of America. (It is noticeable that at the very same time that *The Times* is directing its campaign heavily against Krupps, a successful loan to Krupps is being floated in New York.) America's interest in Europe is an investing interest: Germany represents for America a profitable industrial investing ground with cheap labour like China, only of a highly developed modern type—a type not previously known in the market, being the first of the " Powers " to fall a victim in the cannibal war of Capitalism's last stage. It is not surprising that America wishes to spread the principle of the Dawes Report, and talk is spread of a Dawes Report for France, a Dawes Report for Russia, a Dawes Plan for China, until the imagination of the *Manchester Guardian* beholds—

a vision of Europe working under a system of financial committees

whose duty it would be to transmit across the Atlantic a yearly tribute limited only by the machinery to transmit it.

Truly the Peace of MacDonald is very far from being a workers' peace.

**W**HO is responsible for the Dawes policy which is now unfolding its ruinous results over Europe? It is necessary to ask this question, because, as those results become increasingly clear, the attempt is increasingly made to disclaim responsibility, and so to continue to mislead the workers when they are awakening to opposition and to repudiation of the whole policy. In official Labour circles it is contended that the beneficial peace-giving effects of Mr. MacDonald's policy have been thrown away and destroyed by the Conservative Imperialist policy of Mr. Chamberlain. This is simply contrary to the facts. The Dawes policy was inaugurated under Baldwin and Curzon, carried through under MacDonald and is now being executed under Baldwin and Chamberlain. There was never a more perfect example of that Continuity of British Foreign Policy which Curzon, MacDonald and Chamberlain equally preach. The same applies to the policy of friendship with French Imperialism against the defeated and colonial nations. The only break has been over the policy towards the Soviet Union, and here the break was not with the policy of MacDonald (did he not himself write the note over the forged Zinoviev letter which Chamberlain found so useful for the break?) but with the working-class policy forced on MacDonald. The same applies to the policy in Egypt, where Mr. Chamberlain was able to quote from the MacDonald Note in defence of every point, and the Labour Opposition case was in consequence so weak that the unhappy Mr. Trevelyan, who was put up, could only say that "though they all wished the same ends, he was sure a Labour Government would not have sent such a Note." The same applies to the policy in India, where the coercion measures were promulgated under Olivier. A new stage in the evolution of British foreign policy has certainly been reached with the Secretaryship of Chamberlain, but it is the logical sequel of the policy of MacDonald.

ON the other hand, Price from another angle defends the Dawes policy (in an article in last month's LABOUR MONTHLY) on the grounds that "I saw no other practical policy before the Labour Government, having regard to the relationship of class forces in this country, France and Germany, than to let it go through under protest," and that this was better than "bashing one's head against a brick wall by a policy of pure denunciation and destructive criticism of the Dawes Report." On this argument, which reveals a whole political outlook, it is only necessary to make this comment. Substitute for the Dawes Report Capitalism (the Dawes Report is simply the most modern form of Capitalism, *i.e.*, Imperialism in its culminating stage). What do we get? "Destructive criticism" of Capitalism is useless. Why "bash one's head against a brick wall"? Better advise the workers to "accept it under protest" and concentrate on "practical" constructive proposals. Here we get the very root of reformism and opportunism. Apply the same argument to the war as the position was in 1914. Why "bash one's head against a brick wall"? We cannot stop the war "under the existing relationship of class forces." Therefore it is futile to indulge in "pure denunciation and destructive criticism" (as the foolish Lenin is doing), calling on the workers to rise against the war. On the contrary, we should tell the workers to "let it go through under protest" and concentrate on a few constructive proposals to improve conditions for the workers. But this argument precisely was used by any number of Socialists during the war who are now denounced as War Socialists. Precisely under this plea, "having regard to the relationship of class forces," they defended their position. Precisely under this plea, "having regard to the relationship of class forces," every betrayal of the working class is defended by Social Democrats of the Second International. (The argument, of course, of "the relationship of class forces" certainly never existed in the minds of, or actuated, MacDonald, Haldane, Chelmsford, &c., who were simply carrying out bourgeois Foreign Office policy amid the applause of the bourgeoisie; it is simply a polite "socialist" fiction out of Price's own imagination to reconcile himself to his support of MacDonald's non-socialist policy: but the sophistical character of the argument need not concern us here.)

**B**UT the argument is not only false in principle, it is false in fact. The Dawes Plan was not only carried through by the Second International, but its carrying through was directly made possible only by the support of the Second International. Consider the position. In Germany the adoption or rejection of the Dawes Plan depended on the Social Democratic vote. The Social Democratic vote carried it. In France the Herriot Government depended for its existence on the Socialist vote. The Socialist vote supported its adoption of the Dawes Plan. In England the leaders of the Second International were the sponsors of the Plan. It is thus literally correct that the Dawes Plan was carried through on the back of the Second International. It is obvious that if the united Labour Movements of England, France and Germany had stood against it, it could never have been carried through against that opposition. It was not for nothing that the bourgeoisie inaugurated the short-lived era of Pacifist Democracy in order successfully under its cover to carry through the new line of policy represented by the Dawes Plan: and so soon as that task was accomplished, threw their tools away and appeared again in their own persons. The Europe of Chamberlain is the logical sequel of the Europe of MacDonald.

**T**HIS is the point which is completely missed in the short contribution of Newbold in the current issue defending Price. Newbold thinks that the "aggressive tone" of Radek's articles is responsible for the triumph of reaction in Europe (a view also promulgated by the *Daily Herald* and all anti-Communist Liberals in the Labour Party, who are disappointed at the collapse of their former idol, MacDonald). This is a very natural expression of disillusioned Liberalism; but it is certainly a new presentation of history to come from a Marxist. In the view of Marxists the course of history is determined, not by an article or a "windy pronouncement," but by the action of classes on the basis of economic conditions. Not the propaganda of the Communist International for the class struggle (apparently awakening an otherwise dormant bourgeoisie), but the actions of Western Labour leaders in betraying the class struggle prepared the way for the triumph of reaction in Europe to-day. Newbold must surely



remember sufficient of his own earlier attacks on MacDonald as "Morgan's bootblack" (before he became "my leader") to realise that Morgan's Europe is more likely to have been prepared by Morgan's bootblack than by the principal enemy of Morgan. But Newbold has a new policy: it is to leave Morgan alone in the hope that he will not attack us. Instead of "helping the extreme reaction to unite the Capitalist States long enough to establish a systematic White Terror and to concert a more intense blockade of the Soviet Union" (which is his view of the policy of the Communist International) we ought "to give these gentry a breathing time in which to renew their mutual hostilities." That is to say: "Only stop those awful manifestoes, which put the proletariat to sleep and only awaken the bourgeoisie; 'give these gentry a breathing-time,' *i.e.*, drop the propaganda of the class struggle and then—behold the real 'New Machiavelli'—the bourgeoisie will forget us, and we can dispatch them at leisure while they are embroiled among themselves. But, hist! not a word, or the conspiracy is ruined, and the bourgeoisie, put wise, will combine against us instead." The naïveté of all this defies comment. But it is necessary to observe the political conclusion, which is precisely the same as Price's, *i.e.*, drop the propaganda of the class struggle for a bit, and join up in a united front with MacDonald. Price gives philosophic reasons of "the relationship of class forces." Newbold gives conspiratorial reasons of "giving these gentry a breathing-time." But the effect is the same. "Drop the Class Struggle" becomes the United Front from Newbold to Price, from Price to MacDonald, and from MacDonald to Baldwin—all carrying on their variegated propaganda against the Communist International, *i.e.*, against the sole positive revolutionary force of the international working class.

**B**UT what does this mean, in fact? It means that the objective political position of Price and Newbold now stands defined. For what is the character of the present period? It is marked by two stages. The first stage is the gathering of the forces of the Counter-Revolution under a smoke-screen of Pacifist Democracy. This is the stage of the Dawes Report. The second stage is the launching of the forces of the Counter-Revolution

against the Revolution. This is the stage of the Coalition against the Soviet Union. And now what do we find as the progress of Price and Newbold? Their first stage, which first called attention to the direction in which they were moving, was their attack on the revolutionary criticism of the Dawes Report, and of its smoke-screen, the Labour Government; and consequently their assistance in the task of the Second International and the bourgeoisie in securing its acceptance by the working class ("let it go through"). Their second stage is the break with the Communist International, and the attack upon its policy, at the moment when the bourgeoisie and the official Labour Party are also concentrating this attack, which is the prelude to a direct armed assault upon the Workers' Republic. Thus their progress and their successive positions coincide, in fact, with the progress and successive positions of the Second International and the bourgeoisie. Whatever their subjective outlook ("why I left the cats' chorus"), their objective political rôle is that of part of the ideological preparation, of the ideological artillery work, for the attack on the Soviet Union and the Workers' Revolution.

**T**HE Second International, which carried through the Dawes Plan, is to-day ranging itself behind its logical sequel—the attack on Russia. It was obvious that if the Dawes Plan were successful, if that restoration gave Capitalism a breathing space, then Capitalism would gather itself for the dispatching of the Revolution. Baldwin showed an acuter and a more Marxist judgment than Price or Newbold when he fastened on the Communist opposition to the Dawes Plan as the expression of the struggle of the international revolution and the international counter-revolution. The triumph of the Dawes Plan was the triumph of the counter-revolution. To-day comes the supreme combined attack on the Revolution. In truly Marxian language the organ of the French Foreign Office, *Le Temps*, speaks of "*le front unique contre-revolutionnaire*," the counter-revolutionary united front, which Chamberlain is organising in conjunction with France and America. It was in November, 1924, that the President of the British Chamber of Commerce, Sir Arthur Shirley Benn, declared:—

He was convinced that the effort that was now being made all over the world to do away with credit was going to receive its deathblow in the very near future, and he thought Great Britain and America would lead the way to that end.

And appropriately enough comes the absolutely parallel declaration of MacDonald, reported by his friend and colleague, Vandervelde, in the *Depêche de Toulouse* in December, 1924:—

“The last time that I saw MacDonald,” writes Vandervelde, “he declared to me his firm intention to make an end once and for all of the agents of Zinoviev and their English followers.”

**T**HE coalition against the Workers' Republic is a fact. It is not a question for discussion, but for how the workers are going to meet it. And here it is necessary to be clear that the Second International will not stand by the workers. The meeting of the Executive at Brussels in January made clear that they are a part of the coalition. Brailsford's article in the *New Leader* last autumn describing the meeting in London revealed how completely the Second International has become an anti-Russian organisation pure and simple—to the disgust of the majority of the British Section. At Brussels, Kautsky's Memorandum declared that the reaction of capitalist States (he described them euphemistically as States “with highly developed industry”) on Russia “might shortly furnish the great Socialist parties with the opportunity and the means to exercise pressure (*une action*) on the Soviet Government in favour of democracy and an independent working-class movement in Russia.” In this ugly diplomatic “Socialist” language is barely veiled the support once more of armed intervention, organised and paid by the Churchills and Ludendorfs, to re-establish in Workers' Russia the “democratic” capitalist dictatorship which the workers enjoy in Kautsky's Germany. The Executive passed a resolution in favour of the Geneva Protocol (*i.e.*, the armed capitalist coalition), the British alone abstaining; and when the British proposed an amendment that the Protocol should not apply to be used against non-League States if Russia was not a member of the League, this was unanimously defeated by the rest. The meaning of this is plain enough to see.

**T**HE British working-class movement will have to be prepared to act independently, and to act quickly, if they are to be ready for the dangers in front. The solidarity of the British and Russian working class is the strongest bulwark in the present situation against the capitalist attack. But the means of realising that solidarity will have to be found. Those means are ready to hand, if they are only taken up. They are the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee and International Trade Union Unity. International Trade Union Unity has travelled far beyond a trade union question and become an urgent question of the world working class. But if International Trade Union Unity hangs fire, the British workers will need none the less to be ready.

R. P. D.

# TRADE UNION UNITY AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

By R. PALME DUTT

**A** NEW force has appeared upon the horizon of the British working class movement to raise a note of challenge. The inscription that it bears upon its banner is International Trade Union Unity.

The call to unity of the organised workers of the world would seem to be so clear and so urgent, more especially in view of the present world situation, that it could meet with no resistance. Nevertheless it has met with resistance; the issue has been hotly discussed; forces have been ranged on either side; and it is therefore necessary for all to understand what is involved.

International Trade Union Unity is in the first place the proposal that all the organised workers in the world, through their trade unions, should be united in a single world organisation for common action. The basis of this proposal lies in the urgent needs of the present situation, when the world forces of Capital are able to combine their action against the workers, both economically, as in the wage offensive already developed and threatening further, and politically, as in the war against the Workers' Republic, now visibly in preparation, and the universal campaign of repression against the working class. In particular the situation following on the Dawes Report, the threat to the West European workers, combined with the threat to the Russian workers inevitably draws all the workers closer together. Against the highly organised common action of the capitalist class, the workers have had no organisation of common action. In consequence they have been exposed to defeat after defeat. The urgent needs of the workers' struggle therefore compel International Trade Union Unity. To oppose it is to oppose the workers' common struggle, and therefore to oppose the victory of the workers.

So far there has been no united Trade Union International. Before the war there was hardly any organisation at all, save an

“International Trade Union Secretariat,” which was no more than a post office and was expressly by resolution excluded from discussing common action. This naturally completely failed even to attempt to organise the common action of the workers during the war, and left them at the mercy of the mutual slaughter campaign to which they were driven by their rulers. After the war the situation was one of intense struggle of the workers in every country, and in particular the situation was dominated by the battle for life of the Russian Workers’ Republic. On the one hand there was a strong revolutionary wave among the workers. On the other hand many of the workers’ leaders had openly gone over to the enemy during the war, and continued hand in hand with the enemy after the war. As a result of this situation after the war two Trade Union Internationals were formed. The first, the International Federation of Trade Unions (known as the Amsterdam Trade Union International from its seat at Amsterdam), which contains the bulk of the West European workers, was founded under the direction of three very notorious workers’ leaders: W. A. Appleton, first President (now driven off, and associated with Tory Democracy); Samuel Gompers, first Vice-President (the friend of American Big Business); and Leon Jouhaux, co-Vice-President (a French ex-revolutionary and former anti-militarist, who ran away at the outbreak of war and entered into the service of the government). The organisation was based from the outset on close co-operation with the capitalists, notably with the Entente robbers’ League of Nations through the International Labour Office, which made it impossible for revolutionary workers to take part in it. In consequence the revolutionary workers founded their own organisation, the Red International of Labour Unions, to which they tried to win over the trade unions of all countries.

Between the revolutionary worker and the workers’ leader who has gone over to the enemy there can be no peace or alliance, any more than there could be between strikers and blacklegs. The Amsterdam Trade Union International and the Red International of Labour Unions have been, and inevitably must continue to be, so long as they exist on their present basis, in absolute opposition to one another. The battle they represent must inevitably continue until the victory of the workers. But in the meantime it is obviously

necessary for the workers to be able to unite now for the needs of their common struggle, without waiting for the settlement of so long an issue. From an early date the Red International made offers of a United Front, *i.e.*, for united action on immediate urgent questions. These offers at first met with no response; but later the question was taken up by an energetic Secretary of the International Federation (who was subsequently thrust out of his position), Edo Fimmen, and by the British Trade Unions. The outcome of these negotiations was the proposal of International Trade Union Unity which is now officially before the British movement. The proposal suggests the calling of a World Conference of representatives of the Trade Union movements of every country to form a single World Trade Union International.

During the division many splits have developed in the workers' movement. In many countries the trade union forces are split, with disastrous results for the workers. This makes the question of International Trade Union Unity of especial urgency. The policy of co-operation with the capitalists, and the consequent division and defeats of the workers' forces, drove millions of workers out of the Unions in despair. Many of these organised themselves in new revolutionary unions. At the same time the action of the leaders in many countries, conscious of the growth of discontent, has intensified this situation. In country after country the revolutionary workers have been expelled by their officials from their trade unions for conducting revolutionary propaganda and advocating adherence to the Red International. In France, the revolutionary workers had just won a majority in the Confederation of Labour when the old officials, rather than submit to the new direction, expelled them in a mass, and thus compelled the formation of two Confederations. In Germany masses of revolutionary workers, and whole district councils and sections of big unions, have been expelled for their views. The revolutionary workers in the Red International have continuously opposed and voted against any kind of split or division of the workers' unions, and have invariably supported every move for unity. But in order to achieve unity it is necessary to heal the existing splits, and this can only be completely accomplished on an international basis.

Even in this country these dangers are already visible. The

attempted policy of the expulsion of the revolutionary workers, including many old and tried fighters in the workers' cause, has already begun on the side of the Labour Party, and has inevitably been followed by the expulsion and disfranchising of whole local Labour parties, representing the organised workers in their locality. In the Trade Unions, also, individual cases have occurred, although the tradition of solidarity is still strong, and may even defeat the exclusion policy introduced from the Labour Party. Two serious breakaways of discontented workers have taken place, among the Fife miners and the London dockers. In addition the General Council refuses to "recognise" the Minority Movement, which endeavours to organise the left-wing workers for propaganda within the Unions and staying in them: a serious refusal, since the Minority Movement represents a movement of propaganda, which strengthens instead of threatens solidarity; and such refusals have in other countries been the starting point of the path leading ultimately to expulsions and splits. With the present intense divisions of policy within the Unions, a movement such as the Minority Movement is the only alternative to splits: and for this reason the Minority Movement is in fact the strongest force making for the unity of the working class. Thus, if these dangers of splits, which exist in this country as elsewhere, are to be avoided, an energetic campaign for unity is needed from the top to the bottom of the movement. But such a campaign must be based on actively organising the common action of the workers, locally, nationally and internationally, since otherwise any talk of unity and solidarity must sound a mockery.

International Trade Union Unity is thus more than a question of uniting the trade union movements in every country. It is a question of uniting the workers in each country, and in particular of uniting the revolutionary workers and the rest of the workers where these have got separated. The isolation of the revolutionary workers in the trade unions is fatal alike to them and to the whole working class; since the trade unions should unite all workers without distinction on the basis of the common struggle, and be able to put forth the whole strength of the working class. International Trade Union Unity is the means to achieving this.

For the same reason the question of International Trade Union



Unity is closely bound up in practice with the question of achieving closer unity and common action of the workers in each country in the daily struggle. The necessity of closer unity and common action is universally recognised, but the means to it have not yet been seriously considered. Any campaign for unity must inevitably strengthen this issue and hasten action; and in fact the movement for International Unity has been closely associated with the movement for a common front at home. The common front at home is the basis and condition of the common front across countries: both are necessary and complementary to each other. The question of International Trade Union Unity is thus closely bound up with the workers' daily struggle.

There is a further consideration which must be touched on. At present the Western European trade unions, which are organised in the Amsterdam International, are very isolated. Although tremendous industrial populations have grown up under the conditions of modern capitalism in India, China, Japan, South America and the African Colonies, there is absolutely no contact with the workers of Britain, France and Germany. This is a fatal blow to the unity of the working class, which gives a terrible weapon to the capitalists. They maintain two completely different standards for the workers of Europe and of Asia, and are able to use one section of the workers against the others. This process is still only beginning, and is the strongest weapon in the hands of the capitalists. It must be countered, and it can only be countered by world unity. At present many "White" trade unions in the colonies, which have arisen as a result of the difference in standards, actually try to keep down the coloured workers, and have even "scabbed" against them, instead of helping them to organise and raise their standards. A World Trade Union International should make it its first consideration to help to organise the workers outside Europe, to get in contact with their organisations already existing, and stand by them in their difficult struggle. In this way the International unity of the working class could become a reality, and the strongest and most dangerous basis of modern capitalism would be weakened.

The need of International Trade Union Unity is thus seen to be based on the strongest needs of the workers' struggle, both for the

everyday struggle for bread and for the whole struggle against capitalism.

It is now necessary to consider the objections that have been raised against International Trade Union Unity. These have come with great vehemence from certain quarters in the Amsterdam International (and of course from the capitalist Press). It is necessary to understand the character of these elements, and the basis which has led to their opposition to so apparently obvious a necessity of the workers.

The principal opposition comes from the German Social-Democratic Trade Union Leaders, in association with the Belgian and right-wing French Trade Unions, and a group of leaders of the Second International, chief of whom is Vandervelde. These leaders occupy a peculiar position in the international movement. They were all closely associated with their governments during the war (Vandervelde is one of the signatories of the Versailles Treaty), and after the war were closely associated with the capitalist repression of the workers (the British Trade Union leaders at the Vienna International Conference are reported to have cried out to the German representatives, who were opposing unity, "Where are Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg?"). The success of the Workers' Revolution in Russia aroused their most intense anger, because it was the living expression of their own betrayal of the workers. They let their theoretical hatred, arising ultimately out of a difference in tactics, lead them to lend themselves as instruments of the capitalists' armed intervention against the struggle of the millions of Russian workers; and to-day, after the failure of that intervention, there remains a blind fury against everything connected with the Russian workers and the Russian Workers' Republic, which has reached a point that they are ready to sacrifice to it the unity of the workers. The unreasoning character of this blind fury was illustrated when the speech of Purcell, President of the Amsterdam International, in Russia in favour of unity was issued, and the German Social Democratic paper *Vorwärts* immediately denounced it as a forgery; and on Purcell himself sending a signed authenticated text, only published a few extracts and declared there must be errors in the shorthand.

Thus this opposition has a peculiar character which does not

readily lend itself to argument. A number of the German Trade Union leaders have roundly declared that it would be "suicide" to be in the same international as the Russian Unions. This is simply the direct refusal of any form of international unity.

On the other hand, other of the leaders in opposition have stated arguments in objection: and the Secretary of the International, Oudegeest, who has declared himself not against International Trade Union Unity in principle, has put forward various points and limiting conditions which he considers of indispensable importance. The most typical of these objections and conditions, which will be seen to turn mainly on the campaign against Russia, are four, and may be summarised as follows:—

The first and most usual condition is that the whole question should be confined to the entry of the Russian trade unions into the Amsterdam International.

This is wholly to miss, or even to refuse to see, the meaning of world trade union unity. We are concerned, not simply with the workers of one country, but with the workers in every country; to heal the splits and expulsions in the West European countries; to bring in the Asiatic and African workers (many of whom are organised in the Red International); to unite the world forces of the workers in a single World International instead of two weak Internationals. To refuse to see this, and to limit oneself to a proposition to the Russian workers which is impossible for them to accept (namely, to detach themselves from the Red International, instead of acting unitedly with the revolutionary workers all over the world), and is made with the knowledge that it cannot be accepted, is to serve no useful purpose, and to do nothing but put a bar in the way of world unity.

The second condition most often made is that the International should be based on "independent" trade unions. This sounds excellent, and would be welcomed by all revolutionary trade unionists who are sick of the co-operation of their Unions with capitalist governments. But the makers of it mean quite a different thing. They are trying to make a point against the Russian Unions as not being independent of the Russian Workers' Government. By this they wish to imply that the Soviet Government is not really a Workers' Government. For if it is a Workers' Government, then

of course the Trade Unions could not be "independent" of it in its struggle for life against capitalism; to be "independent" would mean to be on the side of capitalism. And the judgment of the workers of the world (of which the British Trade Union Delegation is the latest example) has acclaimed the Soviet Government as a real Workers' Government—a Workers' Government in a more full and complete sense than the workers of the West have hardly yet begun to dream of. But their opponents have shown by their practice that they are not against co-operation with capitalist governments. Thus by "independent" trade unions they mean *independent* of the working-class struggle, but *dependent* on capitalism. Such a "limitation" would destroy the meaning of a World Trade Union International.

The third type of point frequently raised is that there should be no "cell" or "nucleus" building within the trade unions or "outside interference" from a political party. This is a very confused point, and manifestly outside the scope of Trade Union Unity, since the negotiations are only between Trade Unions and not between political parties. Nevertheless, as the point is frequently raised and often causes difficulty through misunderstanding, it may be worth while to make some comment on it. What is "interference" by a political party? It is clear that no political party can "control" a trade union, except so far as the members of the trade union in question themselves wish to go hand in hand with a given political party, as the British Trade Unions with the Labour Party. But if the meaning is simply agitation, then it is impossible to see the objection. Surely any political party of the workers is faced with the same common questions of the workers' struggle which face the Trade Unions, and must, if it is worth anything, have a view upon them which it will advocate. And surely it is natural for members of a party in a trade union, who hold a common view upon trade union questions, to work together to advocate that view; nor can there be any objection to this so long as they maintain trade union discipline and are good trade unionists. (The work of the I.L.P. in the Trade Unions will be remembered by British readers.) On the contrary such liberty of propaganda is the very condition of trade union unity; for it is obviously impossible to ask workers, holding different viewpoints, to come together, and

yet refuse them the right, provided they maintain discipline, to advocate their viewpoints. Such a policy means to invite splits. The Minority group, so far from being the enemy of the trade union, is the best friend of its united progressive development: for it is the only positive alternative to splits and secessions. To oppose such groups is therefore to oppose working-class unity.

Finally the fourth type of condition or objection that is put forward is that there must be no interference with the right to co-operate with such institutions as the International Labour Office. This would seem at first sight to be the exact opposite of the second condition of the "independence" of the trade unions; but, as has been explained above, when the peculiar sense of "independence" is understood, it is seen to be exactly the same. The claim is in fact the claim to co-operate with the bourgeoisie. And with that the issue may be left to the workers. To put forward such a ground as this for preventing the unity of the working class would be openly to put the interests of capitalism before the interests of the working class.

When these four most typical objections, or limitations to International Trade Union Unity are considered together as a whole, it will be seen that they have a common character. That common character is most clearly expressed in the last point, but it is equally latent in all. We have to do here, not with a plain, direct opposition to International Trade Union Unity—for or against—but with a kind of oblique opposition, in which the antagonist makes a point, and then runs away again, declares his loyalty to the conception of International Trade Union Unity, and then comes with a number of complicated objections and conditions. It is therefore necessary to pin our antagonist firmly down to his points and examine them extremely hard in order to discover what his position amounts to. What is at the bottom of all these objections?

*If all the arguments are closely examined it will be seen that there is one presupposition common to them all: and that is hostility to the workers' struggle.* This is the root of the trouble. From this comes the fear of the introduction of revolutionary unions, which might "corrupt" the workers; from this the fear of revolutionary propaganda, however orderly and conforming to trade union

discipline; from this the clinging to every link with the capitalist class, such as the International Labour Office.

Whoever stands for the workers' struggle, whoever desires the greatest possible strength and unity of the workers' ranks for the common struggle, must stand for International Trade Union Unity.

Whoever is opposed to the workers' struggle, whoever fears the consequences of greater strength and unity of the workers' ranks and the inevitable intensification of the struggle that must follow, is inevitably opposed to International Trade Union Unity.

No workers' leader dare oppose International Trade Union Unity in principle. But the right-wing leaders of the Amsterdam International know that, if International Trade Union Unity is realised in fact, then the greatest barriers to the struggle of the workers are down, then for the first time the working class face the capitalist class with their full united strength, then their old easy days of "leadership" of the workers in inaction and combined with plentiful friendships with the bourgeoisie are ended, then the workers' struggle passes into new, uncharted seas of ultimate struggle with capitalism; *and it is this they fear*. This is the root of the division: this is the issue of "class struggle" which the Red International in response to the query of the Amsterdam International declared to be the dividing line between them.

Without being frightened by phrases, let us consider simply what is the position of the workers at present, and in the light of that what must be the path before them.

It is universally admitted that the standards of the workers have been heavily brought down by the war and the capitalist offensive following on the war. In Germany the eight-hour day is already smashed; the majority of the workers are being driven nine, ten and even twelve hours a day, for wages less than half the English, and new attacks are threatened as inevitable through the Dawes Report. In Britain the workers are faced with unemployment, intensified labour for those in work (revealed in the heavy increase in fatal accidents) and lowered wages in purchasing power, and new attacks are also threatened "in order to meet German competition."

How are the workers to meet this?

The capitalists of each country urge their workers to increase production, to cease strikes, to produce more cheaply and in this way

to defeat foreign competition. In this way alone, declare the capitalists, the workers can improve their conditions, by a " sane " policy free from class struggle. The majority of Labour leaders support them in this, and also preach increased production, cessation of strikes, harmony with the employers, &c.

But is it true that the workers can improve their conditions in this way? It is demonstrably false. For it is precisely the increased production which is the problem that the capitalists are unable to solve. The President of the British Board of Trade declared in 1923:—

The efficiency of production is so much greater now than ten years ago that the same volume of trade will not employ the same number of people. We have to restore as far as we can the old markets and to find new markets as well.

But at the same time other countries have developed the same increased production, and often very much more, and are fighting for the same markets. So we get the position described by the *Financial Times* at the close of 1924:—

Owing to the foundation of new industries in many countries during the war, the world's productivity in industrial goods is higher than ever before, while the consuming power, owing to the impoverishment brought about by the waste of war, is much reduced. In a word, there is serious world over-production. (*Financial Times*, December 30, 1924.)

What is the way out? There is no way out under capitalism (the only suggestion of the *Financial Times*—which correctly rejects international cartels as unworkable on a capitalist basis—is to conquer Russia and open up a new market there). The only way out is for the workers themselves to take over production and organise it to meet needs.

But in the meantime what is the position?

The capitalists of each country drive their own workers to produce more, to produce more cheaply, to accept lower wages and longer hours in order to capture the markets. And each time the workers are driven down in one country, it becomes immediately the demand to drive the workers down in other countries in order to meet the competition. And the more the workers produce, the fiercer becomes the fight for spheres of influence, markets, raw

materials, &c., between the capitalist Powers. So the process goes on until it reaches the point of war, as it did in 1914. And after the war the process has been caught up again with a tremendously increased intensity.

Thus, the more the workers produce, the more they co-operate with the capitalists, the more they abstain from strikes and demands for higher wages—by so much the more they worsen their conditions, drive themselves section by section down the pit of misery, and ultimately into the hell of war. This is the meaning of co-operation with the capitalists, which many Labour leaders preach.

What, then, must be the policy of the workers? Not co-operation with the capitalists, but united struggle against the capitalists, united struggle for higher wages and shorter hours, leading on to the struggle for the control of production. So far the workers have been defeated in sections, both within each country and internationally. Now they must unite their action, both by the common front at home and by international unity on the world scale.

Only in this way, by struggle, not by co-operation, can the workers defend their position to-day and advance in the future.

If we turn to the political position we find the same. On every side, in every country—except the one country where the workers have advanced along the path of the class struggle and established their Workers' Republic—the capitalists are on top and strongly established and organised to hold down the workers. In every capitalist country the workers are organised in millions to face the capitalists and to strive to win power. But in every case the capitalists have so far succeeded, either by trickery and deception, such as was experienced in Britain in the last election, or, where that fails, by open violence, as in Germany and Italy, to maintain their power. They are strongly organised through their machinery of the State to keep the workers down, and to protect at every point by their law courts, officials, bailiffs, police, &c., the daily exploitation of the workers. In any struggle between the capitalists and the workers their governments come out openly on the side of the capitalists and use all their power to secure their victory. Their control of the Press and publicity and education is used to keep the workers in ignorance and protect the interests of the capitalists. Thus at every point we see a class in power, maintaining their power



## *Trade Union Unity and the Class Struggle 91*

by every possible means ; and in every country the workers advancing against them.

Coolidge in America, Baldwin in England, Herriot (who is acting openly with the bankers) in France, Stresemann and the Nationalists in Germany, Mussolini in Italy—they are all enemies of the workers. Is it the task of the workers to co-operate with them or to struggle against them ? There can be only one answer to that question.

But the question can be put even more precisely.

In one country the workers have advanced along the path of the class struggle and established their Workers' Republic. Therefore the triumphant capitalists in all the other countries are combined against them. At the present moment a new coalition for military attack is being openly organised. What is the task of the workers ? Is it to unite with their capitalists against the Workers' Republic. Or is it to unite with the other workers against the capitalists ? There can be only one answer to that question,

United struggle of the workers of the whole world against the capitalists, politically and economically—that is the only path before the workers.

On every side, in fact, we find ourselves faced with a single situation. The workers are engaged in struggle with the capitalists all along the line, from the daily struggle over a penny an hour to the ultimate struggle for the control of production—the struggle for power. At every point in the process the interests of the workers and the interests of the capitalists are irreconcilably opposed. Whoever stands against the struggle of the workers, at any stage, proves himself by his actions an enemy of the workers.

This, and nothing else, which is the inevitable basis of all working-class action and organisation, is the whole of the "Class Struggle" which is held up as a bogey to the workers by the capitalists. The Class Struggle is a universal reality of daily life under capitalism, and none pursue it more vigorously and relentlessly than the capitalists themselves. For the workers to abandon the pursuit of the Class Struggle is not to escape from it, but only to surrender themselves helplessly to the merciless enslavement of Capitalism. Not by surrender to the capitalists, but by struggle against them, by more and more united and determined struggle to

the final overcoming of the power of the capitalists and the establishment of the power of the workers, only so can the workers win their freedom and end their class enslavement which is the basis of the class struggle. So long as the enslavement of the workers continues, to advocate the abandonment of the class struggle by the workers means in fact to advocate the continued enslavement of the workers. Every step that the workers have won so far, they have won only by class struggle in the face of the unremitting opposition of the capitalists, and hold to-day only by the measure of their strength. Every step that they have to make in the future, they have to make in the face of the ever more concentrated, intense and unscrupulous opposition of the whole capitalist class. Not the abandonment of the class struggle, but the greater strength and unity and solidarity of the workers' ranks, more powerful combination and concentration of forces, stronger determination and leadership—these are the needs of the working class.

It is obvious that it is to the interest of the capitalists to try to conceal the antagonism of interests between the workers and themselves, to urge them to abandon the class struggle as unprofitable (while busily practising it themselves in a far more highly organised and scientific manner than the workers, through all their institutions) and to persuade the workers to regard their interests as identical with those of the capitalists, *i.e.*, to produce profits for them quietly. It is natural that a host of capitalist economists, professors, journalists, lecturers, literary men, preachers and politicians should all be engaged in preaching these doctrines to the workers, and dressing them up in all kinds of fine coatings of patriotism, religion, morality, duty to the community, &c. (receiving in reward a share of the spoils in a standard of living superior to the workers). So long as these are open capitalist advocates, the working class movement presently gets to know them and to know what their opinions are worth.

But it is also the case that many workers' leaders preach precisely these same capitalist doctrines to the workers, and actively in word and deed deny the class struggle. This is far more serious. This means to betray the workers' struggle from within, and thus completely to disorganise the workers. It means that men, who owe their positions and advancement to the class struggle of the

workers, forget their origins and go over to the capitalists, and then use their position to destroy the working-class movement from within. When the workers see the men they have elected to lead them against the capitalists appear before them hand in hand with the capitalists and actually direct them away from the path into some path the capitalist desires, then it is natural that the workers' front is completely broken up. The workers are confused and do not know in which direction to go; they are at the mercy of the capitalists' ideas and bogies, for their leaders do not teach them to think otherwise; they are broken up, sectioned and even sabotaged in action: and the capitalists are able to dispatch them at leisure. It is not surprising that every time a workers' leader denies the class struggle in word or action a shout of applause and triumph goes up in the capitalist Press.

*Here we come to the very root of the weakness in the working-class movement*, the issue behind the issue of International Trade Union Unity, the root cause that stands in the way of the unity and effective action of the working class, that puts obstacles in the way of the common front at home and equally of the common front on a world scale. That root cause is the denial of the class struggle.

Until this issue is fought and won, the effective unity of the working class in action, whether at home or abroad, can never be finally achieved, and will always be subjected to sabotage. Whoever, therefore, wishes the unity of the working-class must desire the clearing out of the denial of the class struggle from the movement, *i.e.*, the ending of co-operation with the capitalists. We have come to the deepest question behind the question of Unity, and that governs the future of the movement.

The majority of the leadership of the British working-class movement does in fact deny the class struggle. It is necessary to recognise this fact squarely, if we are to overcome it. The denial of the class struggle is not a question of words or formulas, but of actions—very serious actions. In words there may often be recognition of the class struggle, though many leaders also deny it in words and openly proclaim the interest of the capitalist. But in action there is denial. In practice there is co-operation with the capitalists.

In what way does co-operation with the capitalists take place in

the British movement? We may distinguish four principal types, which between them comprise the dominant leadership of the British working class at present, and through all their variations unite in a single policy of co-operation of classes.

It is necessary to analyse these types very carefully if we are to understand the character of the problems with which we have to deal here particularly in Britain.

In the first place there is co-operation in negotiations with the employers. This is the most fundamental and most open type. This is the type of a whole series of powerful trade union leaders, who are strongly enough established in their positions to come out openly as advocates of the employers' interests as identical with those of the workers, who denounce strikes and use their power to prevent them whenever possible, who preach increased production, the interests of the trade, and industrial peace, who plead for better relations between employers and employed, a "fair share" for the workers, &c. These figure in such associations for class co-operation as the National Alliance of Employers and Employed (which is openly financed and run by Big Capital). This is the most powerful type in the governing circles of British trade unionism.

(It is notable that, when the I.L.P. in its official organ raised the question of membership of the National Alliance of Employers and Employed by prominent leaders, including members of the I.L.P., no reply was deemed necessary or received.)

To what does this co-operation lead?

It begins with simple association with the employers in industry. The trade union leader makes many friendships with the capitalists. He enters into close social relationships, and the capitalists make it easy for him in a hundred ways. "He had experienced the benefit of a changed atmosphere" (J. H. Thomas at the function of the National Alliance of Employers and Employed, March 21, 1923). This naturally has its effect on negotiations. "There was no question that arose when a general manager and himself could not sit down with all their cards on the table. This did not mean that they agreed, but it meant that they had established confidence in each other, and this went nine-tenths of the way to industrial peace" (the same). The idea of conflict with his friends becomes distasteful. 'Am I to say to the general managers of the railway companies,

## *Trade Union Unity and the Class Struggle 95*

many of whom are close friends of my own, 'You are to be treated as enemies.' The whole thing is absurd." When a strike becomes inevitable, he bursts into tears: he cajoles, bullies, intimidates, hectors to reverse a delegate meeting's decision, and even in the last resort uses his dictatorial power to defy it.

But this co-operation inevitably extends to a wider sphere, to the whole sphere of working-class policy. He acquires a new outlook ("a changed atmosphere.") Socialism becomes forgotten. The workers' leader becomes the full advocate of his capitalist friends' outlook: he holds before the workers the ideal of a world of good trade, harmonious relations between employers and employed and a fair share for the workers and capitalists alike.

He did not begrudge to the real captains of industry the best reward to which their services entitled them. . . . All that the working men asked from them in exchange was that they should see to it that too much of the reward of industry should not go to the form of capital which was idle and worthless so far as general direction and experience of trade were concerned. (J. R. CLYNES at an employers' function at Stanton Ironworks, April, 1923.)

The workman's share had generally been based on how little he could live on. Employers seldom asked how much could the trade or business afford to give him. There was a growing revolt against the wage standard being fixed at the lowest sum on which the working man could manage to live. (J. R. CLYNES at an Industrial League meeting, January, 1924.)

. . . he hoped that the policy and ideals of the League would triumph. (J. H. THOMAS at the function of the National Alliance of Employers and Employed, March, 1923.)

From this point the way is now open to complete political co-operation with the capitalist class, *i.e.*, to co-operation in maintaining the power of the capitalist class against the workers and in the suppression of the workers. This takes place openly during the war with the entry of the trade union leaders into the Coalition War Cabinet. Later it is repeated in the MacDonald "Labour" ministry (which was also in reality a coalition government). The "workers' leader" has now become the complete instrument and defender of the capitalist class and their suppression of the workers, of the slaughter of the workers, of imperialism, of secret police persecution of the workers, &c., &c. This is the culmination of the betrayal of the working class, which follows in logical process,

step by step, from the original denial of the class struggle and acceptance of co-operation with the capitalist class.

Around this central basis of British working-class leadership revolve the other types.

There is, to begin with, the other most frequent type of trade union leadership, comprising the majority of the remainder. Here we find the same positive denial of the class struggle as with the first type, and even the desire to drop it and reach the same heights of the first: but the facts are too strong for them, and compel them, on account of their closer connection with the daily trade union struggle, in practice to recognise the class struggle in some part, while continuing to deny it in their professions. The result is a complete contradiction, making for utter confusion of working-class leadership, compared with which the policy of the first type is at any rate consistent and therefore prevails. A typical expression of this group may be taken from an election speech of a prominent member of the General Council, who is associated with the more active members of that body:—

A Labour Government in office increased to an enormous extent the power of organised Labour. Organised capitalism in politics and industry has decided that no more Labour Governments must be permitted. The right to govern is now claimed as the special possession of those who own land, control industry, and almost monopolise the professions.

I am not an advocate of class antagonism, but the workers must repudiate the claim of organised capitalism, whether in industry or politics, to retain the exclusive right to govern, either in the workshop or Parliament.

Here is expressed a direct conflict of "Organised Capital" and "Organised Labour," *i.e.*, classes, over "the right to govern" both economically and politically, *i.e.*, Class Struggle for power. Yet immediately after comes "I am not an advocate of class antagonism." What is the effect of this? To create complete confusion in the minds of his hearers and leave them ready soil for a Clynes and a Thomas, who, when they say "No Class Struggle!" carry it out to its logical conclusion.

Here the crime is far greater than in the first type. For the first type is at any rate open in its betrayal; therefore their actions soon begin to anger and nauseate the working class, and in conse-

quence they have usually to end up directly in the bourgeois ranks. But the second type still maintains its connection with the working-class struggle, appears to be representing their interests; and at the same time is in reality completely misleading them, not pointing the path forward, hiding the abyss between the interests of capitalists and workers, giving currency to the language of class co-operation and so helping to cast a cloak over the gross betrayals of the first type, with whom they fully associate.

Then there is the third type. Here we pass beyond the ranks of those who are primarily trade union leaders into the ranks of the "Socialists." First and foremost among these stands out the type of leader who begins as a "Socialist" and ends as a "statesman," *i.e.*, a bourgeois politician. He begins with the language of socialism and the class struggle, denounces the bourgeoisie, calls on the workers to organise and defends the struggle of the workers. But his words do not represent a serious policy. When he has risen by this means and tasted power, he forgets his old words and enters into new surroundings. He finds that even the language of the class struggle is not suitable in the new atmosphere, and moderates his language to suit the task of co-operation with the progressive bourgeoisie. Although still nominally a "Socialist," the very name of Socialism becomes distasteful to him. The old rebel songs and symbols become a painful reminder of the past. The class struggle of the workers raises his anger and indignation. He is completely assimilated into the bourgeoisie and a simple instrument of their policy. But he still retains a fading hold upon the masses, because the echoes of his old language when he appeared to champion their struggle still linger among them.

Of this type, which characterises the majority of the leaders of the Second International, MacDonald is the supreme English example. (Being English, the language is far more confused than with the Continental examples, but the practical progress is precisely the same.) MacDonald began as the organiser of the working class in politics, along with Keir Hardie, first through the Independent Labour Party and then through the Labour Party. Against the existing trade union orthodoxy of working-class subjection to bourgeois politics they preached the fiery gospel of independent working-class politics. On the basis of this MacDonald

won his political position, and soon, by the time of the Asquith Cabinet, particularly after the 1910 elections and the veiled coalition that followed, became completely enmeshed in bourgeois politics, and found himself faced with the growing hostility of the working class. But the war saved him and gave him another lease of life. He resumed contact with the masses and revived his old revolutionary language. He sat on the "Workers' and Soldiers' Council" to emulate the Russian Revolution, and issued a fiery call to the masses to found their Workers' and Soldiers' Councils throughout Britain; he defended "Direct Action"; he wrote of "the bourgeoisie" and "bourgeois parties"; he quoted with gusto Engels' open denunciation of English working-class leaders, and Michel's merciless analysis of Labour leaders who seek "a new companionship amongst the socially distinguished bourgeoisie"; he declared the British Foreign Office a Tsarist institution which needed a strong man to clear it out with a broom; he denounced the conception of any League of Nations other than the Socialist International; he advocated workshop organisation and Workers' Committees, &c. After the war was over, he won the leadership of the Labour Party on the basis of this fight by the support of the Left Wing, and so became Prime Minister—and then farewell to all his phrases, which were revealed as nothing but phrases. It was not for nothing that he fought all his life against being tied to any "harsh, dogmatic" form of Socialism. He now blossomed into a statesman, praised and applauded by the bourgeoisie, in coalition with Liberal and Tory Imperialists, sponsor and defender of the British Foreign Office and Imperialism, applying the whip and bullets and bombs to the Colonial workers, himself now revelling in the "new companionship amongst the socially distinguished bourgeoisie"—a direct, merciless enemy to the working class, openly attacking the workers' struggle, their strikes, their "limitation of output," their "doles," their movements of "Poplarism" and the like. But he is still able to maintain his position as a "workers' leader," though daily weakening, because echoes of "the stand that he made during the war" still linger in the minds of the masses.

This type is the most complete expression of co-operation with the bourgeoisie and betrayal of the working class. It is the "Socialist" counterpart of the Trade Union leaders of the first



type. The coalition between these two (although rendered uneasy by mutual jealousy) is the basis of the present Labour Party leadership.

There remains the fourth type. These are the Socialists who still profess Socialism and the class struggle in some sense, but in practice co-operate with the bourgeoisie. Their expression is to be found in the present official expression of the I.L.P. (which is at present not representative any longer of MacDonald, but in conflict with him). It is only necessary to take one or two examples of this group.

In the I.L.P. organ, the *New Leader*, of November 11, 1924, the editor writes as follows (replying to a denunciation of "class hatred" by J. H. Thomas), giving what might appear to be a definition of class struggle:—

We think it almost the gravest mistake which a Labour Party could commit to ignore the fact that a process which is usually called the class struggle is the most vital fact of our lives. It is waged whenever trade unions and employers bargain over wages; it is waged when we battle for the eight-hour day; it is the whole meaning of our central effort to further democracy in industry, and to win for the whole community the control over the foundations of its economic life. . . . With the "class" (if that word must be used) which turns its ownership of land and machinery and credit to private gain we have a quarrel which cannot be compromised or ended until we have brought about a transference of this gigantic power from private to public ownership. About this central aim of ours it is our business to speak plainly.

Immediately after this definition of "class struggle," in the very next editorial note on the next page of the same issue, appears the following welcome to the new Baldwin Government, the most direct instrument of the most open capitalist class repression all over the world:—

*All the world* agrees that Mr. Baldwin has *done well* in the delicate task of constructing a Cabinet. . . . One cannot read far in this list without realising that *Mr. Baldwin means to avoid stagnation or reaction*. . . . Lord Cecil, one may be sure, will do his best to preserve the fruits of the *joint work of the British and French "Left" Parties* at Geneva. Lord Eustace Percy has shown by his collaboration with the *Workers' Educational Association* that he cares for Education. We confess that our first impression of Lord Birkenhead's appointment to the India Office was one of alarm till we recalled his *admirable* speech about Amritsar. It is a relief to be able to draw from this list and

from Mr. Baldwin's speech at the Guildhall the *comfortable conclusion* that *we* may escape the four years of violent reaction which some of us had feared . . . (Italics present author's.)

If it were possible to pack more class collaboration in one paragraph it would need some skill. It is only necessary to add that within one fortnight of the above, when this Baldwin class government of all the virtues had begun to exercise its virtues on the Egyptian workers and peasants, this same I.L.P. editor has to write:—

The sudden outbreak in Egypt of Tory Imperialism leads us to repent of the tolerant note with which we had greeted Mr. Baldwin's Government.

From this short succession of passages (which is typical of almost the whole of this group) it will be seen we have here to deal with a "Socialist" leadership which is the opposite of useful to the workers. The class struggle is "recognised" in phrases, but it is soon clear that the phrases are literary, not serious. There is no serious pre-occupation with the workers' struggle as an actual fight and not a theory. For example, when the admittedly most important recent development in the struggle, the question of International Trade Union Unity, was raised by the joint agreement of the representatives of the five million British workers and the six million Russian workers, and the whole continental social democratic, as well as communist, press was engaged in the discussion of the issue, the only reference of the *New Leader* for weeks was a casual paragraph referring to the incredible "mischief" being caused by the Trade Union delegation in Russia. Thus, while the phrases are the phrases of the class struggle, the practice is ordinary bourgeois liberal politics. This is indeed the hallmark of the I.L.P. The language is strewn with the expressions of "Socialism," "the workers," "the working class," the "capitalists," "emancipation," &c.; but the practice is ordinary bourgeois liberal politics, in fact the grossest co-operation with capitalism and imperialism, acceptance of parliamentary hypocrisy, deception of the workers and even religious charlatanry.

It is necessary to characterise thus plainly the objective value of this type of leadership because it represents in fact the most dangerous enemy to the working class. What may arise subjectively from sentiment, good-heartedness, scepticism, a desire to be

polite, bourgeois cultural confusion, &c., can represent in fact the most fatal betrayal of the interests of the working class. While the other types are by comparison open in their fundamental denial of the class struggle, and can therefore come to be known by the workers (or in the case of the second type may even reach in time, before it is too late, the basis of the class struggle), this type, which uses phrases without seriousness, can only mislead, confuse and betray the working class, and therefore cause great suffering.

It is necessary to add that the fact that representatives of this type can play their part in one aspect or another of the class struggle only adds to the danger, because they are capable at the same time of taking part in the grossest co-operation with the capitalists. For example, Wheatley declared recently in an expression which attracted general attention:—

He believed that until the working classes learnt that they were engaged in a class war, they were not going to make any progress. (December, 6 1924.)

But it was Wheatley himself who took part unquestioningly in the MacDonald Government of class co-operation, which was in fact a government of Caretakers of Capitalism, and even of open coalition with Liberal and Tory Imperialists; which not only did not practise the class war, but in fact practised the most violent repression against the workers all over the world; in all which Wheatley had his full responsibility as a Cabinet Minister without ever raising a word of protest on behalf of the working class. And it is Wheatley who to-day joins in and lends his name to the whole sham fight of the Parliamentary Labour Party, which refuses to raise real class issues, confines its pleading to a few petty reforms, and avows cordial co-operation with the Baldwin Government on all principal issues: Wheatley himself taking full part in all the Parliamentary banalities. (“He could assure the Minister of Health, whom he congratulated on his return to the post he loved so well and fitted so well, that if he indicated in a vigorous and progressive Housing programme his intentions to use the unparalleled opportunity that political fortune had given him, he would receive from that House only the most benevolent criticisms,” &c.) Of what use to make speeches to applauding left-wingers about “the class war” so long as the practice is like this?

In the same way Lansbury in a recent speech in Glasgow declared with equal strength and justice, "While we talk about the class war, they make the class war"; but, instead of drawing the natural conclusion that we should in that case also make it, and more strongly, or be smashed, he went on: "Comrades, we must stick together: don't fight about methods and things which don't matter for another twenty years or so. Our mission must be to carry our great gospel to the working class." Which means precisely: "Don't object to Clynes and Thomas daily sabotaging the class struggle, and preventing the common front, and leaving us helpless to the mercies of the capitalists' class war, which admittedly they are making, while we are talking; but instead let us talk about the gospel of Socialism, and meanwhile let the capitalists finish us."

Thus the fourth type, by the talk of Socialism, is in fact protecting the other three; and all four types, through all their diversity, are united solidly on the basis of the denial of the class struggle. *Here is the knot of the British working class movement which must be unloosed before progress can be made.* It is this false solidarity, this false conception of unity—solidarity not on the basis of the class struggle, but solidarity of the upper strata of the movement on the basis of the denial of the class struggle—that holds up all progress, that keeps back the development of the official movement dangerously behind the development of the working class, and actually creates, instead of minimising, the danger of splits, breakaways and decay of organisation.

To overcome this it is essential that all those, to whatever section of the movement they belong, who individually sincerely will the class struggle, and are determined to find the means for its better progress in Britain, must contrive, in spite of all difficulties, to act together on the basis of the common front at home in every day-to-day struggle as it arises, and the common front internationally. And it is here that we come back to the issue of International Trade Union Unity. For the issue of International Trade Union Unity provides the means for such a coming together. The issue of International Trade Union Unity becomes not only the means to the international common front, but to the common front of the British working class, to the recovery of the British working class.

## *Trade Union Unity and the Class Struggle* 103

We have travelled a long path in the course of this article from the initial question of International Trade Union Unity, a path which has led us over the whole question of the Class Struggle, which we found to lie behind the question of International Trade Union Unity, and over the whole situation of the British working-class movement from the point of view of the class struggle. But in the end the conclusion to which we are brought is a single one.

From the point of view of the international situation it is essential to overcome the dispersion of the working-class forces in the face of the heavy concentration of the capitalist reaction both in every country, and in addition against the Workers' Republic, and, through the Dawes Report, against the West European workers. The means to that is the achievement of a united Trade Union International of action.

From the point of view of the British situation it is essential to break once and for all with the policy of denial of the class struggle and co-operation with capitalism, which keeps the British workers divided and defeated; and to organise instead a common front of action for the conflicts immediately ahead both nationally and internationally. But to achieve this it is necessary to unite in a common campaign all those who wish for a common front of the workers. The basis of such a campaign lies in the campaign for International Trade Union Unity.

Thus in either case the conclusion is the same. The immediate line of advance is International Trade Union Unity.

*(We regret that, owing to unexpected pressure on our space, we have to hold over till next month several articles, including the sixth instalment of Lenin's "On the Road to Insurrection.")*

# The DIPLOMACY of MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD

## II.

By "U.D.C."

*[Continued from last month]*

**M**ACDONALD'S attitude during the Russian negotiation was significant enough. But the real test of his diplomacy must be sought in his handling of the group of questions centring around the Versailles settlement, for these were the questions that he had made particularly his own.

On Russia his hand had always been forced. The Labour Party policy had been formulated not by, but almost in spite of, him. But on the Versailles questions it was he and his associates who had laid down the line of policy and had secured its adoption by the party as a whole. Now came the opportunity to put into practice the principles so often enunciated during the period of opposition.

The central thesis of those principles had been expressed in a resolution moved by MacDonalld himself at the 1919 Southport Conference:—

The immediate revision of the harsh provisions of the Treaty is essential on grounds of honour and expediency.

In 1923 he had been even more emphatic. "There will never," he declared in a speech at Leicester, "be peace so long as the Versailles Treaty is in existence."

Chiefly, of course, it was the reparations clauses which were to be revised. Over and over again MacDonalld had denounced the folly of Allied statesmanship in seeking to extort large sums from Germany as reparations. "Pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of reparations is the great curse of every country." Morally it was indefensible. Economically it was suicidal. Either a complete abandonment or a sweeping reduction of the Allies' claims was the indispensable preliminary to any settlement.

That, and the immediate evacuation of the Ruhr and the evacuation as soon as possible of the Rhineland were the primary

points. But the Labour Party policy—which one may justly call the MacDonald policy—further insisted that there must be a revision not only of treaties but of diplomatic attitude. The perpetuation in peace of the war-time groupings of Europe into allied, enemy and neutral States was a folly and an obstacle to settlement. We must be good Europeans, not good allies. Real peace could not be secured by the Entente dealing with Germany, but only by the statesmen of Europe meeting either in a League or in conference without recrimination or memory of the war years, as equal partners in a common task of reconstruction.

To put those principles into practice and to carry the policy into effect was, above all, the work for which MacDonald had made himself Foreign Secretary, and which the Party looked confidently to him to essay. Few underestimated the difficulties, few hoped that success could be complete. But almost without exception the Party looked for a strenuous and gallant attempt. It might fail, but failure would be no disgrace and would prepare the way to greater success.

But for what actually happened no one was prepared. So startling, so devastating it was that even when it came few realised it clearly. Even those who saw could hardly believe. It was tragic to watch men like Brailsford and Morel trying, until further trying was impossible, to persuade themselves that it was not so.

Yet, looking back over the year of testing, the truth is pitifully obvious.

MacDonald, faced by this tremendous task, simply gave it up. He was not beaten in the struggle. He did not struggle at all. He threw aside, as if in panic, every principle he had ever professed, every policy he had ever supported.

Instead of trying to secure that treaty revision which he had declared "essential on grounds of honour and expediency," he made the sanctity of the Versailles obligations the basis of his policy.

Instead of attempting—as even his Tory predecessors had attempted—to secure a reduction of reparations claims, he tacitly accepted the preposterous figures of St. James's and devoted himself to the task of squeezing the maximum possible yearly contribution from the workers of Germany.

Instead of breaking down the war-time grouping and the war-time psychology he made it his first effort to strengthen the Entente and to promise that in case of need Germany should "find herself confronted by England, Belgium and France, inflexibly united, as they were during the war."

Instead of bringing pressure upon France to bring her troops out of the Ruhr, he declined to interfere in the matter at all: nor did he even obtain assurances that the Cologne area should be evacuated—in accordance with the Treaty—in January, 1925.

All these things might have been—would have been—difficult to secure. The charge which MacDonalld has to meet is not that he did not succeed in securing them, but that he did not so much as try to do so. He threw up the sponge as he entered the ring.

The reasons for this pitiful surrender are not far to seek. To talk of treachery is absurd. MacDonalld was never in his life guilty of so positive and so virile a crime. The plain fact, in plain language, is that he funked the job.

It would have meant hard fighting. And MacDonalld is—well, not a fighting man. It would have meant hard work. And MacDonalld is incapable of sustained mental effort. Anyone who has been associated with him in any real work will have unpleasant memories of his aversion to detail, to precision, to "brass tacks," of his tendency to wool-gathering, of his habit of avoiding difficulties and decisions and of finding refuge in cloudy generalities from hard facts. To use plain words again, he is a shirker. And like many of the species, he is filled with pity for himself whenever circumstances force him to undesired and unaccustomed effort. He scarcely made a speech as Premier which did not appeal for sympathy on the ground of overwork. Yet he cannot be classed among the hard-working Foreign Ministers, of whom Palmerston and Lord Curzon stand out in the traditions of the Foreign Office. His boasts and self-commiserations impressed his audiences. His officials read them with polite amusement. They knew how he preferred sitting by the fire at Chequers or Downing Street to reading or drafting dispatches, attending a banquet or garden party to studying a financial problem. They remembered how in the days when he was supposed to be learning the ropes he would



give his attention to culling and eagerly reading every word of insincere adulation which he could find in the British or American Press.

Add to this temperamental indolence the desire of the man to stand well with the people amongst whom he now found himself thrown, his eagerness to show them that a Lossiemouth loon could satisfy all standards of qualification for a Premier of Britain, his pitiable anxiety to forget and bury the past when he was the detested Socialist and pro-German, his vanity and susceptibility to flattery, and you have the psychological explanation of his conduct.

His first act as Foreign Secretary was as decisive as it was amazing. Impetuously, almost indecently, he flung himself at the head of M. Poincaré. It was for those with eyes to see an amazing spectacle. MacDonald of the I.L.P., MacDonald of the U.D.C. assiduously wooing "Poincaré-la-Guerre." In the ardour of his new affection he flung decency to the winds.

"Our two countries," began his first letter, "have made such sacrifices together for a common cause." "He will soon be boasting that he won the war," commented one sardonic tongue. M. Poincaré contented himself with the biting answer, "You may be sure that the memory of those times is ever present to my mind as it is to yours." Unhappily the sarcasm was wasted on MacDonald, who is unable to appreciate the finer shades of insult.

To curry favour with M. Poincaré, even to placate him, by such crude blandishments was impossible. It was also unnecessary. For the writing was already on the wall. Every competent prophet knew that the coming elections would bring the end of the Poincaré regime and would give France a Government of the Bloc des Gauches. Every canon of diplomacy prescribed delay and cautious waiting on the event. But MacDonald was an impetuous wooer. He bombarded Poincaré with letters. He declared that he wanted to make the Entente "much more than a nominal thing." He dismissed the views of his party as "popular sentiments, erroneous though they may be." And he crowned all by the historic invitation to Chequers issued on the eve of the French elections. That invitation, said the French Socialists bitterly, was worth, at the lowest estimate, 100,000 votes to the Bloc National. Which one

does not doubt was precisely the intention of those who advised MacDonald to send it.

It is curious to note how MacDonald's tone, haughty to the point of arrogance in addressing the Labour Governments of Russia or Mexico, became effusive and almost cringing in addressing Poincaré or Mussolini.

It is also worth recalling how reluctantly after the French elections he abandoned his Poincaré flirtation. He went on writing letters until a sharp though unofficial protest from M. Herriot's friends forced him to stop. And even then he told the French Ambassador that he felt it was necessary to make sure that the settlement with Germany should be one "acceptable to M. Poincaré." It should be added that he later denied having said this. But to that, again, it must be added that MacDonald's denials are like depreciated currency. They have been issued in such quantities that they have ceased to have any appreciable value.

The first phase closed with the fall of Poincaré. The second had already opened with the presentation of the Dawes Report.

Now the Dawes Report, though in rhetorical flights MacDonald described it as a document which would "bring peace and security to the Continent," had nothing to do with peace and security. It was, and professed to be, nothing more or less than an expert examination of the most effective method of extorting reparations from Germany. It was a dissertation on the ways and means of performing an operation which, just a year before, MacDonald had declared in the House of Commons would "wreck Europe." Moreover, it was a report drawn up by men of capitalist training and views, under the chairmanship of one of the bitterest living enemies of organised Labour. Therefore it was only natural that it should not merely contain plans for squeezing Germany for the benefit of Allied and American capitalism, but that it should so devise these plans that the squeeze should be felt as much as possible by the German workers, as little as possible by the German capitalists.

Yet within forty-eight hours—as he himself boasted—MacDonald had not merely accepted this plan in its entirety, but had made the forcing of it upon the German workers the chief object of his policy.

Again the real explanation is, I believe, his amazing indolence. He does not, as he proudly informed a dinner party, wear ready-made clothes. But one suspects that he would so do if the alternative were a piece of hard work. For he leapt eagerly at this ready-made policy. "There are things in the Dawes Report that I do not like," he said at York. "But if I begin to raise this detail and that detail, France, Belgium and Germany would do the same." Acceptance in its entirety would be so simple, would avoid all that detail, all that hard work of bargaining and struggling from which his soul recoiled. And so, to save trouble for himself, he abandoned the German workers without lifting a finger on their behalf, without saying a word for them except that perfunctory "there are things I do not like."

"What if Germany will not accept?" asked Morel at a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party. "She must accept. We shall make her accept. We must have *some* settlement," replied the Premier, irritably. "That is what Lloyd George used to tell us in 1919," came Lansbury's deep-voiced comment.

Even more remarkable was the Premier's explanation, given in private on another occasion, that it was necessary to place a heavy Reparation burden on Germany in order to handicap German industries, which otherwise might prove dangerous competitors. Perhaps none of his utterances during this year of office was more startling to his hearers than this. Many had doubted the quality of his Socialism; but the purity of his Liberalism had always been counted above suspicion.

A case valid, or at least agreeable, for acceptance of the Dawes Report from the Labour point of view could with some ingenuity be made out. The *Herald* and *New Leader* began valiantly to make it as the best of a terribly bad job.

If, they argued, we can, by acceptance of the Dawes Report and by the pressure of our position as France's creditor for some £600,000,000, induce the French Government to bring its troops out of the Ruhr, to give a firm undertaking that the Rhineland evacuation would begin in January and that there would be no repetition of the Ruhr escapade, to abandon the whole policy of alternate threats and panics towards Germany—in short if, at the

price of the Dawes acceptance, we can bring about a genuine settlement in Western Europe, then the sacrifice may be worth while.

And this was the policy which—though with some misgiving born of recent experience—the party expected MacDonald to pursue.

For whenever he spoke of the Dawes Report, it was in terms which suggested that in putting it into effect he would be able to establish peace on earth. "Here," he had cried to the York Conference of the I.L.P., "is Europe's chance. Put it into operation all at once. Finish the job and bring peace and security to the Continent."

It was remembered too that MacDonald had always wisely insisted that a settlement of the debt question must be reached at the same time as a settlement with Germany. "The questions," he had declared only a few months before taking office, "cannot be separated. They must be pursued simultaneously. The time has come for us, France, Belgium and Italy, to come to an agreement about the debts. We can't go on month by month playing with the thing and allowing it to remain until it becomes like a right of way."

That had been a firm speech, wildly cheered by men who realised that by slackness and procrastination in this matter of debts the Bonar Law and Baldwin Governments had deprived themselves of a powerful diplomatic instrument which might be used for the compelling of peace. Now that same instrument lay in the hands of the maker of that speech, ready for use.

Again the almost incredible happened. Without a word of explanation MacDonald deliberately threw his weapon away. He declined flatly to consider or discuss the debt question. He calmly informed M. Herriot that his view had always been that the question of international Allied debts must be kept separate from that of the Reparations settlement. It took a political crisis in France to extort from him a promise that he would "seek with the Governments concerned an equitable solution of the debt problem"—a promise which, incidentally, he made during his remaining four months of office not the slightest effort to fulfil.

He threw away the power which the ardent French desire for a debt settlement had placed in his hands. But it matters little that he did so, for it turned out that he had no intention of using

it in any case. Except for oratorical purposes he had quite forgotten about the pacification of Europe. It was too detailed, too difficult, too uncertain. The weak and wayward mind turned with relief to the single task of getting acceptance for the Dawes scheme. The actor's instinct realised joyfully that he would be able to represent this, at any rate for a little while, as a great diplomatic victory.

From now on MacDonald develops the Wilsonian single track mind. As Wilson in Paris in the summer of 1919 saw only the League, so MacDonald in London in the summer of 1924 saw only Dawes. Instead of imposing conditions for its acceptance, he was willing to give concessions. In the famous Chequers talk with Herriot it was only the cool restraining influence of Sir Eyre Crowe which deterred him from giving every pledge and every promise—save that one of debt discussion which he should have given gladly, but from which his indolent mind recoiled—which Herriot asked of him.

As it was he said enough to enable Herriot to claim in the Chamber that France's liberty and military action remained inviolate, that the French Government had "the right to count on the continuous collaboration of Great Britain to assure the security of France, which has to be protected from German Imperialism," and that they had restored the united front "necessary in peace as in war."

Further concessions were made in the dramatic dash to Paris "to save M. Herriot." But for this we must not blame MacDonald overmuch. For the little crisis was caused as much by a bad piece of departmental bungling as by MacDonald's own slipshod methods of business. It was clear indeed from the Premier's speech in the House on July 7 that he had only a vague idea of what it was all about. For it must be admitted that when Mr. Baldwin remarked afterwards that "with the utmost goodwill he found himself with far less grasp of the whole subject than when the right honourable gentleman began to speak" he was voicing the thoughts of our side of the House as well as of his own.

The Herriot crisis was the prelude to the London Conference. And the London Conference was the crowning point of MacDonald's

diplomacy. His part in it is therefore singularly instructive. He welcomed the delegates in a characteristic speech, lofty in sentiment, admirable in phrase, charming in manner.

And then he retired, leaving the work to be done by the various committees. Yet he did not retire completely. With a graceful condescension he visited each committee from time to time, bidding the members continue with their work as though he were not present. One regrets to have to add that this courtesy was not appreciated as it should have been by all the delegates, one of whom commented, with unjustified bitterness, that "it was just like a headmaster going round the class rooms to see that the school was behaving itself."

The first hitch in the Conference came over the question of guarantees against the taking by any individual power of independent sanctions in the event of Germany's default—in other words of guarantees against a repetition of the Ruhr adventure. Snowden put up a fight, but MacDonald, airily arguing that as Germany would not default it really did not matter what was decided, conceded the French claim. Three days later, to his astonishment and chagrin, he found himself faced with an ultimatum from the British and American bankers. Mr. MacDonald, they said in effect, might be satisfied. But they were not. And without some effective guarantee, they would not advance the indispensable £40,000,000. Finance has always been a closed book to MacDonald. He has an almost morbid dislike of its entanglements. But this time there was no escape. The week which followed was one of the unhappiest of his life. Deadlock seemed complete between obstinate business men and obstinate French statesmen, neither of whom seemed in the least susceptible to his persuasiveness of speech and manner. The bankers especially wearied him with insistence on hard facts and with complex arguments in a language he did not understand. But at last the crisis got itself solved. The bankers prevailed, the French produced a formula acceptable to them and the harassed Premier, emerging from a crisis in which he had felt helpless between two strong conflicting wills, grew cheerful again and remarked—it is alleged—that "the Devil himself could not now divide the Allies."

He made two speeches in the House of Commons, remarkable in that they were almost free from inaccuracy of statement or confusion of thought. And the dignity of his reception of the German delegates was only slightly marred by his appeal to the astonished delegates to finish off the Conference in three days so that he could get off to Scotland for a much needed holiday.

His longing to get away from the troubles of diplomacy to his beloved Lossiemouth was not gratified. Crisis followed crisis in quick succession. The question of military evacuation of the Ruhr, which he had tried to exclude from consideration, refused to be excluded; the Germans made it a condition of signing the Dawes protocol that they should be given a firm pledge with a fixed time-limit. They and the French began haggling, chaffering, threatening to go home.

Here was a situation created for Mr. MacDonald's special gifts; and he used them fully. He put aside all questions of principle and policy. He devoted himself single-heartedly to the task of getting a settlement as quickly as possible, so that the Conference might be able to claim a successful ending and he might be able to catch that famous 4.30 train. He kept a magnificently open mind. Such an apparently vital question as that vexed one whether Dusseldorf and Ruhrort and Duisburg should be evacuated at the same time as the Ruhr, he blandly declared to be of no importance at all.

And at last he succeeded. The French and Germans, left to themselves, at last got the "formula" in which all diplomatic squabbles end—until they break out again over the question of its interpretation.

A final bustle got the protocols signed late on Saturday evening. The London Conference was over. And in the chorus of praise and thanksgiving the only note of doubt and warning came, to the slight bewilderment of the Labour Party, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The meeting of the League Assembly in September was—the Premier had repeatedly assured us—to complete the great work of the London Conference. Though in precisely what manner he had always left somewhat indefinite.

At York he had suggested that in some unspecified way the League was to take a hand with the Dawes scheme. "My view," he remarked, "is that we take the report : that we get the League of Nations in with us : that this becomes a League of Nations operation as well as an Allied operation." To M. Herriot he had promised that the Dawes Report once being accepted the question of French security should be taken up at Geneva. To the world in general he had given assurances that the League was the keystone and centre-point of all his policy, that to strengthen it was his prime concern, to work through it his constant aim.

Now he did certainly extend to this Assemblage of the Nations the high compliment of his personal patronage. The Premier himself is going to Geneva, announced the fuglemen, adding that, in whatever low water the League had found itself, through Corfu and other unhappy incidents, this would set it on its feet again. The voyage to Geneva, we were made to feel, was the social recognition of the League, which must hereafter be regarded as moving in the Highest Society.

Expectations ran high. But in achievement the Geneva Assembly in so far as MacDonald's share in it was concerned was merely a rather futile epilogue to the Conference of London. It produced nothing whatsoever.

The Premier attended the meeting of the Assembly during two days. He made a dramatic speech in which he declared that they were about to lay the foundations of peace upon earth and to begin a new era in Europe. He urged rather perfunctorily that Germany should be admitted as a member, ostentatiously classed himself with capitalist statesmen and against the Bolsheviki, and made a vague proposal that the Covenant of the League should be converted into a Charter of Peace. Incidentally he angered the Poles by a reference to Silesia, the Swedes by his praise of Danish disarmament and the Russians by a remarkable suggestion that Great Britain had not recognised Soviet sovereignty over Georgia—three indiscretions which had to be rather humiliatingly explained away—a species of inverted diplomatic hat-trick probably without precedent or parallel.

Then, having moved formally the setting up of a couple of committees, he took the train back to London, leaving the League



precisely where he found it, and all the problems of European settlement precisely where they were when he arrived in Geneva.

His only further indication of his belief in the League was his brusque rejection a month later of Zaghul Pasha's proposal to invoke its aid in settling the problem of the control of the Suez Canal—an incident of which all mention was tactfully omitted from the White Paper which purported to tell the story of the Zaghul conversations.

So ended MacDonald's handling of the Versailles Treaty problems. The net result was the forcing of the Dawes plan upon Germany with all its implications for the German workers. Nothing else had been settled or even endeavoured. The Versailles Treaty, whose immediate revision "honour and interest" demanded, remained. The French troops are still in the Ruhr, nor is there even the certainty that they will leave next August. The British troops were left in Cologne, with a half promise that they would not be withdrawn so long as the French needed their presence. No assurance was obtained that the first zone would be evacuated in accordance with the Treaty in January, 1925. Germany remained outside the League of Nations and was still to be treated as the criminal state, to whom now and again minatory and dictatorial notes were addressed by the Allies. Western Europe when he left office was—save for the Dawes plan and its apparatus for squeezing Germany until the pips squeak—singularly like Western Europe when he took office. There had, it is true, been changes of Government in France and Germany, but this was scarcely MacDonald's doing, despite his curious endeavour to persuade himself that he—the sender of the famous eve-of-the-polls invitation to Poincaré—had won the election for Herriot.

As to the much-talked-of change of atmosphere, it was a transient illusion which has left scarcely a trace behind it. The relation of Germany to the Allies, the relations of Britain and France are not sensibly different to those which MacDonald found. The Allies unite for the coercing of Germany. But their diplomacies intrigue against each other for predominance in very European capital. Security, disarmament, a genuine League and a genuine spirit of real co-operation are as far off as ever. The attempt—if attempt it may be called—to solve hard problems by the repetition of homilies

and moral precepts in a sonorous voice had failed miserably. "Ah, my friends," in deep tones may thrill the lady members of the I.L.P. It had singularly failed to move the statesmen in Europe. Intent upon himself, MacDonald had forgotten the task to which he had been called and had preferred his own social comfort to solid political achievement.

Of his exploits in other fields it is impossible to speak in actual detail here. Yet one may recall his histrionic treatment of the Mexican problem, in which he seems to have thought himself cast momentarily for the rôle of Palmerston, with Mrs. Evans as his Don Pacifico : and the conversations with Zaghul Pasha, in which he evaded wearisome negotiations on detail by forcing an immediate deadlock, while at the same time giving new assurance to his favourite audience that he was as good an Imperialist as any Toryism could produce. It made the task of his successor in Egypt a hundred fold easier that he could point to the MacDonald-Zaghul conversations as the starting point of that policy of coercion of which the December ultimatum was only the logical fulfilment.

Here, perhaps, he may be counted as having changed the policy of this country. For the rest he left it unchanged. And as with policy, so with personnel. As leader of the Opposition he had declared over and over again the urgent necessity for sweeping changes in the Foreign Office. "We propose," he wrote, for example, in the *New Leader* in August, 1923, "to end the bureaucracy of the Foreign Office, with its queer mentality and subversive selection of agents."

That proposal went the way of all the others. He ended nothing and changed nothing. He left every "queer mentality," every "subversive agent," where he found it. He refused even to reinstate in the service men of Labour sympathies who had been driven from it. Herriot the Radical transformed the personnel of the French diplomatic service. MacDonald the Socialist left ours untouched. When it was a question of sending a special mission to the Labour Government of Mexico, he proposed to appoint Sir Thomas Hohler, whose name is a by-word for reaction throughout Central Europe. And he was angry to hear that the Mexicans regarded the choice as an insult.

He came to the Foreign Office, he saw, and was conquered.

Those skilled dealers with men took his measure swiftly. They praised him to his face and paid seeming deference to his love of authority. Behind his back they smiled and wondered at the anxiety with which they had looked forward to his coming. "He is the easiest Foreign Secretary I have ever had to manage," was the complacent summing-up of one of the most powerful of them. They flattered him, deluded him, despised him, and, finally, by a shrewd stroke which his foolish confidence in flatteries made easy, brought him crashing to his political ruin. That would have been a tragedy—but the fall of little men does not stir our tragic senses, which demand that our pity shall not be mingled with contempt.

He has written his own epitaph in that amazing article in the *Spectator* in which he boasted naively how he—who had been sent to Downing Street to change the whole current of our Foreign Policy—had preserved its continuity.

Had that article been written in 1923, James Ramsay MacDonald would never have been Foreign Secretary. The fact that it was written in 1924 should in itself make certain that he is never Foreign Secretary again.

*(In response to certain inquiries our contributor wishes to state that he does not claim that his two articles necessarily express all the views of the majority of the late Prime Minister's colleagues in the U.D.C.; nor has he attempted to restrict his expressions of opinion within the limits of the present policy of the Union of Democratic Control as declared through its official organs.—Editor, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.)*

# DIDDLING THEM WITH DAWES

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

Anglo-American collaboration has only just begun. This collaboration will also have an end; it will be torn asunder by the contradictions of capitalism in England and America, *but the beginning of this end is not yet in sight.*—KARL RADEK, in *THE LABOUR MONTHLY*, December, 1924.

**W**HEN precisely Karl Radek wrote the above lines, which in their ending are so blind to the actualities of the situation, I cannot say. It was certainly amusing to read them alongside the newspaper reports of the debate in the House of Commons on the revival of Imperial Preference in the form of special marketing schemes for handling two articles of American produce so important in the economy of Chicago and so provocative of rivalry between British and American capitalism as meat and fruit.

Taken in conjunction with the British Government's evident concern to fortify friendship with Argentina, whose strategic and economic importance in any struggle between Britain and the United States, shutting the Panama Canal route to British shipping and the American meat market to British butchers, must be obvious, the new tendencies of British trade policy become markedly evident.

Perhaps an excessive preoccupation with Germany as not only the hub of Europe but as the centre of the world may account for Karl Radek's eyes resting too long upon the coal-streaked waters of the Rhine and the Ruhr.

Had he remembered reading—but how can even Radek recall everything that he reads?—in the British newspapers of the now dominant Tory Party the constant argument that “we” should be advised to leave Germany to stew in her juice and Russia to her own devices what time “we” went forth to develop “our” imperial heritage, he might have seen more in this Anglo-American co-operation than he has done. He might have seen in the tortuous course of British capitalist diplomacy during the last three or four years a very astute game being played to entangle America once again in the economic chaos of Central Europe.

The British governing class has, or we who know it at first hand and not merely in a foreign Press are greatly mistaken, no intention of yielding its pride of place in the scheme of world domination to these Yankee upstarts.

British-Canadian capitalism is, doubtless, fighting on a double front the penetration of the Dominion by American finance and the jeopardy of its grain and timber trades by the opening up of Russia's competitive sources of supply. It knows, however, how to avail itself of the rivalry that must exist between Chicago and Minneapolis on the one hand and Moscow and Odessa upon the other.

British capitalism in commencing first to encourage Empire meat and fruit is repelling not Russia but the United States. The Soviet Union, the maledictions of whose reserve diplomats attached to the Comintern are used to scare old ladies during election time rather than regarded seriously over here, will not be permitted indefinitely to remain without the interested assistance of our astute masters.

The Soviet Union is practically powerless in modern world-war without an industrial equipment which only the aid of foreign capital can rapidly provide. This will, of course, meet with the indignant clattering of the whole horde of phrase-mongers and manifesto merchants attached to the E.C.C.I., but even at the risk of stimulating the Paper Trust and the Ink Commissariat unduly it is just as well to state the unpalatable truth.

The British governing class has succeeded so far in what may well prove to be the most daring *coup* in all its long and brilliant record of diplomatic chicanery.

It has lured American capitalism—with £20,000,000 as against £12,000,000 of its own money out of that £40,000,000 loan under dear old Dawes—back into old Europe.

It has so manoeuvred that American capitalism has excited the nationalist enmity of the French bourgeoisie. It has so wriggled and twisted that it is the Government of the United States which comes "dunning" the impoverished peoples of the war-stricken Continent for "blood money." It has found means to contract out of the obligation to help Japan, but has done nothing seriously to estrange her. Step by step, our governing class, skilled in the

arts of statecraft, empire builders, and conservers of order across the ages, have applied to the world problem those principles of the balance of power which have guided their policy through the centuries.

It may be that Karl Radek really believes—though I must say that I doubt it—that the aggressive tone and sharpened criticism which characterise the ever-more windy pronouncements of the Comintern and the “brother-parties” of Western Europe are rendering the best service to the cause of revolution. He may think that to help the extreme Reaction to unite the capitalist States long enough to establish a systematic White Terror and to concert a more intense blockade of the Soviet Union is better than to give these gentry a breathing-time in which to renew their mutual hostilities.

Only another world-war can so disintegrate the economy and corrode the social pacifism, at any rate, in the Anglo-Saxon world wherein I live and wherein I have to play my part, as to make the objective of the workers’ conquest and subsequent maintenance of power practical politics.

Would but the Foreign Office give my friend Radek facilities to observe on the *terrain* of Great Britain—for instance, in this South Wales mining village where I write and where the lodge meeting of the miners is attended by less than a dozen out of hundreds of members—what there is besides “the constitutional illusions which stand between the revolution and the British proletariat” (M. N. Roy), he might understand why I left the “cats’ chorus.”

When I am very old I may return to what Bukharin told me was the centre of “the most important place in the world,” *i.e.*, the House of Commons.

Meanwhile, still having good sight in my eyes and the vigour of youth guiding pen and voice, I prefer to condemn “the most valuable part of my anatomy” to the discomforts of crowded railway carriages and ramshackle omnibuses *en route* from town to town and village to village of unawakened agrarian and industrial Britain.

*(The above article and M. Philips Price’s article, which appeared last month, are referred to in our current “Notes of the Month.” Karl Radek will reply to the two articles in a forthcoming issue.—*Editor, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.)

# The World of Labour

	PAGE
THE UNITED FRONT : International Trade Union Unity ..	121
The Attack on the British Trade Union Delegation .. ..	123
Joint Meeting of I.F.T.U. and Second International .. ..	124
Metal Workers' International ..	126

## THE UNITED FRONT

### International Trade Union Unity

THE repercussions of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union unity negotiations in certain leading circles of the International Federation of Trade Unions were referred to in these notes last month.<sup>1</sup>

In *Het Volk*, the chief daily paper of the Dutch Social-Democratic Party, Mr. R. Stenhuis, leader of the Dutch Trade Unions and a member of the Executive Committee of the I.F.T.U., published a series of articles attacking Mr. Purcell. He wrote:—

Purcell stated in a speech to the Russian Trade Union Congress, after being two days in Russia, that the position of the Russian workers, since 1920, has improved in an admirable manner.

The simple fact that he made such a statement after staying two days in Moscow proves already that the man is either a common tool in the hands of the Communists or a superficial braggart. . . .

At the same time he declared that an international Trade Union Congress must restore unity without unnecessary formulæ and without preliminary conditions. . . .

The full committee of the I.F.T.U., which meets in February, will have something to say of these declarations of its chairman, as Purcell is in the service of the I.F.T.U., with no right to dictate. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The British Labour Movement has the honour to nominate a chairman of the I.F.T.U. We cannot say that it seems to appreciate that honour : at first it produces a "Right" extremist and then a "Left" extremist, thus showing that it did not think it worth while to consider the choice of a chairman seriously.

If the British Labour Movement cannot produce a capable chairman,

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<sup>1</sup> THE LABOUR MONTHLY, January, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 57, 60.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Stenhuis here turns aside to admonish an ex-Chairman of the I.F.T.U., Mr. J. H. Thomas, for his habitual denial of the "class war" and his deification of the "community." Mr. Stenhuis declares that the class war "is the motor of all social legislation, it is the force that increases wages and reduces excessive profits. It is organisation, forming of power, discussion. . . . Mr. Thomas' advice would mean nothing but pushing the working class into the arms of the Communists. Then the class war would express itself again in its first primitive form and the coming of Socialism, the real community, would be delayed."

whose views and actions represent the I.F.T.U., then we must look for a chairman in another country.

We will have to finish, anyway, with the doings of Mr. Purcell, who is still chairman of the I.F.T.U.

*De Volksgazet*, a Belgian Social-Democratic organ, took it upon itself to declare that Mr. Purcell's

irresponsible and untimely statements show ignorance and carelessness.

Meanwhile a meeting of the Executive Committee of the I.F.T.U. was held on December 1-2, naturally in the absence of the British delegates, Purcell and Bramley. The official *Press Report* of the I.F.T.U., reporting the meeting, published the following note :—

With regard to the attitude of Purcell in Russia, it was pointed out that Purcell did not go to Russia as representative of the I.F.T.U. and that therefore he is only personally responsible for his utterances in or about Russia.

The Executive Committee addressed the following letter (dated December 1) to the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions:—

We gather from your letter of July 26,<sup>3</sup> and also from this last letter,<sup>4</sup> that you do not appear willing to affiliate with the I.F.T.U. on the basis of its rules and resolutions. Instead of doing so you propose the convening of a Joint General Congress, a World Labour Congress, to which would be invited not only the organisations affiliated with the I.F.T.U. and the R.I.L.U., but all other organisations outside these Internationals which recognise the principle of class war.

We have already called your attention in our letter of September 11<sup>5</sup> to the fact that the Vienna Congress gave us definite directions for the opening of negotiations on the question of affiliation of the Russian Trade Unions to the I.F.T.U.

It is for our General Council, which, together with the Executive Committee, constitute the two bodies competent to interpret and execute the decisions of our International Congresses, to consider and define its attitude regarding your new proposal for the convening of a World Labour Congress.

The date fixed for the meeting of our General Council is February 5, 1925, and the following days.

Mr. Oudegeest, the Secretary of the I.F.T.U., published an article in which he pointed out that Purcell, though he acted in Russia as an individual:—

will always and under all circumstances bear in mind his high office and never lose sight of the fact that he is president of an organisation which represents twenty-three countries,

<sup>3</sup> This proposed a joint meeting to arrange the fusion of the R.I.L.U. and the I.F.T.U.

<sup>4</sup> Dated October 23. "We declare that the chief and most important guiding principle in the activities of the trade union and workers' organisations, as we hold, is to get free of the irreconcilable contradiction in interests between Labour and Capital. This demands a class war to the knife between the wage slave and the capitalist system.

"Hence the reason of our proposal, a complete break with every form of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, a common fight of the workers and their organisations on a national and international scale against world capital."

<sup>5</sup> This letter replied to the Russian letter of July 26, desiring a written basis for discussion "so that we may see where agreement on principles and policy is possible."



and further that Purcell had signed the previous letters of the I.F.T.U. (see above) to the Russian Trade Unions. Mr. Oudegeest opined that if Purcell had changed his mind and

now desires to cancel his signature to these letters he would unquestionably have acquainted the I.F.T.U. with the fact before mentioning it in any other quarter.

Quoting Purcell's remark that the convening of a world unity Congress depends entirely on how soon the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress sees the necessity for such a congress,

Mr. Oudegeest declared:—

If the General Council should be in favour of such a Congress, which is very questionable, it will undoubtedly adopt the correct method of procedure and apply first to the I.F.T.U. For both Purcell and the General Council know very well that no Congress *not* convened by the I.F.T.U. would be attended by a single one of the affiliated national centres.

With regard to the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, Mr. Oudegeest said:—

In any case, the British members of an Anglo-Russian Committee will be bound by the resolutions of the Vienna Congress, while the Russians cannot act independently of the Red International of Labour Unions and the instructions of Zinovieff.

The T.U.C. General Council has refused to be represented at a Conference on International Unity issued by the National Ministry Movement for January 25.

#### The Attack on the British Trade Union Delegation

The British Trade Union Delegation to Russia returned to London on December 19: the next day they issued a short preliminary report. This report was exclusively concerned with the economic situation in Russia and made no reference to the International Trade Union unity negotiations.

However, the Press attack on the Delegation continued with unabated vigour, the *Manchester Guardian* as before leading the attack, seconded by *The Times*, the *Morning Post* and the *Daily News*.

Great play was made with the fact that, on their return, passing through Berlin, the Delegation had given interviews to the Communist *Rote Fahne* and not the Social-Democratic *Vorwärts*, and that they had been welcomed by a Communist demonstration.

The *Morning Post* (December 12, 1924) gave prominence to excerpts from an article by Mr. Tom Shaw, M.P., ex-Minister of Labour, in the *Clarion* of December 19. Mr. Shaw wrote:—

I have read the extraordinary statements attributed to the trade union delegation now in Russia, but I am waiting for their return before I believe some of the things I have read. It seems to me incomprehensible that some of the things attributed to them are true. . . .

I know that flattery can work wonders. I know how difficult it is to get at the truth if you do not understand a word of any language except your own, but I simply cannot believe that the men who went to Russia have been such helpless fools as they have been made to appear by the reports of their

speeches. Anyhow, we shall see. I fancy there will be a great fight before the English workers accept some of the doctrines alleged to have been given as their views.

The *Manchester Guardian* (December 23, 1924) wrote:—

Why does the preliminary statement say nothing of the very foundations of trade unionism—the right to combine, the right of free speech, and a free Press? This is felt to be a most damaging omission which invalidates all the fulsome praise of economic progress.

The article went on to invoke two cases of the political prisoners in Russia, and of Georgia, and to quote an "open letter" to Mr. Purcell, written by an *émigré* Russian Menshevik Trade Union leader. This letter makes the usual allegations that the Trade Unions in Russia are not "independent" of the State and are "subjugated" to the Communist Party. The *Morning Post* (December 15, 1924) had previously given publicity to this letter which was printed in the first place in the Berlin *Vorwärts*.

Following the publication of the Delegation's Report, the Foreign Delegation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Mensheviks) addressed a very lengthy letter to the T.U.C. General Council and the Labour Party Executive in a tone that might be expected. The Delegation are stated to have surrendered themselves completely to the Soviet authorities. . . . Trusting the external impression made by official parades which the Bolsheviks so well know how to arrange, &c. . . .

Their conduct in Georgia transgresses the bounds of tact and decency which one has a right to expect from the responsible representatives of such a powerful labour organisation. Objectively speaking, this is intervention of the worst kind—in favour of the conquerors . . .

. . . The conduct of the British delegation . . . is a heavy blow to the cause of establishing in Russia those principles of democracy and Socialism which are also the foundation of your movement.<sup>6</sup>

A letter in a similar strain has been sent by the Mensheviks to Ben Tillett, signed by the notorious M. Abramovitch, their representative on the Bureau and Executive of the Labour and Socialist International. The letter challenges a statement made by Ben Tillett in Moscow to the effect that the Mensheviks were supported by French capitalists; it concludes formally:—

While publishing this our letter to you in the Press, we turn for defence against your behaviour, without qualifying this letter, to the executive committee of the Labour and Socialist International, which is to hold its session in Brussels on January 3, of which you are hereby notified.

#### Joint Meeting of I.F.T.U. and Second International

On January 3-4 a joint meeting of the Executive Committee of the I.F.T.U. and the Bureau of the Labour and Socialist International was held at Brussels; it was preceded by a meeting of the L.S.I. Bureau and succeeded by a meeting of their full Executive. The attitude of the International to the Soviet Government and the Communist International was discussed, but it is

<sup>6</sup> This letter was made the basis for a leading article in *Le Populaire* (Paris), the official fortnightly of the French Socialist Party, with a two-column headline: "The Naive Delegates of the Trade Unions Will Deceive No One."

understood that any decision was deferred till the next Executive meeting, in August or September.

The joint meeting was presided over by M. Vandervelde (Belgium) who delivered a sensational attack on the British Trade Union Delegation. Purcell and Bramley were prevented by the gale from being present at the meeting.

M. Vandervelde observed that:—

During the tour in Russia certain of its [the Delegation's] members, in particular those who acted as its spokesmen, such as Messrs. Purcell and Bramley, made declarations which were given wide publicity in the Bolshevik Press. . . .

. . . In their conclusions and in certain speeches which have been made we find statements which are plainly political in character, and which must necessarily have an altogether adverse influence, not to say a disastrous influence, from the point of view of their political repercussions in the Labour Movement.

He also attacked the Delegation's support of the Soviet Government in Georgia and declared that it was necessary for the joint meeting to discuss their Report. Discussion, however, was postponed.

M. Jouhaux (France), for the I.F.T.U., declared himself against an unconditional acceptance of any united front proposals.

“We are prepared to discuss the matter with the Russian trade unions,” he said, “but we want nothing to do with the Red International of Labour Unions.”

Mr. Tom Shaw agreed with this view.

In view of M. Vandervelde's remarks it is interesting to note that in the issue of *Le Peuple* (Brussels), the central organ of the Belgian Labour Party, for January 4, he wrote a signed article entitled “The Truth About Russia.”

This article attacked the British Delegation for their “optimistic” view of the situation in Russia. He compared their visit to the “conducted tours” arranged by the Belgian Government twenty years ago for inquiring visitors to the Congo.

They saw in Russia what they hoped and wished to see. Their hosts, past masters at this kind of game, showed them the “Patomkin villages”<sup>7</sup> of the Soviet Republic. Undoubtedly, unable, as they were, to speak a word of the language, they had no direct contact with the people . . . They saw; but they could neither ask questions nor inquire. But this does not prevent them declaring unreservedly that the Bolshevik regime has succeeded. . . .

It has been shown, here and elsewhere—in the *Manchester Guardian*, for instance—that the optimism of Purcell and Bramley is flatly contradicted by the official reports of the Soviets themselves.

Against the testimony of the British Delegation M. Vandervelde sets that of M. Kosta Todoroff (“who is not a Socialist”), a former Bulgarian minister in Belgrade and a member of the reactionary Agrarian Party led by the late Stamboulisky. This gentleman “recently” journeyed to Russia—neither the date nor the length of his trip is mentioned by M. Vandervelde—and published his impressions in the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary review *Volia Rossii*. The “truth” about Russia purveyed by M. Todoroff is of the kind that may

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<sup>7</sup> A reference to the custom of Patomkin (1739-1791), favourite of Catherine II of Russia. He built sham “show” villages in order to persuade her Royal Highness of the progress of social reform in Russia.

be imagined—30,000 starving and destitute children infesting the streets of Moscow, the peasants ground down in terrible poverty, the workers unable to live on their wages, general economic chaos and ruin. This black picture is solemnly reproduced by M. Vandervelde, with copious quotations, in his article.

#### **Metal Workers' International**

The Executive Committee of the Metal Workers' International met at Paris on January 5. The principal subject of discussion was the question of the relations with the All-Russian Metal Workers' Union.

Mr. J. T. Brownlie, President of the Executive Council of the A.E.U., made the following statement with regard to the British Trade Union delegation:—

I do not know if the Delegation sent by our trade unions to Russia has made all these statements with which it is credited. I was not there with them. I do not know if these statements have been such as they have been published, for instance, in the British Press. What I am in a position to say here is that if these statements were made, they are not necessarily the expression of what the British Trade Union Movement thinks as a whole." (*Le Peuple*, Paris, January 6, 1925.)

It will be seen that this statement is a very guarded one: but *Le Peuple*, which as the organ of the reformist C.G.T. (General Confederation of Labour) is notoriously opposed to any united front with Communist and revolutionary working-class elements, presented it as a definite repudiation of the Delegation. It wrote:—

These words, voluntarily emphasised by their speaker, have a significance that cannot be ignored. . . . We may remark, in the attitude of the British delegate at Paris, evidence of the reaction provoked in Labour circles by the exploits of the Delegation to Russia.

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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 131
<i>THE GOLD STANDARD</i>		
Two Deserters	- - - -	„ 151
	<i>By KARL RADEK</i>	
On the Road to Insurrection—V. The Bogy of Civil War	- - - -	„ 157
	<i>By V. I. LENIN</i>	
The Political Defeat of the Working Class	-	„ 172
	<i>By C. H. NORMAN</i>	
Some Questions for J. R. Clynes	- -	„ 180
	<i>By MANABENDRA NATH ROY</i>	
Loyalties	- - - -	„ 184
	<i>By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD</i>	
The World of Labour	- - - -	„ 189
Italy		

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*The Bankers' Triumph—Socialist Illusion—"International Capitalism"  
—What is Reformism?—Reformism New Style—"Organised  
Anarchy"—Concentration plus Competition—1914—Unequal  
Development of Capitalism—America—America and  
Europe—Gold to America—Apoplexy—1924—  
Pound Rises—But not British Economic Situation—  
Artificial Restoration—The Morning After—  
No Redistribution—Chains of Gold—  
Increased Output—The World  
Market—Germany—The Final  
Contradiction—War and  
Revolution.*

**A**LL the bankers are pleased that Britain is likely to return to the Gold Standard. In this they see the triumph of stabilisation and the restoration of capitalism, for which they have worked for six years. The capitalist offensive on hours and wages, the Dawes Report, the settlement of Reparations on a business basis, the establishment of stable governments, the loans to Europe, the ending of insecure currencies and exchanges and the return to gold with the path open to the recovery of trade and production—this is their answer, slowly and painfully pieced together, to the threat of revolution overhanging capitalism from its own internal violence and disorder. This answer, they see, is fraught with the suppression of the workers, the policing of Europe, intensification of labour and worsening of conditions, energetic action against revolutionary propaganda, preparation of counter revolution, fascism, strike-breaking, &c. ; but all this they believe they can pull through successfully, provided the situation holds together ; and once production begins to increase they can ease the pressure. This is the basis of the " hopes of revival " they are now holding out.

MANY Socialists also believe this. They believe that "International Capitalism" has straightened out its immediate difficulties and differences and, under the leadership of America, established itself as a single force against the European workers. "From Competition to Combination" is their cry; and they believe in consequence that (save for the "risk" of war, which, if the capitalists are "wise," they will avoid by Disarmament Conferences and Security Pacts) a period of more or less harmonious development is in front. Any talk of revolution they therefore feel to be idle dreaming or "romanticism" before the solid wall of International Finance. The only path before the workers they feel to be is the slow gradual accumulating organisation within the framework set by International Finance, the progressive conquest of positions within it, and the steady advance of "Education and Propaganda." They, therefore, preach peace with the powers that be, acceptance of the obvious fraud of bourgeois democracy, disclaiming of the class war or its admission only as a descriptive phrase, unity behind leaders in open alliance with the bourgeoisie, &c. In their practice, accordingly, they work for the restoration of capitalism and call it peace; take part in anti-revolutionary propaganda and persecution; help to hold down the Colonies by force and violence, &c. In this way, while not forgetting Socialism as the "ultimate aim," they become in practice ordinary bourgeois politicians (and the softer and more gullible of them fall by the wayside into corruption even by bourgeois standards—Barmat, biscuits, &c.). Thus, in this conception of capitalism as a more or less harmonious "system" which can be gradually remodelled, we are face to face with the innermost essence of reformism as a theory; of that reformism which flourished in the "progressive" period before the war, and which to-day, after the catastrophic shock of that mighty "accident," is gathering itself together again under the shadow of the restoration for a renewed run to a like conclusion. *The theoretical basis of Reformism is the belief in Capitalism as a stable system to be transformed by rational persuasion, and not as a war in which the only change can come by battle and victory.*



**I**T is therefore very necessary to look closely and exactly at the present situation, in order to determine what is the process of events which is represented (and in fact actually summarised and symbolised with mathematical clearness) by the proposed return to the gold standard. Does it represent a return, or even the beginning or possibility of a return, to what are called "normal" conditions? Or does it represent an intensification of forces leading in a very opposite direction? To answer this question it is not sufficient to point to the obvious external symptoms of disorder in the existing world situation; the increasing tension of armaments, inter-imperialist rivalries and crises, Fascism, the colonial wars, the collapse of the League of Nations, &c. Similar symptoms, although never on such a large scale, existed in the pre-war situation which led up to the world war; but their plain meaning was not understood because the basic process behind them (the final stage of capitalism and its approach to collapse) was not understood. They were regarded as excesses, accidents, abnormalities on the smooth face of stable capitalism: they were parcelled off into separate compartments of the Armaments Trust, Secret Diplomacy, Economic Imperialism, &c.; and it was endeavoured to meet them by liberal politics of arbitration and the Hague, parliamentarism, progressive blocs, pacifism, &c. In consequence the war of 1914 and the revolution of 1917 crashed on the labour movements of the West completely unprepared. In the same way to-day the external signs of disorder and struggle are seen—as who can fail to see them? But the process behind them, and therefore the inevitable revolutionary conclusion, are not understood: and in consequence the working class forces are still correspondingly unprepared for the much larger issues looming in front. It is accordingly necessary to go a little deeper into the theoretical development of capitalism.

**R**EFORMISM (that is to say, bourgeois thought in the Labour movement) before the war challenged Marxism on the following points. First, that the process of capitalism was not to increasing concentration, as Marx had declared, but to increasingly wide dispersion through the spread of limited liability companies, growth of the middle class, &c. Second,

that the division of classes was growing less, not greater, through the improvement in conditions of the working class, labour legislation, &c., and that in consequence the class struggle was diminishing in intensity and able to pass into the "civilised" form of the legislative parliamentary struggle for Socialism. Third, that the Marxian theory of inevitable crises of capitalism on an increasing scale, leading to its breakdown and to the revolutionary struggle of the working class for power, was incorrect; and that capitalism was on the way to overcoming its crises through its increasing international development. All these points, which were demonstrably false before 1914, were finally smashed beyond resurrection by the war—a "crisis" of capitalism which it was impossible for the most rosy-spectacled professor of capitalism and reformism to ignore. The effects of the war produced a terrific concentration of capitalist power and wealth beyond the wildest imaginings which could have been suggested in 1914. It intensified the bare division of classes until to-day that division into two camps dominates the inner politics of every country in Europe. Keynes has pointed out in his Tract on Monetary Reform how the old middle class in Europe has been in practice wiped out. The increasing misery of the working class has been felt in person by every European worker. The class struggle has increased in intensity to the point of revolution and counter-revolution. Thus in every respect the relentless force of facts has proved Marxism right and bourgeois thought wrong, and in consequence Marxism, alike as a theory and as a positive force, is a hundred times stronger to-day than in 1914.

**A**CCORDINGLY to-day it is no longer possible for Reformism to appear in the old form. The force of facts has driven it into the open as the avowed ally of capitalism against the working class. This is the significance of the Ebert trial, the Hungarian Social-Democratic pact with Horthy, and the hundred other revelations that are now coming out to illuminate the real purpose of the Second International, and are substantiating in bare historical fact charges far more serious and far-reaching than all the "abuse" of which its leaders have complained. To meet the new situation a new theory has to be found, which can

counter the obvious revolutionary meaning of the present epoch. At first a trial was made with Wilsonism and the League of Nations; but these soon became weak and ineffective in their appeal in the face of the open power-policy of modern capitalism. But now on the basis of the Dawes Restoration, on the broad back of American capital, a new attempt is made. The concentration of capital is no longer denied: it is embraced as the last salvation against the revolution. The secret of modern capitalism, we are told, is combination, not competition; capitalism is overcoming its own inner conflicts and, under the leadership of America, is developing into a single world trust; the dream of world revolution is a cinema romance in the face of modern capitalist organisation and chemical weapons; the old State boundaries bear no relation to the international character of modern capitalism; to attempt revolution in any country is to invite starvation from international capitalism; and consequently the only path forward is the gradual socialisation of modern concentrated industry through the spread of democracy and trade unionism.

**H**ERE in fact we have precisely the old exploded error in a new form—that is to say, the belief in capitalism as a possible stable system, the belief in organised capitalism as a possibility and not a contradiction in terms. Marx declared that the essence of capitalist apologetics consisted in seeing only the unity of capitalist relations, and not being able to see the internal contradictions. This is precisely the character of the modern reformist conception of “International Capitalism” and the possibility of stabilisation, which is used as a conception to prevent and resist the direct task and needs of revolutionary working-class preparation. The fundamental conceptions of Leninism: the conception on the one hand of finance capital as the culminating form of capitalism, of its supreme expression in the imperialist state capitalist trusts (“Britain,” “France,” “America”) and their conflicts, of the unequal development of capitalism, of the consequent intensification of the conflicts, of the inevitable development of world war, leading to revolution or renewed world war, to the ultimate point of world revolution; and on the other hand the conception of the increasing massing and concentration of all

the oppressed and exploited peoples under imperialism, of the necessary unity of the industrial workers with the struggles of the peasants, with the colonial workers, with the revolutionary subject nations, and of the combined assault upon imperialism under the leadership of the International Workers' Party—all these fundamental conceptions of modern Marxism in relation to the present epoch are still unfamiliar in Western Europe; and in consequence, until their practical significance is somehow learnt, the workers' movements are unable to advance. It will accordingly be worth while to take advantage of the present occasion of the return to the gold standard in order with its aid to examine a little more closely into the possibility of capitalist stabilisation.

**W**HAT is the process of capitalist development? It is a development to ever-increasing concentration. Certainly: but does this mean the elimination of competition? Not at all: *it only means the intensification of competition.* Competition develops from the relatively peaceful undercutting rivalry of individual merchants and manufacturers to the terrific conflict of the modern highly organised concentrated capitalist states, using every weapon of armed force and unscrupulous diplomacy, and culminating in world war. The greater the scale of capitalism, the greater the concentration, the more intense grows the conflict; the more violent and desperate the means employed; as the power of production grows greater, the available markets outside the home markets grow less, the number of rival capitalist producers for export increases, and the spheres of the earth's surface for the supply of raw materials and new exploitation are all marked out. The age of Cobden and peaceful politics gives way to the age of Chamberlain and aggressive imperialism; the age of Chamberlain gives way to the age of Lloyd George and the world war; the world war gives way to the nightmare politics of the post-war period of Versailles, Reparations, inflation, counter-revolution, Fascism, &c. Capitalism reveals itself in fact, with the increase of concentration and the power of production, not as a growingly harmonious and organised system of world production, but as a growingly violent system of antagonisms. The inequality of capitalism grows continuously greater: the rich grow richer and

the poor poorer; and nations and states themselves develop into "capitalist" and "proletarian" nations, with a growing gulf between them, and a continual diminution in the ranks of independent exploiter states as nation after nation becomes openly or hiddenly subject to the stronger.

**B**Y 1914 the stage has been reached that six world Powers of the old capitalist world (Europe) dominate between them almost the whole of Asia, Africa and Australia: while two new Powers outside, Japan and the United States, are rising very rapidly, but have not yet entered fully into the arena of world politics. The war of 1914 was the war of the six Powers—a war to extinction. The new Powers only entered into it to extract the maximum advantage from it to win a commanding position for themselves. The war of 1914 was inevitable in the sense that capitalism could provide no other solution for the conflicts of imperialism. The inevitable fact of growing capitalist accumulation, and the consequent driving force of the continual hunt for new profits on the part of each section of advanced capitalism, compelled it. There could be no peaceful solution, that is to say, no equal division of the spoils, because of the inequality of capitalism and the unequal rate of capitalist development. German iron and steel was advancing, British declining; Britain held the majority of colonial possessions; Germany with a much more rapidly developing capitalism was too late in the field. In these conditions, a hundred-fold multiplied for all the complexities of the different fields of capitalism and the different Powers, there could be no permanent ratio. Each section had to fight for itself. Each statesman and diplomatist had to fight for his own group or lose his position; each captain of an industrial combine had to fight for the profits of his own shareholders or lose his; each editor of a newspaper had to fight for the interests of his own Power grouping or lose his. No statesman or capitalist can think for capitalism as a whole, save for the immediate fight against the revolution: if they could, they would cease to be capitalists. Not the particular ambition or intrigue of this or that individual or group (the majority of whom probably did not directly will the war, but only willed the particular advantages to their side which made it inevitable), but the inevitable collective

product of their individual wills, which in the aggregate only reflected the existing social forces of capitalism that they did not themselves understand—this was the real “origin of the war” (about which bourgeois professors still talk in terms of this or that diplomatic document to establish points favourable or unfavourable to this or that individual or group).

**W**HAT was the position after the war? The former six Powers have been cut down by the destruction of three. We now find a new division of victor states and defeated states. The victor Powers endeavour to destroy the basis of the defeated German capitalist state trust by robbing it of its colonies, shipping and the main part of its iron and coal resources, and shackling the possibility of future development by the imposition of a heavy debt to pay. In doing this they raise a hundred new problems of which they are not themselves aware at the outset. On the other hand a new world Power has appeared, stronger than any other, the United States of America, grown to full power on the profits of the war, and overshadowing the rest in wealth, resources and the power of production. In addition there have grown up other Powers outside Europe—Japan—and, in an early stage, the Dominions, which threaten the former commercial supremacy of the old world and increasingly begin to win its markets. On the other hand the class struggle has reached such a point of development that it is no longer simply a social phenomenon within each country, but has taken on a geographical character. The revolution extends over one-sixth of the earth: and the capitalist powers, after repeated vain efforts to destroy it, have had to reconcile themselves to the presence of the unwelcome stranger. Communism has become, in the fullest realisation of the words of Marx, a world power. At the same time the colonial nations are now rising to consciousness and in revolt. Thus we get an extremely diversified picture in the post-war world of a whole series of different levels: (1) the super-state, America; (2) the victor powers; (3) the defeated states; (4) the colonial nations; (5) the revolution. And this is to miss out a whole series of intermediate stages, backward countries, semi-independent states, &c. It is indeed a picture of the inequality of capitalist development. But what of the antagon-

isms of capitalism? Have they diminished? On the contrary. The antagonisms which gave rise to the war are intensified by its results; and a dozen new antagonisms all over the world have broken out.

**A**T the head of the series of the capitalist states stands the United States. The colonial peoples are tributary to the capitalist nations; the defeated states are tributary to the victor states; but all alike, victor states, defeated states, and colonial peoples, are tributary to America. The supreme contradiction of capitalism to-day is expressed in the relation of America and the rest of the capitalist world. Here is realised in its intensest form the concentration of capitalism (in its actual realisation, not in the imaginary form of "International Capitalism") and the inequality of capitalist development. The figures of American wealth and production stagger comprehension. The official estimate of national income is sixty thousand million dollars. The official estimate of national wealth shows a multiplication tenfold since 1870, or a total more than twice the estimated total of Britain and France together. The estimate of yearly new capital investment is six thousand million dollars, or six times the British. The excess of exports on last year's trade balance was one thousand million dollars. The net gold import was two hundred and eighty million dollars (Hoover's figures). The capitalist intensification of social divisions has been realised on a world scale. The impoverishment of Europe has been accompanied by the enrichment of America.

**T**O him that hath shall be given." In accordance with this fundamental principle of capitalism, all the world, which is impoverished, must pay tribute to America, which has more wealth than it knows what to do with. The rest of the world is indebted to America; and the more America pours forth goods, the more the rest of the world becomes indebted. Europe, which has an adverse trade balance of four hundred million pounds, must pay tribute to America, which has a favourable trade balance of two hundred million pounds. It cannot be done. The old familiar process of capitalism, by which the rich grow richer and the poor poorer, is taking place on an international scale.

There has been a great deal of indignation, both expressed and suppressed, at the relentless insistence with which America has maintained its right to the war debts incurred "in the common cause." But these eloquent complainants fail to see that the whole principle of capitalism is a principle of Debt, incurred in the common cause of human social labour of production and mercilessly exacted from the poor by the rich, and that ninety-nine per cent of the human race in the capitalist world is born under the yoke of this Debt, which they themselves and their ancestors originally created by their labour and have repaid by their labour over and over again in every generation, and at the end are always more indebted than before (the amount of capital or wealth created is yearly greater, and therefore the amount of interest or tribute to be paid by the workers who created the capital is yearly greater). The original historical basis of such Debt holding is very commonly to be found in some unsavoury episode of violence, such as the slave trade and the plunder of India was to the growth of British capitalism in the past, and as war profiteering has proved to American capitalism to-day. But unsavoury origins do not affect capitalist sanctity, once the title-deeds are secure. America has got the real capitalist's grip on Europe and will not let go.

SO far Europe has met the situation by three methods: (1) increasing the debt and letting interest mount up; (2) selling the estate, *i.e.*, the acquisition of European concerns and properties by American interests, the extent of which process can only be judged by the continual instances occurring and cannot be statistically stated; and (3) the shipment of gold. Like a silent picture of actual tribute, the gold of the world has flowed into America. The European countries at the outset of the war stopped the gold currency and issued an (in practice) unexchangeable paper currency: which means in plain fact that the war governments raised money for their extraordinary expenditure by the simple process of forging money (issuing worthless paper and on its basis inflating credit), a deception which was paid for and continues to be paid for by the people in higher prices, the depreciation of savings and a tremendously inflated war debt. All the



gold has been needed in practice to go to America. The net gold imports into America for recent years show: 1921, \$650 millions; 1922, \$240 millions; 1923, \$300 millions; 1924, \$280 millions. By 1924 over half the gold in the world, the token of capitalist wealth, was in America; and a new problem, hitherto unguessed at in capitalist economy, had been created.

**T**HE apoplexy of capitalist development was now reaching a stage visible to every capitalist. Gold is still the life-blood of capitalism, and it was gathering in one part to the choking of that part and to the starvation and mortification of the rest. European production was stagnating from (among other causes) dear money and lack of purchasing power. Credit in Germany for normal industrial enterprise was costing 100 per cent. On the other hand America was faced with the problem of "gold inflation." America literally did not know what to do with the gold. Gold normally provides the means of raising credit to about ten times the value of the gold. But such a tremendous increase of credit, without a corresponding increase of production, would have meant a disastrous inflation. This would have been precisely the "automatic" process of classical economy, which would have brought down the value of gold with a rush by vastly raising prices and so enabling the rest of the world to export goods into America, while stopping American exports. But naturally such a solution would have been the last thing the American bourgeoisie would allow. They made the most frantic efforts to prevent the gold from ruining them by keeping it shut up in their vaults. They sought to "immobilise" the gold, to "sterilise" it, as the expression ran. Instead of using it to raise credit, they used it to replace the ordinary interest-bearing securities in their bank reserves. The percentage of gold in those reserves increased until it reached two-thirds of those reserves. But there is a limit to this process, which becomes visible long before the point of a 100 per cent. gold reserve is reached. For gold in this way brings no interest, and even banks have to earn interest. The gold had to be employed. But it could not be employed in America. Therefore it had to be employed abroad.

**S**O in 1924 came the change (one bubble on the wave of which mighty world change went by the name of MacDonald). Very cautious initial steps were taken. The Dawes Committee was set up to inquire into conditions and prepare the ground. It was made sure that favourable governmental receptions could be counted on in England, France and Germany. And then the process began. During the second half of 1924 loans and credits, governmental and industrial, of which the Dawes German Loan was simply the leading example and signpost, poured into Europe from America. The restoration of Europe was in full swing. The Democratic Left had their brief heyday while the golden chains were being imposed—to be speedily replaced by sterner forces as soon as the exaction of the tribute became the task. The flow of gold was turned. Gold began to pass out again from America to Europe and the rest of the world. In the first half of 1924 the net gold import into America was 450 million dollars; in the second half there was a net gold export of 170 millions. And recent bullion reports show in a single week (in the beginning of February, 1925) a shipment of 50 million dollars in gold to all over the world.

“**S**PLENDID,” said all the economists and bankers; “the gold is coming back. Now we can recover.” The pound rose, in common with the other European currencies. Between July and December, 1924, the pound rose from \$4.40 to \$4.73. By the beginning of the new year the pound was within a fraction of gold parity, the Governor of the Bank of England was on his visit to New York, and talk was busily spread of a prospective return to the gold standard, and taken up by the bankers in their annual addresses. America was naturally desirous of a return to the gold standard by Britain and other countries. At one point there had been a very real danger that Europe might abandon the gold standard in favour of a “managed” currency. Had that been successfully achieved, all the advantage of America’s hoard of gold in relation to Europe would have vanished. The restoration of the gold standard in Europe meant the recognition that America held in its control the majority of the world’s accepted basis of wealth—and not simply so much precious metal. But

Britain was equally desirous of the return to the gold standard. For the British bourgeoisie it meant that the pound could face the dollar as an equal throughout the world. The complaints and opposition of a few home industrial interests, that wanted easier credit, counted for little; the discontent of the workers, who saw the sudden multiplication by a stroke of the pen of the burden of war debt and of every other kind of capital holding upon their backs, counted for nothing. The gold standard is a conservative interest. It is the interest of those who hold against those who speculate or wish to change; it is the interest of the investor, of the holder of capital, of those who own possessions and investments all over the world, and wish to see the highest value and the highest return: and these interests are stronger in Britain to-day than the development of home industry. Amid a chorus of capitalist approval, and the silencing of controversy, the prospective return to the gold standard was received.

**B**UT on what was this return based? This is the question that brings us to the centre of the position. Was it based on any increase in British economic strength? Was it based on any expansion of trade and production? Was it based on an improvement of the relation of exports to imports? On the contrary the visible adverse balance of trade was higher than ever and touched a record figure of £341 millions, as against £203 millions in 1923 and £171 millions in 1922, an increase of 100 per cent. in two years, and 116 per cent. above the pre-war figure. Not only that, but the steepest advance was just in the latter part of the year, precisely when the pound was apparently climbing most, the December adverse balance reaching the extraordinary figure of £50 millions, at the moment when the pound was approaching gold parity. The Board of Trade endeavoured to estimate that the apparent adverse balance was still covered, as in previous years, by a heavily increased figure of invisible exports (mainly through a large increase in the return on foreign investments): but even this estimate showed the net balance available for new investment abroad to be heavily reduced to £29 millions, against £102 millions the previous year and £154 millions the year before. Thus the advance in the pound was completely artificial. It was simply the reflection of the American flow of capital abroad.

**T**HIS point is so important that it is worth while quoting one or two authoritative statements from leading British capitalist sources to show that there is no dispute upon it. The two principal bank chairmen's speeches both deal with the point. Mr. McKenna stated :—

The pound sterling is now finding its way back to parity, not because it will have climbed uphill to meet the dollar, but because the dollar under the pressure of the surplus supply of gold will have come down to the level of the pound.

Mr. Walter Leaf, after showing that American investments abroad in 1924 were twice the value of the British, goes on to say :

This large excess seems to be sufficient explanation of the change in the relative value of the dollar and the pound.

The *Manchester Guardian Commercial* shows in much greater detail how the "flow of American money for temporary investment in London" (owing to the difference in official rates in the second half of 1924), combined with the "much larger flow of money destined for more permanent investment in Europe" led to the rise in the pound exchange. Thus it is agreed on all sides that the return to the gold standard, if it takes place, would in fact be based, not on any recovery in the British economic position, but simply on the temporary feature of the excess of American capital investment over the returns and payments into America.

**B**UT what does this mean ? It means that in fact no solution has been reached. For what is the automatic result of the flow of American capital for investment abroad ? The automatic result is that there must immediately begin a heavy return flow of interest to America. Only so long as the new American capital put out for investment exceeds the ever-increasing volume of interest on capital invested (a process to which there is an obvious limit), only so long does the situation continue on which is based the return to the gold standard. As soon as the point is reached at which the interest and payments exceed the new investment, then, unless the whole trade and production relations of Europe and America have been reversed in

the interval (so that Europe exports to America more goods than America exports to Europe—a many hundred millions reversal of trade), the gold standard must crash and with it the whole restoration. This is a simple mathematical necessity. The immediate bearing of this situation on the question of the return to the gold standard in Britain is dimly envisaged by the anxieties of the chairman of Lloyds, who raises the question, first:—

In view of our large adverse visible trade balance, is the present gold value of sterling due to exceptional and passing causes, and, if we go back to a free gold market, can we maintain our holding of gold without harming our trade by an increase of money rates?

and second :—

Whether the tendency in America to invest abroad is likely to continue.

In answer to this last question he can only say that it is “ a question of prophecy which is very difficult to answer.” But the bearing of this goes very much further than the issue of the British gold standard.

**F**OR what is the whole restoration of Europe? The restoration of Europe is admittedly based on the flow of American gold and credits to Europe. By this means capitalism seeks to overcome the consequences of its own concentration, which was leading to the logical capitalist conclusion of suffocation in one part and starvation in the rest. But does it overcome it? Not at all. For, by the very nature of capitalism, America can only send the gold as loans to be repaid with interest. The only salvation for capitalism would be an actual redistribution of gold and holdings of wealth; which would at any rate enable the game of beggar-my-neighbour to begin afresh. (The more progressive bourgeois economists, such as Keynes, advocate a complete cancellation of debts and reparations: but this is only a part of the tie-up.) But such a redistribution is impossible without destroying the whole property basis of capitalism. The juridical forms are at war with the existing development of production. Only the revolution can cut the knot. The restoration is an illusory restoration, because it is based on the increased indebtedness of Europe, which is precisely the problem that gave rise to its need.

There can be no escape by capitalism from its own law of concentration, of increasing division and intensified antagonism.

**T**HE gold has come back to Europe—yes: but it has come back in reality as an added burden, and only apparently as a new life to capitalism; that is, it has increased and not diminished the gulf between America and Europe and the inequality of capitalism. Only the moment of the flow of the gold for investment gives a temporary and illusory restoration. But thereafter the indebtedness of Europe is increased, and the balance weighs down on the side of America more heavily than ever Europe, with its enfeebled production, heavily loaded by every form of tax and debt and special imposition, reparations, armies of occupation, tariffs, militarism and balkanisation, has to compete successfully with the relatively free, vigorous and vastly wealthier production of America and the new world; has actually to have a vast surplus to pay America; or else every year the balance will go more heavily against Europe, the chains will draw a little tighter, the moment of final conflagration, of desperate revolt and war, international and social, against impossible conditions, will draw closer.

**I**T cannot be done. Europe will make the most desperate efforts. The drive to production on the basis of the American gold will be terrific. An adverse balance of four hundred million pounds value has to be translated into a surplus of hundreds of millions. To save itself, Europe will have to flood the markets of the world with cheaper and yet cheaper goods. On every side, in every country in Europe, the call is sounded to increased output, to cheaper output, to greater intensity of labour, to longer hours, to more economy of "social" services, to lower wages, to more and more competitive effort. In England and Germany alike, the challenge to the working class is proclaimed. Renewed and again renewed capitalist offensives are not simply the reckless expression of individual greed and stronger capitalist combination: they are the inevitable expression of the economic situation. The sooner the workers of Western Europe realise that their lowered conditions and the repeated capitalist offensives are not the

accidents of the "ups and downs" of trade or the machiavellian conspiracies of a few credit lords, but the inevitable expression of the bankruptcy of capitalism in Europe under an accumulated load of shackles that only the sword of the revolution can destroy, the sooner will they realise their future in unity with the workers of Eastern Europe and the colonial workers as the only way to win their freedom and the freedom of Europe. Not easier conditions, but renewed attacks and greater intensification of labour, harder pressure of the coolie standard, lie in front. The power-and-production schemes which Lloyd George is incubating in the name of Liberalism, the vast projects of State capitalism to which Baldwin is moving in the name of Conservatism, will play a tremendous rôle in the future (and every development will be welcomed with chortling cries of a new instalment of "Socialism" by the bat-eyed Reformists, who will meanwhile be deploying the ugly discontent and strikes of the workers, and appealing for a new spirit of "public" sympathy with their sad lot).

**B**UT the drive to more production as the only way out in every country itself raises a new problem—the problem of markets. If every capitalist country is to achieve a surplus export or favourable balance of trade (which is the supreme object of increased production in every country and the absolutely necessary condition for the payment of debts, reparations, &c.) then it is obvious that it cannot be at the expense of the other capitalist countries. This is a simple question of arithmetic, although never indulged in by the capitalist economists of each country, who look only to the salvation of their own country. The ultimate market for the surplus must lie outside the ring of capitalist exporting countries, *i.e.*, in the non-capitalist producers of the backward countries not yet drawn into capitalist production. Hence the supreme importance of China from the capitalist point of view; and the reason why the future war of Europe and America is universally expected to centre on China and the Pacific. But the whole character of the present stage of capitalist development is the rapid shrinkage of markets, and expansion of new capitalist producing and exporting countries. India, Japan and the Dominions are all developing machine production with extreme rapidity to the

detriment of British industry. (The childish conventional liberal economists' plea that the economic gain of one country cannot under any conditions mean loss for another is simply to avoid serious detailed analysis of how the factors really work *under capitalist production*.) And the Chinese millions are already awakening to the unity of their interests with the world revolution and may even defeat the plans of the imperialists (which is all cinematographic nonsense to the good British John Bull, Bernard Shaw). Thus the very moment when Europe to save itself must make a tremendous expansion of exports, is the very moment when there is already such a shrinkage of the world market as to be unable to absorb the existing diminished production.

LET a concrete example be taken—Germany. Germany has to pay out, once the full reparations period begins, £125 millions. This is to leave out of account all the additional interest on private and industrial foreign investments in Germany. This payment, it is now universally agreed, can only be made in goods, since Germany has neither colonies, gold available nor foreign securities. But Germany has at present an adverse trade balance, which on the figures of recent months was reaching the equivalent of £240 millions a year. This means that a rise in exports equivalent to £360 millions a year is necessary. But this is to leave out of account the additional imports of raw materials necessary to produce this tremendous addition to exports. If this is estimated at well below half the value of the additional exports, £140 millions, we get a total necessary rise in exports of £500 millions. And this is to leave out of our reckoning the interest on industrial loans. Even if this fantastic figure of values could be produced by the most merciless slave-driving of the German workers, what prospect is there that it could be absorbed by the world market? The total exports of the whole of Europe before the war amounted to £1,750 millions. To come nearer to current values, the total exports of the whole of Europe in 1922 amounted to £1,637 millions. And already, even at the current production, the lack of markets is causing stagnation. What prospect is there of unloading this additional £500 millions. And this is to take only one country.



**T**HUS we get to the final contradiction. It was expressed with unconscious irony in the statements of two of the bank chairmen made on the self-same day. Mr. Walter Leaf, chairman of the Westminster Bank, stated:—

How the enormous excess of exports which they were forcing upon Germany was to be absorbed by the world at large without ruinous competition was a problem which was now exercising the best brains of Europe and America.

Sir Harry Goschen, chairman of the National Provincial Bank, declared:—

In his opinion the solution of the problem of foreign competition lay in an effort towards greater production and the lowering of production costs . . . operative labour must increase the output per man hour.

That is to say: The amount of production already raises problems of "ruinous competition" how it is to be absorbed. What is the solution? To produce more and beat "foreign competition"! So long as *we* produce more, so long as *we* produce cheaper, so long as *we* cut out the rest and get *our* necessary increase of exports as against imports—never mind the rest. But the statesmen, bankers and economists of Germany, France (which has already by its tremendous industrial development achieved a minute favourable balance of trade) and the other countries are saying precisely the same. What is the net result? The net result is: first, to drive the working class down in every country to greater slavery and heavier production of surplus value (producing an illusory appearance of prosperity on top); and second to hasten the inevitable ultimate explosion which will leave 1914 a pinprick in comparison.

**F**OR before the final outcome, before the final completion of the enslavement of Europe by America, we should get the last arbitrament of capitalism in its dilemmas—war, the preparations for which move feverishly ahead on every side. Hoover's statement of 1919, on the question of granting credits to Europe, still remains the most fundamental capitalist statement of the situation. "If such credits be obtained for more than temporary

purposes, it would result in the economic slavery of Europe to the Western hemisphere, and the ultimate end would be war again." The chains with which America is seeking to bind the world are chains of gold and paper. There are no arms and garrisons behind them extended over the world to guard the exaction of the tribute, save so far as they can constrain and bribe the governments of every country to their service to act as their gaolers and bailiffs. The British Empire is an Empire of the sword. British arms and diplomacy are extended over the whole world, where America is still unsurely feeling its way. America is desperately driving forward to militarisation in preparation for the future, to 100 per cent. Americanism, to "National Test Mobilisations," &c. (but with the disadvantage of having to work against the grain of an in the main naturally pacific population, unconscious of "world problems" and mainly concerned with the problem of the domestic "dinner pail" which does not appear visibly in danger). Thus the immediate contest is not so unequal, although the ultimate resources lie with America. Before the final collapse the British Empire will try conclusions with America. But the path of the World War becomes inevitably the path of the European revolution, and this time the international organisation of the revolution is not absent. This is the final outcome of the capitalist restoration, if we accept the reformist policy of accepting the ultimate conditions of capitalism and only endeavouring to achieve a gradual evolution "within" the system. Not restoration or revolution, but either revolution before world war, or world war leading to revolution—these are the actual ultimate alternatives before the European workers to-day.

R. P. D.

# TWO DESERTERS

By KARL RADEK

**M**Y article on the "Stabilisation of Capitalism and the Unstable Communists," printed in *Pravda* of November 7, was reprinted in the London Communist journal,<sup>1</sup> **THE LABOUR MONTHLY**, and produced a reply from the deserters from the British Communist Party, Philips Price and Walton Newbold. The Editor of **THE LABOUR MONTHLY** asks me to reply to these articles. I do this, although the arguments of both heroes are more than ridiculous. I begin with the question which both these former members of our Party consider fundamental for themselves, although it is not at all a fundamental question for judging their conduct. I refer to the question of the international situation.

Philips Price thinks that he knocks out either me or the Communist International when he expresses the view that the period we are living through now cannot be considered as a period of acute revolutionary struggle, which will end after a few years in the victory of the proletariat all over the world. The attempt of Price to represent the Communist International as a blind man who does not see realities is ridiculous. The Communist International did not mean to await instruction on the part of Philips Price, who has seen the light in 1925; for at its Third Congress in 1921 the Comintern drew the attention of the Communist Parties to the fact that it was a mistake to look on the development of the world situation as a constantly rising wave of revolution; that the defeat of the Italian proletariat in the summer of 1920, and the defeat of Soviet Russia in its war with Poland, meant for a certain time a fall in the revolutionary wave: and that, therefore, the main task for the immediate future was the winning of the majority of the working masses and the creation of firm Communist parties, capable of leading the masses to battle when a *new wave* of revolution arose. In 1923 a new wave arose in Germany, but it was not strong enough to carry our ship to the harbour of victory. The

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<sup>1</sup> Although the Editor is a Communist, **THE LABOUR MONTHLY** is not a publication of the Communist Party.—K. R.

Fifth Congress examined a number of mistakes made during the period of this new wave by the pilots of the German Party, and was far from concluding its labours with paeans of victory. The Congress realised that the Experts' Report was a method of retarding for a certain period the development of the revolutionary struggle in Central Europe. Anyone who studies the passionate disputes of the Fifth Congress will understand clearly that the basis of those disputes was concerned for strengthening the fighting of the Communist Parties *during the period before the next wave of revolution*. If Newbold and Price want to know the views of the Communist International and of the leaders of the Russian Communist Party on the world situation, let them read the speech of Comrade Stalin at the Moscow Conference of the R.C.P., where the General Secretary of the R.C.P. frankly spoke of the strengthening of capitalism in Britain and America to such an extent that it was capable of pouring new blood into the weakened capitalist organism of Germany and France. But being a dialectical thinker, Stalin simultaneously sees not only the temporary character of this strengthening of European Capitalism, but also the revolutionising of the East, and the developing conflict of Western Capitalism and the Eastern revolution which arises therefrom. Our British parish-pump politicians only see the dividends of Morgan, and think them to be the whole world.

But although both our opponents are in agreement on one thing, namely, in their complete despair of revolutionary prospects, they differ completely in their concrete estimate of the relation of forces in world capitalism. Philips Price thinks that British financial capital is striving to set up a world financial consortium together with the Americans. Philips Price sees a possibility of this situation being altered only if industrial capital—capital interested in the raw materials market and invested in the production of armaments—succeeds in gaining the upper hand of financial capital. In this way, Price claims the existence at the present moment of Anglo-American co-operation. Walton Newbold laughs at any idea of Anglo-American collaboration. I will not go into this question in detail. I will only say that in the case of either possibility materialising, which has to be reckoned with, the transient stabilisation of capitalism will lead to a tremendous

sharpening of international antagonisms. If Anglo-American co-operation lasts long enough—as is quite possible, first because the U.S.A., while enjoying vast economic advantages over Great Britain, has not sufficient military bases or alliances for a struggle with her, and secondly because both countries are united in their struggle for the Russian and Chinese markets—nevertheless, they will set against themselves not only the Eastern peoples and the U.S.S.R., but also a number of weaker capitalist countries. The latter will be strengthened by this very process of capitalist stabilisation, and will strive to defend themselves against the domination of the Anglo-American financial consortium. On the other hand, in spite of the political co-operation of these two great Powers, Anglo-American competition is becoming acute in a number of countries ; and if it undermines their co-operation—an outcome which may be hastened by their struggle with the U.S.S.R. and China—Anglo-American rivalry will become the starting point of ever more acute imperialist and revolutionary conflicts, and will hasten the coming of a new wave of revolution. None of us affirms that all this will happen to-morrow. But whoever sees only the strengthening of capitalism, and does not see the revolutionary prospects, is an opportunist Philistine.

The real question, however, is : *what is a Communist to do, even taking the most pessimistic estimate of the world situation?*

To this question both my opponents have replied with their feet—by running away from the Communist Party to the opportunist I.L.P., which belongs to the Second International, whose task in turn it is to help in the restoration of capitalism. Thus they both sit facing the horse's tail. To the honour of Newbold it must be said that he only holds on with both hands to the hind quarters of his horse, but does not attempt at the same time to give people riding lessons. He only plays the part of a clown, showing off the extremely advantageous position he has taken up. It is otherwise with Philips Price. Rolling helplessly in his unenviable seat, he simultaneously tries to play the part of an instructor in Communist tactics. He philosophises, and asks me the "fatal" question : What do I think MacDonald ought to have done when he took over the Government in the given relations of international forces

and without a majority in the working class? My reply to this terrible question is very simple. The British bourgeoisie split at the elections of autumn, 1923, only because the Labour Party did not represent any revolutionary danger either for the Liberals or for the Conservatives. Only because both the Conservatives and the Liberals knew that the Labour Party would not carry on a revolutionary policy, would not disturb their State apparatus, would not mobilise the working masses by its activities, could they try the risky expedient of allowing the Labour Party to compromise itself by temporarily taking office. The Russian Liberals, previous to October, 1917, also used to say that if the Bolsheviks took power they would only compromise themselves. But not a single serious Russian Liberal thought that he could allow himself the luxury of such an experiment with the Bolsheviks—for the simple reason that he knew that if the Bolsheviks came to power they would not abandon it without leaving a trace behind. The British bourgeoisie knew Messrs. MacDonald and Snowden as opportunists and enemies of revolution. Consequently the coming to power of the Labour Party involved a foregone conclusion that, as far as the intentions of the Labour Party leaders were concerned, nothing tangible would come of it for the workers. But in politics there are revolutionary facts created by the opportunists in spite of themselves. Such a revolutionary fact is the experience acquired by the British proletariat, which has seen with its own eyes what the opportunists do when they are in power, and which unquestionably has emerged from the period of the Labour Government enriched in experience. Consequently the accusation of Machiavellianism against the British Communists for welcoming the coming to power of the Labour Government only proves that Price and Newbold must be praised for leaving the Communist Party: it reveals such a lack of elementary understanding of the tasks of a revolutionary working-class party, that they really have no place in it.

Philips Price, pointing a pistol at my head, asks me: "Is it not better that MacDonald avoided a fight with the bourgeoisie on the question of the Experts' Report, and fought them instead on the Russian question?" Philips Price, remembering that he must be more radical than MacDonald, regrets that MacDonald, when accepting the Experts' Report, did not simultaneously tell the

British workers that this Report was fraught with peril for them—but it must be accepted. I do not know whether Philips Price considers his British readers to be simple-minded children, or whether this question is only one more proof of his spiritual innocence? Messrs. Snowden and MacDonald did everything in their power to assist the robbers of Wall Street and the City to carry through their plan for enslaving Europe. Mr. Snowden acted as witness for Morgan, and swore that the Stock Exchange kings never interfered in the London Conference. Mr. MacDonald proclaimed the Pact of London to be the beginning of a new era of democracy and pacifism. The whole rôle of the Labour Government and of the Second International consisted in deceiving the mass of the workers about the effective meaning of the Experts' Report—and yet Philips Price expresses his regret that, while accepting his fate and the Experts' Report, MacDonald did not tell the Socialist truth to the working masses!

And now this fight on the Russian question, in the name of which MacDonald helped to procure the acceptance of the Experts' Report! I must ask once again, has Philips Price lost the remnants of his Socialist self-respect, or the remnants of his ability to see facts as they are? Snowden was the enemy of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty. On MacDonald it was imposed by the Left Wing of the Labour Party, and naturally this opportunist never carried on any fight on the Russian question. Is it really necessary to tell the shameful story of the so-called Zinovieff letter over again? Mr. MacDonald had not the courage to demand from Gregory, the chief of the Russian Department of the Foreign Office, his proofs of the genuineness of this letter, or, in the case of their absence, to bring this official to trial for supporting the Conservatives by forged documents. Mr. MacDonald left the Labour Party for three days under a storm of attack, maintaining a cowardly silence. He dared not fight, not only against the British bourgeoisie, but even against a clique of officials in the Foreign Office, who incarnate all the intrigues of British diplomacy against the working class, against universal peace and against the Soviet Union. If Philips Price now speaks of MacDonald's struggle on the Russian question, this only shows that he, *yesterday a Communist, who entered the Labour Party, according to his own statement, to revolutionise the masses*

*inside it, though it were at the cost of giving up his principles, has in reality sunk to the position of the Right Wing, and now helps to gloss over the unprincipled and opportunist policy of the Right-Wing leaders.*

Lloyd George recently wrote that MacDonald's government left no traces behind it. If we are to speak of the achievements of that government in the sphere of legislation and in the struggle with Imperialism, it not only left no traces behind it, it not only did not improve the position of the working class, but it soiled its reputation by responsibility for the London compromise, for the bloody crusade of Lord Lytton against the Indian Nationalists, and for the organisation of British repressive measures in Egypt. But it is quite indubitable that by all this the Labour Government promoted the crystallisation of a Left Wing in the Labour Party. The reception given to MacDonald at the election of the leader of the Parliamentary Party proves this. The members of the Left Wing of the Labour Party are not Communists ; we know this very well. We know that they will develop towards a really revolutionary position with great hesitation. The British Communists, in criticising them, must show patience and self-control, and must act by means of calm explanation. But in relation to former Communists who have deserted the banner, and are now playing the part of *screens for opportunism*, no words are sharp enough, as the most violent defender of the United Front tactics will admit. The rank-and-file worker, moving slowly from Reformism to Communism, is one thing. The spineless intellectual, who has fled from Communism on encountering its first difficulties, who gives himself out as a realist in order to hide his renegacy, and who sinks to the defence of MacDonald—that is a very different thing. Philips Price defends the honesty of Newbold. I am ready to confirm that Walter Newbold has never stolen any silver spoons, and that Philips Price does not even need to commit such sinful acts. "Brutus is an honourable man ; nay, they are all, all honourable men." But the replies both of Price and of Newbold have convinced me that we shall meet these two deserters only when we stand on opposite sides of the barricade.

*Moscow, February 10, 1925.*



## On the Road to Insurrection—V

# THE BOGY OF CIVIL WAR

By V. I. LENIN

[TRANSLATION COPYRIGHT]

SEPTEMBER 16, 1917.

**T**HE refusal of the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries to join with the Cadets—although the democracy could perfectly well form a government and rule Russia without them, and even against them—alarmed the bourgeoisie into preparing schemes to frighten the democracy.

“Spread terror to the utmost!” Such is the watchword of the whole bourgeois Press. “Terrify as much as you can! Lie, slander—above all things terrify!”

The *Stock Exchange Gazette* attempts to stir up panic by means of forged information about Bolshevik plots. The rumour is spread that Alexiev has resigned and that the Germans have broken through the Russian lines in the direction of Petrograd—as if it had not been proved that it was just the “Kornilovian” generals (with whom Alexiev is undoubtedly connected) who have no hesitation in throwing open the front to the Germans in Galicia, before Riga<sup>1</sup> and before Petrograd and stirring up in the army violent hatred against G.H.Q. To incite the danger of civil war you are forced to use intimidation of the democracy in the most consistent and convincing way. In fact, the stirring up of the civil war bogey is the most widespread method of intimidation. Observe how this idea, very prevalent in petty bourgeois centres is described by the Rostov-on-the-Don local committee of the party of Freedom for the People.<sup>2</sup> To quote from their resolution of September 1 (cf. *Ryetch* No. 210):—

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<sup>1</sup> It is probable that the fall of Riga was due to the incapacity or to the connivance of the military staff. The troops fought bravely as the bourgeois journalist Naudeau admits.

<sup>2</sup> Name taken by the Cadet party after the March revolution (French translator's note).

“ . . . Considering that civil war would abolish all the victories of the revolution and drown in rivers of blood our young and as yet unestablished freedom, the committee considers it necessary for the good of the revolutionary victories to protest strongly against the tendency to extend the revolution, a tendency which is dictated by the impracticable Socialist utopians.”

We see here the clearest, the most distinct, detailed and most thought-out expression of the fundamental thought that appears continually in the publications of the *Ryetsch*, in the articles by Plekhanov, by Potressov, in Menshevik newspapers, &c. In passing it would do us no harm to stop and consider a little this idea.

Let us try to examine the question of civil war as concretely as possible, basing ourselves on the experience of the six months of our revolution.

This experience, which corresponds absolutely with that of all European revolutions since the end of the eighteenth century, shows us that civil war is the most acute form of class struggle. After a series of conflicts and economic and political battles, increasingly numerous and violent, it becomes transformed inevitably into an armed struggle of two classes, one against the other.

What one sees most frequently, one might say invariably, in all countries, however little advanced, is civil war between the classes (that is between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat). This antagonism has been created and is accentuated by the whole economic development of capitalism, and can be seen by the whole history of society all over the world. Thus, during the six months of our revolution we had on April 20 and 21, and on July 3 and 4, vigorous spontaneous outbursts which almost amounted to the beginning of civil war. Kornilov's insurrection is a military plot, supported by the large landed proprietors and capitalists, and directed by the Cadets. This conspiracy has effectively brought about the beginning of civil war, started this time by the bourgeoisie.

Such are the facts. Such is the history of our revolution. Now, it is chiefly from this history that we must extract guidance; it is to its development and social significance that we must give special

thought. Let us try to compare the beginnings of proletarian and bourgeois civil wars in Russia from the following points of view : (1) The spontaneity of the movement ; (2) Its aims ; (3) The class consciousness of the masses who take part ; (4) The strength of the movement ; (5) Its tenacity. We believe that if all the parties who now talk at random about "civil war" should formulate the question thus, and try to study the outbreak of civil war from the basis of the facts, the Russian revolution would gain vast knowledge of itself.

Let us take first the spontaneity. Concerning July 3 and 4 we have the verdict of such witnesses as the Menshevik *Rabotchaia Gazette* and the Social Revolutionary *Dielo Naroda* of the spontaneous character of the movement. I have quoted these reports in an article in the *Proletarskoe Dielo*, which afterwards appeared in a special pamphlet entitled *An Answer to the Slanderers*. But for perfectly obvious reasons the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries, who defend themselves for having shared in persecutions carried on against the Bolsheviks, continue to deny the spontaneity of the outbreak of July 3 and 4.

Let us leave aside for the moment disputable points and stick to the indisputable. The spontaneity of the movement of April 20 and 21 is not disputed by anyone. It is to this spontaneous movement that the Bolshevik Party allied itself and proclaimed the slogan "All power to the Soviets." And independent of the Bolshevik Party, the late Linde<sup>3</sup> was also whole-heartedly attached to the movement and brought 30,000 soldiers on the scene to arrest the Provisional Government. (It may be mentioned in passing that this incident of the troops' intervention has not been adequately brought to light.) The more one thinks about this, the more one connects April 20 with the historical course of events; that is, when one regards it as a link in the chain between February 28 and August 29, the clearer it appears that the Bolsheviks erred then through *insufficient* revolutionarism, although the philistines continue to accuse them of the reverse.

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<sup>3</sup> A soldier who led the Finnish regiment, 180, and the Moscow regiment to surround the Town Hall where the Government were besieged.

Hence one cannot question the spontaneity of a movement which nearly brings the proletariat to civil war. Meanwhile Kornilov's insurrection presents no shadow of the resemblance of spontaneity. All we have there is a conspiracy of generals who hope to drag after them a section of the troops by means of deception and the prestige of authority.

Beyond a doubt the spontaneity of a movement reveals its grip on the masses and its fundamental soundness. Thus the summing up of events from the point of view of spontaneity demonstrates the firm basis of the proletarian revolution and the lack of this basis in the bourgeois counter-revolution.

Let us pass now to the aims. The movement of April 20-21 came very near to the Bolsheviks' policy, while on July 3 and 4 the movement sprang up under the immediate influence of that policy which was its real guide. Dictatorship of the proletariat and peasants, immediate peace proposals, confiscation of the land of the large owners—these are the principal *aims* of proletarian civil war which the Bolshevik Party declared openly and as definitely as possible in its Press and in spoken propaganda.

Concerning the aims of Kornilov and his supporters we all know, and no democrat will deny, that they consist of the dictatorship of the landlords and of the bourgeoisie, the suppression of the Soviets and the restoration of the monarchy. The Cadets, the principal Kornilovian party (it would be quite a good thing, by the way, to begin now to call them simply the "Kornilovian Party"), who own a Press and other methods of agitation superior to the Bolsheviks, have never dared, nor dare yet, to speak openly to the people of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or of the dissolution of the Soviets—the aims of Kornilov's supporters.

Events show that the proletarian civil war can fearlessly display its final objects before the people, for they are certain to attract the workers, while it is only by dissimulation that the bourgeois civil war can drag after it a portion of the masses. Hence the extreme importance of the degree of consciousness in the masses. . . .

The only relevant information that one has on this question is in connection with the party and the elections. There seem to be no other facts which enable us to judge precisely the mass conscious-

ness. It is obvious, and no one would dream of denying it after six months of revolution, that the proletarian revolutionary movement is led by the Bolshevik Party and the bourgeois counter-revolutionary movement is led by the Cadets. Three comparisons based on fact allow us to throw some light on the question of the development of mass consciousness.

In the first place, the elections; the central Duma elections of August, compared with the district municipal elections of May, show a considerable decrease of Cadet votes and an enormous increase of the number of votes secured by the Bolsheviks.<sup>4</sup> The Cadet Press admits that where the masses of workers and soldiers are collected the strength of Bolshevism is usually demonstrated.

Secondly, the facts concerning the parties; with no statistics of the strength of the parties, attendance at meetings, &c., we can only measure the participation of the masses therein by the results of the money collections in support of each. From all accounts the Bolshevik workers have shown extraordinary heroism and collected comparatively considerable sums for the *Pravda*, for suppressed or suspended newspapers, &c. We have always published the accounts of our collections.<sup>5</sup> This is not the case with the Cadets. It is obviously the wealth of the rich that supports their party. There is no trace among them of any active aid from the masses.

Finally, in comparing the movements of April 20-21 and of July 3-4 on the one hand, and the escapade of Kornilov on the other, it is demonstrated that in civil war the Bolsheviks always openly reveal their enemy to the masses: the bourgeoisie, the big landed proprietors and the capitalists. The troops behind Kornilov, on the contrary, were *deceived* in the literal sense of the word, and this deception was laid bare after the first encounter of the "barbarian division" and other Kornilovian battalions with the Petersburgians.<sup>6</sup>

Let us consider now the facts concerning the *strength* of the workers and of the bourgeoisie in civil war. The strength of the

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<sup>4</sup> On May 27-29 the Cadets had 185 seats out of 801. On August 20, 42 out of 200. The Bolsheviks exceeded from 22 per cent. to 33 per cent of the votes.

<sup>5</sup> In May and June the subscription for the printing of the *Pravda* came to about 200,000 roubles. The same in Moscow for the *Social Democrat*.

<sup>6</sup> Kornilov made his troops believe that there was a Bolshevik revolt in Petrograd. As soon as they were disabused by the Soviet propagandists sent from Petrograd to meet them, they refused to fight. The enterprise was thus settled without a single shot. General Krasnov, who was in command of the cavalry corps that marched on Petrograd, recounts these events in his memoirs.

Bolsheviks rests in the numbers of the proletarians, in their consciousness; it also depends on the sympathy of the "lower orders" (that is to say, the workers and poor peasants) and of the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks towards Bolshevik slogans. It is these slogans which on April 20 and 21, June 18, and July 3 and 4 in Petrograd won over the majority of the effective revolutionary masses. Here we have an indisputable fact.

Further, the comparison of the data provided by the mass movements with those concerning the elections entirely confirms, in connection with Russia, that observation which is frequently made in the West: the strength of the revolutionary proletariat from the point of view of its influence *on the masses* and on their enthusiasm for the contest is immeasurably *greater* in the struggle *outside* than inside parliament. This is a very important observation on the question of civil war.

It is easily understood why the conditions of the struggle in Parliament and the elections prevent the oppressed classes from utilising all the strength that they can effectively muster in civil war.

The power of the Cadets and Kornilovians is the power of *wealth*. Anglo-French capital and imperialism are on the side of the Cadets and Kornilovians, as has been demonstrated both in the Press and by a series of political interventions. It is notorious that the whole of the right wing at the Moscow Conference (August 12-14) was resolutely on the side of Kornilov and Kaledin.<sup>7</sup> It is further notorious that the bourgeois and French Press "assisted" Kornilov. And there are certain signs to indicate that the latter was supported by the banks.

All the power of wealth was ranged on behalf of Kornilov, and none the less what a speedy and lamentable downfall was his! Beyond money there are only two social forces that the Kornilovians can depend upon: the "barbarian division"<sup>8</sup> and the Cossacks. The strength of the former relies upon ignorance and deception, and this power is all the more appalling because the bourgeoisie hold most of the Press. The proletariat, after having

<sup>7</sup> These two generals made unveiled protestations in their speeches at the Conference against the Soviets and soldiers' committees, &c., and were frequently applauded by the whole right wing.

<sup>8</sup> A division of Caucasian cavalry, made up of mountaineers, naturally warlike and blindly devoted to their officers—as long as they had not deceived them.

conquered in the civil war, will obviously destroy this source of power once for all.

As regards the Cossacks, we are dealing with a portion of the population that is composed of small, medium and big landed proprietors (the average extent of the Cossack estate is about 50 hectares) who have preserved the economic and moral characteristics of the Middle Ages. The Cossacks might provide the social and economic foundation of a Russian *Vendée*.<sup>9</sup> But what have the relevant *facts* shown in the Kornilov-Kaledin movement? Although supported by Goutchkov, Miliukov, Riabouchinsky and their associates, Kaledin himself, the "well-beloved leader," *could not* let loose a movement of the masses! And nevertheless he went much more directly towards civil war than the Bolsheviks! Out to "stir up the Don," which purpose he did not conceal, he failed to rouse any mass disturbance in "his" region, in this Cossack area, utterly isolated from the Russian democracy! Very much the reverse: revolutionary explosions broke out among the proletarians in the very centre of the anti-Bolshevik Russian democratic stronghold.

We have no relevant information concerning the attitude of the various economic grades and groups of the Cossacks towards the democracy and the Kornilovian regime. We can only gather from certain indications that the majority of poor and middle-class Cossacks incline rather towards the democracy, and that only the officers and the most wealthy are entirely Kornilovian.

At all events, it is historically manifested after the experience of August 26 to 31 that the Cossack movement in support of the bourgeois counter-revolution is extremely weak.

There remains one final question, namely, the *tenacity* of the movement. In connection with the Bolshevik proletarian revolutionary movement, it has been proved that its adversaries carried on the ideological struggle with a great advantage of Press organs and methods of agitation. But they did not limit themselves there; they brought into action a furious campaign of calumnies at the same time as *methods of repression*, arrests by the hundred, pillage of our printing presses, suppression of our principal organ and of

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<sup>9</sup> This happened more or less in February, 1920, when the representatives of all the Cossacks (from the Don, Kuban, Orenbourg, Amur, &c.) declared themselves on the side of the Soviets.

our other newspapers.<sup>10</sup> Events have demonstrated the result. There was a formidable strengthening of Bolshevism at the August elections in Petrograd, there was a pronounced growth of the international and left wing tendencies in the very heart of the Socialist Revolutionary<sup>11</sup> and Menshevik parties and an approach nearer to Bolshevism. Thus the tenacity of the proletarian revolutionary movement in republican Russia is shown to be very great. The united efforts of the Cadets, Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did not succeed in weakening it. On the contrary, the coalition of the Kornilovians with the "democracy" only *strengthened* Bolshevism.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, all these methods of combat were exhausted because no other method of opposing the proletarian revolutionary movement except the struggle of ideas and repression can exist.

We have as yet no details about the tenacity of the Cadet-Kornilovian movement. The Cadets have never experienced persecution. Goutchkov himself has been released; Maklakdeov and Miliukov have not even been arrested. The *Ryetch* has never been suppressed. The Cadets, in fact, have been spared. The Kerensky Government pays *little attention* to them and the Kornilovians. Granted that the Anglo-French and Russian Riabouchinskys still fling millions into the *Edinstvo*<sup>13</sup> and the *Dien*<sup>14</sup> for a new electoral campaign, will that increase their votes now after the Kornilov insurrection? It is very unlikely. To judge from their conferences, meetings, &c., it is almost certain that the number of their partisans will rest approximately the same.

As a result of our comparison we are driven to the conclusion that the beginning of the civil war initiated by the proletariat demonstrated the strength, consciousness, basis, growth and organisation of the movement. And the beginning of the bourgeois civil war, on the other hand, revealed that it had no strength, no mass consciousness, no foundation, no chance of victory.

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<sup>10</sup> After the July days amongst others Trotsky, Kame. ev, Lunasharsky, Kollontai, Raskolnikov, &c., were arrested. *Pravda* was shut down on July 5, afterwards the *Pravda des Tranchées* of Riga, the Bolshevik paper of Cronstadt, &c. The campaign of calumny, launched by Bourtev, financed by the Allies, consisted in representing the Bolsheviks as German agents.

<sup>11</sup> In the S.R. organisation of Petrograd, for example, the Left had the majority from that time.

<sup>12</sup> Particularly in the army.

<sup>13</sup> Plekhanov's organ.

<sup>14</sup> Liberal-Socialist organ, started in Petrograd towards the end of 1916 and subsidised by high finance.



We have had practical experience for many months of the union of the Cadets with the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks, that is to say, against the revolutionary proletariat; and this alliance of the temporarily silenced Kornilovians with the democracy in reality provoked not the weakening but the reinforcement of the Bolsheviks, the crash of the coalition, the strengthening of the left opposition even among the Mensheviks.

A Bolshevik alliance with the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks against the Cadets, against the bourgeoisie, *has not yet been tried*. Or to be exact, it has only been experienced for five days—from August 26 to 31—and at one point against Kornilov's revolt. And this alliance made it possible to conquer the counter-revolutionary forces with supreme ease, unexampled in any other revolution. It inflicted such a defeat on the counter-revolutionaries, the bourgeoisie, the landed proprietors, the capitalists, the Allied imperialists and the Cadets, that the civil war (which was initiated by the bourgeoisie) was held up from the start, crushed at birth, annihilated without a shot being fired. In spite of this historical fact the whole bourgeois Press with its auxiliaries (the Plekhanovs, Potressovs, Brechko-Brechkovskaias, &c.) continues to declare that a union of the Bolsheviks with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries would threaten Russia with the horrors of civil war!

It would be laughable if it were not so sad. It is pitiful that anything so obviously absurd, so appalling, and which evinces such a contempt for the facts, such a misreading of the whole history of our revolution should still be believed. It only goes to prove how widely spread are the bourgeois lies (inevitable since the bourgeoisie monopolise the Press) which smother the most indisputable and tangible lessons of the revolution.

If the revolution teaches anything, incontestably and definitely proved by facts, it is that only the alliance of the Bolsheviks with the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, only the immediate handing over of all power to the Soviets, can prevent civil war. The bourgeoisie could not even dream of launching this alliance into civil war against the Soviets of elected workers, soldiers and peasants, for this war would not even get so far as one battle.

After Kornilov's adventure the bourgeoisie would not even find a "barbarian division."

The peaceful development of a revolution such as this is on the whole an extremely unusual and difficult process. For revolution is the culminating point in the antagonism of the classes. But in a fundamentally agrarian country where the alliance of the proletariat and the peasants can give peace to the masses exhausted by an unjust and criminal war, and *all the land* to the peasants—given such an exceptional moment historically, the peaceful growth of the revolution would be both possible and probable if all power were given over to the Soviets. The struggle of the parties for power could develop peacefully in the heart of the Soviets on condition that the latter cease to distort democratic principles, as, for example, granting the soldiers one representative per 200 and the workers one per 1,000.<sup>15</sup> In a democratic republic these departures from principles would not be tolerated.

Against the Soviets who would give the land to the peasants without compensation, and who would propose a just peace to all the peoples, no alliance of the Anglo-French and Russian bourgeoisie, or of the Kornilovs, the Buchanans, the Riabouchinskys and the Miliukovs with the Plekhanovs and the Potressovs could do anything. For such an alliance would be doomed to impotence.

Certainly the bourgeoisie would oppose giving up the land to the peasants without indemnity, similar rearrangements in other spheres, a just peace and the rupture with imperialism. But to carry this resistance as far as civil war there would need to be a *mass* capable of *warring* against the Soviets and conquering them. Now, the bourgeoisie does not possess these masses and can therefore take no action. Moreover, the Soviets will speedily and resolutely seize power; the "barbarian divisions" and Cossacks will be disintegrated; and fast enough the masses will divide themselves into a meagre minority of conscious Kornilovians and an immense majority of workers and peasants, partisans in the democratic and *socialist* democracy (for it will then have to do with Socialism).

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<sup>15</sup> A regulation which has been allowed since the formation of the Petrograd Soviet; one deputy for each company or thousand workers. The Social-Democrats and even the Mensheviks have tried scores of times, but always in vain, to do away with this anomaly.

The bourgeois resistance, after the Soviets have seized power, will result in *every* capitalist being watched, inspected and controlled by *tens* and *hundreds* of workers and peasants whose interest it will be to prohibit the deception of the people by the capitalists. The forms and machinery of this registration and control have been invented and simplified by capitalism itself, by its very creations—the banks, large factories, trusts, railways, post office, consumers' associations and syndicates. It will be enough to break all resistance without bloodshed for the Soviets to punish by means of confiscation or a short-term imprisonment the capitalists who refuse to give an account of themselves or who continue to trick the people. For it is precisely by means of the banks, which will be nationalised, the associations of employers and civil servants, the post office, the consumers' societies and the syndicates that the control and registration will become universal, all-powerful and invincible.

The Soviets, the workers and poor peasants of Russia, are not alone in their march towards Socialism. If we were alone we would not reach the goal of our task, even peacefully, for it is properly speaking international. But we have a powerful reserve in the army of the most advanced workers of other countries. Russia's break-away from imperialism and the imperialistic war will accelerate everywhere the ripening of the Socialist—the workers'—revolution.

One talks of the "rivers of blood" that civil war would provoke. This phrase, which we have already cited in the resolution of the Cadet-Kornilovians, is repeated on all sides by the bourgeoisie and opportunists of every shade. After Kornilov's insurrection it does and can only excite laughter among all class-conscious workers.

But during the time of actual war the question of bloodshed must be regarded from this perspective: the approximate evaluation of the forces, the calculation of the consequences. It must be taken seriously, not just as an empty phrase, as a simple hypocrisy of the Cadets who did their best to allow Kornilov to flood Russia with blood in order to restore the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the power to the big landed proprietors and the monarchy. "Rivers of blood" they say to us. Let us also examine that side of the question.

Let us admit that the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks continue in their eternal falterings, that they do not give over the

power to the Soviets, do not overthrow Kerensky; that they re-establish, in a scarcely different form, the old compromise with the bourgeoisie (discarding, for example, the Cadets for the Kornilovians "without party"), that they do not substitute the existing machinery of power for the Soviet machinery, that they make no peace proposals, that they do not break with imperialism or confiscate the estates of the big proprietors. Let us face all this as the result of the present shilly-shallying of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries.

The experience of our revolution shows with blinding evidence that such a state of affairs would bring the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks to an even feebler condition. They would become more and more separated from the masses, whose indignation and fury would retaliate and whose sympathies for the revolutionary party the Bolsheviks would considerably increase. The proletariat in the capital would be nearer related than at present to the Commune, to the workers' insurrection, the conquest of power, and to civil war in its most definite and decisive form. After the experience of the occasion of April 20 and 21 and July 3 and 4 this consequence should be regarded historically as inevitable. "Rivers of blood" cry the Cadets! But "rivers of blood" would grant victory to the proletariat and poor peasants. This victory would have ninety-nine chances out of a hundred to substitute *peace* for the imperialist war, that is to save the lives of *hundreds of thousands* of men who shed their blood at this moment to settle the question of the division of profits and territorial conquests (annexations) among the capitalists. If the movement of April 20 and 21 had ended in the transference of power to the Soviets and had given the victory in them to the Bolsheviks allied to the poor peasants, that seizure of power, even suppose that it had let flow "rivers of blood," would at least have saved the lives of the *half-million* soldiers which the disastrous offensive of June 18 certainly cost us.

All the conscious workers and soldiers, when they seriously approach the question of civil war, about which there is so much noise at present, will make this reckoning. And surely the workers and soldiers who have gained a certain amount of experience and acquired the habit of thought will not be frightened by the shouts of the men, parties and groups who argue about "rivers of blood,"

while they themselves prepare again to sacrifice the lives of *millions* of Russian soldiers for Constantinople, Lvov, Varsovie—for the victory over Germany. All the *rivers of blood* caused by civil war would not bear the remotest comparison with the *seas of blood* which the Russian imperialists have shed since June 18 (in spite of the considerable opportunity that they had to avoid these hecatombs by transferring the power to the Soviets).

Be a little more discreet in your reasoning about the “rivers of blood” of civil war, my gentlemen—Miliukov, Potressov, Plekhanov and others, for during the war the soldiers have already seen seas of blood.

Now in 1917, in the fourth year of a frightful and criminal war that has exhausted all the peoples, the international situation of the Russian revolution is such that proposals for a just peace through the Russian proletariat, victorious in civil war, would have ninety-nine chances out of a hundred to end in an armistice and peace—*without it being necessary to shed any more seas of blood.*

In fact, the alliance of the rival Anglo-French and German imperialisms *against* a Russian Socialist proletarian republic *cannot be realised*, whereas the alliance of English, Japanese and American imperialism is almost impossible, and in any case in no way formidable considering the geographic situation of Russia. Besides, the existence of the revolutionary and Socialist proletarian masses in the bosom of *all* the European States is a fact; there is no doubt about the growth and inevitability of the world-wide Socialist revolution. Surely it is not through delegations and conferences at Stockholm with the foreign Plekhanovs or Tseretellis that one can seriously assist the development of this world-wide revolution, but only by the progression of the Russian revolution.

The bourgeoisie talks of the inevitable defeat of the Commune, that is of the proletariat, if they seize power.

These are lying assertions, dictated by class interest.

Once power is captured, the Russian proletariat has *every* chance to retain it and to lead Russia right on to the triumph of the revolution in the West.

For, in the first place, we have learnt a lot since the Commune, and we shall not repeat its fatal mistakes. We shall not leave the

State Bank in the hands of the bourgeoisie, we shall not limit ourselves to a defence against our *Versillais* (the Kornilovians), but we shall take the offensive and crush them.

In the second place, the victorious proletariat will give Russia peace. After all the horrors of that methodical extermination of the peoples which has lasted already more than three years, no force will be in a condition to overthrow the government of *peace*, the government of honest, sincere, just peace.

In the third place, the victorious proletariat will immediately present the land to the peasants without indemnity. And, tired and exasperated by the way our Government has flirted with the large landowners, especially the Coalition Government, Kerensky's Government, the vast majority of the peasant class will support the victorious proletariat whole-heartedly and heroically in every way.

You speak incessantly of the "heroic effort" of the people, my Menshevik and Social Revolutionary gentlemen. I have recently seen for the *n*th time this phrase in the editorïal of your *Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee*. For you it is nothing but a catch-phrase. But the workers and peasants read it and think about it and all their thinking, fortified by the experience of Kornilov's adventure, by the "experiences" of the Minister Piechekhonov, the Minister Tchernov and so forth—all their thinking, I say, leads them inevitably to this conclusion: this "heroic effort" is nothing else but the confidence of the poor peasants in the workers in the towns, whom they regard as their allies and faithful leaders. This heroic effort is nothing else but the victory of the Russian proletariat over the bourgeoisie in the civil war, for that victory alone will put an end to the agonising hesitations, it alone will resolve the situation and it alone will give peace.

If the union of the town workers with the poor peasants can be realised by the immediate transference of power to the Soviets, so much the better! The Bolsheviks will do everything to assure that opportunity for a *peaceful* development of the revolution. If not, the Constituent Assembly itself will not bring salvation because the Social Revolutionaries can carry on in its bosom their policy of

compromise with the Cadets and with Brechko-Brechkovskaia and Kerensky, who are no better.

If the Kornilov experience has not enlightened the democracy, if it continue to carry on its policy of oscillation and conciliation, we shall say: Nothing is more fatal to the proletarian revolution than these oscillations. Do not seek, gentlemen, to frighten us with the spectre of civil war—it is inevitable unless you decide to break with the Kornilovians and the “Coalition” immediately and definitely. And that war which will terminate in victory over the exploiters, and which will give the land to the peasants and peace to the peoples, will throw open the way for a victorious Socialist proletarian revolution to the whole world.

# THE POLITICAL DEFEAT OF THE WORKING CLASS

By C. H. NORMAN

**N**O serious observer of English politics can doubt that the results of the General Election will be as disturbing to the political side of the Labour Movement as were the betrayals in 1919-1921 to the industrial side. The political leaders have sought to minimise the extent of the defeat (as the industrial leaders did in 1919-1921) by talking loudly about the increase in the Labour vote. But these gentlemen do not mention that the Labour Party secured a mass of non-Labour votes as a consequence of the Conservative-Liberal pact, which compelled many Radical workmen and some Conservative, as well as middle-class voters, to vote Labour for lack of a candidate of their own parties. Such is the accurate explanation of the increased Labour vote. The Labour Government failed to attract the popularity that should have been won had a more honest and different policy been adopted in the period of office.

The letter, from which extracts are printed at the conclusion of this article, carried its criticism of the record of the Labour Government up till June. Since then, there have been a series of blunders and crimes committed by the Imperialism of Mr. MacDonald and by the reactionary members of his Government. Of course, the Government was a Coalition-Labour Government ; it was as much a Coalition Government in opinion as the Lloyd George Governments were. The Labour Movement should now understand what Mr. Winston Churchill meant when he declared that "Labour was not fit to govern." Mr. Churchill knew the character and quality of the leaders of the Labour Movement. Mr. Churchill (who has been in half a dozen different posts) knows quite well that nothing is easier than to govern England through the medium of the permanent officials, merely acting as their spokesmen and defenders, instituting some small measures



## *The Political Defeat of the Working Class* 173

here and there to satisfy certain party interests. That is how England has been governed ever since 1832. But Mr. Churchill considered that the Labour rank and file intended that there should be a change, and that their leaders should use the political machine to transform the social system. Mr. Churchill was scoffing at the notion that the political leaders of the Labour Movement had either the capacity, the resolution or the will to undertake such an onerous task, and let us recognise that Mr. Churchill has been proved to be substantially right.

The Campbell prosecution arose out of the fact that the Labour Attorney-General was merely a place-hunting lawyer, who was quite ignorant of the personalities or traditions of the Labour Movement. He was a Liberal candidate in 1918. Sir Patrick Hastings is the ordinary type of lawyer-politician. He admitted that he had never heard of the *Workers' Weekly* and knew nothing about the Communist Party, boasting righteously that he had never spoken to a Communist in his life ! That was an interesting revelation of the quality and mentality of the "Labour" Attorney-General. The handling of the case was a series of errors from beginning to end, due to the fact that the Labour Attorney-General did not know he was not a Tory or Liberal Attorney-General.

The revelations of Lord Thomson concerning the deadliness of the bombardment of the Arabs in Iraq throw a lurid light on the apologies of the pacifist Mr. Leach on this subject. It is not surprising that the Bradford constituencies rejected their Labour representatives when there was such a startling object-lesson of the difference between professions in wartime and practices in peacetime as in the case of Mr. Leach. It is a shocking fact that the most cruel development of modern Imperialism, namely, the "ordering" of peasant peoples by means of air bombardments of a most destructive character to life and property, should have had the sanction and authority of the Labour Government. In the recent affair in Transjordan, Lord Thomson admitted that over 700 Arabs were killed, while the attackers had no casualties. Such is Labour Imperialism !

Then came the anti-Communist campaign, culminating in the exclusion of Communist members from the Labour Party in almost every rôle. The present writer has never been a member of the

Communist Party, but this kind of heresy hunt is of the same hypocritical character as that adopted by the I.L.P. in its attitude on the Third International controversy. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. Leach and their colleagues have objected to any association with the Third International *because* it advocated the class war and insurrectionary tactics—in other words, because the Third International, unlike the bombers of the Arabs, believed in *violence!*

Next there were the disclosures concerning the motor car transaction, which has done the Labour Movement incalculable harm, inasmuch as no repudiation of the standard of integrity involved in this deal has come even from Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Smillie, Mr. Jowett or other upright members of the Party. Can one imagine Mr. Keir Hardie engaging in such a transaction? Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was well treated by the Press in this matter because he had served Capitalism so well that the Labour Movement was being led to certain defeat. Let us make no mistake about the influence the Grant affair had with the electorate. Very few people believed that the £30,000 was not related to the baronetcy. It was argued that the time to endow Mr. MacDonald with a motor car, if it was a pure act of friendship, was when Mr. MacDonald was the overworked leader of the Opposition, drawing only £400 a year from the public funds, not when he was the recipient of £5,000 as First Lord of the Treasury, with a house next door to the Foreign Office, and a secretariat to assist him. The argument continued that Sir Alexander Grant did not endow his friend in this handsome manner until his friend, as Prime Minister, was able to exercise his power of recommendation to the King. It was also pointed out that the income from the shares, representing a gross amount of £2,250, was largely above the sum required to maintain any motor car, the annual upkeep of which could not possibly exceed £800 (and that only on the most luxurious and plutocratic scale). It was further said that the income from these shares was derived from that exploitation of the labour of young girls which is one of the saddest features of the industrial system of to-day. Lastly, one was reminded of Mr. MacDonald's past denunciations of Capitalism, and the whole business was derided as something which should have been utterly repellent to the man who was entrusted with the leadership of the party standing out against industrial exploitation. How consistently could such a

## *The Political Defeat of the Working Class 175*

severe critic of "Poplarism" as Mr. MacDonald has developed into being accept such a "dole"? The matter was not improved by the defenders of Mr. MacDonald stoutly declaring that £5,000 a year was too small a salary. Yet Mr. MacDonald is the leader of a party the vast mass of whose members do the useful toil of the world at a rate of pay which rarely exceeds £4 a week! Mr. MacDonald has been whitewashed in this matter at a heavy and increasing cost to the party.

The situation in Egypt and India gave a great opportunity for a generous stroke of statesmanship, but nothing was forthcoming. Whether Mr. MacDonald has returned the golden chair which was presented to him by the Egyptian Nationalists when he was Leader of the Opposition one does not know: but one may well speculate what the donors are thinking now! Egypt regards Britain much as England would regard the United States had that Government seized the Manchester Ship Canal in pledge for the payment of the interest on the English Debt to the United States. Mr. MacDonald merely adopted the bullying tone of blood-stained Imperialism towards India and Egypt. Britain holds those countries only by the sword, the bomb and the maxim gun. No doubt, some day the same drama will be enacted in Egypt and India as preceded the formation of the Irish Free State. Judging by the repressive legislation required to suppress popular discontent throughout the British Dependencies, British rule in these States is about as popular as the government of the mice kingdom by the cats. In India, Mr. MacDonald began with a hectoring letter on sedition, and ended with authorising arrests under tyrannical ordinances like that of 1818, specially reserved for subject peoples. Notwithstanding the advent of the Labour Government, it is still felony to engage in trade union agitation in India!

It is plain that Mr. MacDonald, having attained his ambition of becoming Prime Minister, and having sacrificed the movement that made such a promotion possible, has quite openly disclosed himself as a Liberal Imperialist, as anyone who sat with Mr. MacDonald on the I.L.P. Policy Committee must have suspected would be the next stage in his career. If Mr. MacDonald has any desire to retrieve his reputation he should re-read Browning's lines entitled "The Lost Leader."

In the interests of the party, Mr. Wheatley or Mr. Lansbury should have been elected as Leader in succession to Mr. MacDonald. In the meantime, the rank and file are faced with the position that Capitalism has assumed the Labour mask with the same facility with which it adopted either the Liberal or Conservative mask as the circumstances required. The outlook for the Labour Movement is dark, because the lesson of the Labour Government is that the six or eight leading men of the Party have no intention of carrying out, when in office, the policy which the party stands for in its programme.

LETTER SENT BY C. H. NORMAN TO THE MILE END LABOUR PARTY EXECUTIVE WITH REFERENCE TO HIS PROPOSED L.C.C. CANDIDATURE, JUNE 21, 1924.

MY DEAR KERSHAW,—I regret that I cannot attend the further meeting of the Executive on Tuesday next; but, in view of all the circumstances, I must adhere to my already expressed opinion, that no purpose would be served by the submission of my name to the Selection Conference. As requested by the Executive, I will state some of the reasons for this decision.

(1) The formation of the Cabinet by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was carried through under circumstances quite contrary to the principles of the Labour Movement. Until the Cabinet list was published the Party as a whole had no means of telling that the Labour Cabinet was to consist of representatives of every shade of political thought. The Party was given no opportunity of passing its approval or otherwise on the *personnel* of the Cabinet. No explanation has ever been offered to the Labour Movement concerning the reasons why life-long workers in the party were excluded from office and non-members given high positions. Able men like Mr. George Lansbury, who were willing to take Cabinet rank, were excluded on grounds improper for consideration by a Labour Prime Minister.

The creation of peers by the Labour Government was a blow at the democratic principle. The excuse given for this action, namely, the desire to strengthen the debating power of the Government in the Lords, is false in fact, as the three created peers, to my knowledge, are poor speakers, and quite useless as debaters compared with the Conservative peers against whom they are matched.

It is also to be regretted that the Cabinet did not show the sincerity of some of its past professions by reducing the salary list of £150,000 a year to some more reasonable figure, in accordance with the Labour view that there should be some equalisation in the standard of life of the people as between the producers of the wealth and those who live in luxury upon what is produced by the mass. Had this course been adopted, the movement might have been spared much of the outbreak of snobbish display which has taken place since the Labour Cabinet endeavoured to copy the social standards of the idle rich. The result has been to bring the movement into ridicule, not only among its opponents, but among the honest-minded within its own ranks.

## *The Political Defeat of the Working Class* 177

(2) With regard to Russia, the recognition of Russia had to be forced upon Mr. MacDonald by the threat of the "Hands Off Russia" Committee to organise meetings in all the large towns to secure "unconditional recognition" of the Soviet Government. Unfortunately, the recognition was not "unconditional." The situation now is that the Labour Cabinet are insisting upon acceptance of liability for all the pre-war debts and much of the revolutionary damage, while declining to admit any counterclaim by the Soviet Government in respect of the action of the Coalition Government in carrying on war against Russia between 1918 and 1920. This is amazing conduct on the part of the Labour Cabinet.

The general line in foreign policy has been indecisive in character. Nothing but mischief to the working people of Europe can come from the bleeding of Germany which is provided for in the Dawes Report, General Dawes being the representative of American finance. The stubborn line adopted towards Mexico and the postponement of the recognition of the Obregon Government have created a situation which may develop into a most awkward dispute with that country. The kow-towing to the royal families of Italy and Roumania indulged in by Mr. MacDonald was a gross abuse of his position as a *Labour* Prime Minister; actually, the movement has been put under the humiliation of the Roumanian Queen remarking (quite truly) that the existence of a Labour Government was not inconsistent with the recognition of the privileges of royalty and the plutocratic class!

British diplomacy under Mr. Ramsay MacDonald is no more open concerning the realities of the international situation than it was under Lord Curzon.

(3) The expenditure on armaments is being maintained practically on the pre-war basis. It is not true to say that the Estimates could not have been cut down in a drastic manner. Estimates can be cut down at *any* time; the difficulty is in increasing them, as that would involve provision of more funds by the Treasury. Had the Ministers concerned the will to do so, the Labour Government could have made drastic alterations in the Estimates. Nor am I satisfied that the Party is not being deceived about the Singapore dock. Enough money was voted to carry on the preliminary work which could not be stopped—so the Government said; but that work will not be finished till September, 1925, so the scheme can be easily continued should another Government come into office. Then the attitude of the Cabinet in rejecting the amendments to the Army Act, which its members had previously voted for when in opposition, produced a most humiliating spectacle for those who believe in sincerity in public life.

(4) The Chancellor of the Exchequer duly presented an almost non-controversial Liberal Budget in which certain proper reductions were made in food and other taxes: but on such matters as the interest on and capital of the National Debt, the use of the Post Office Savings Bank deposits, and the setting up of a State Bank to utilise the receipts from the income tax and excise duties, &c., the Chancellor has not revealed the glimmerings of a Socialist policy but has merely set up a capitalist committee to consider the National Debt!

(5) The administration of the Home Office by Mr. Henderson has not differed from that of his predecessors. The spying system is being continued, the alien is being harassed, the ex-police strikers have been refused re-employment, the factory and workshop regulations are being broken with the same impunity, the adulteration of the food of the people is not being checked any more effectively than in the past, the absolute right of appeal to all persons convicted in the police courts is still being denied them, and the inhabitants of the prisons are being left to the tender mercies of the brutalised Prison Commissioners. In fact, nothing has been changed. Mr. Henderson even exceeded his own record of cynicism in the debate on the reinstatement of the police strikers.

(6) The Board of Trade under Mr. Sidney Webb seems as apathetic on questions connected with safety of life in the mines, on the railways, and on the general conditions of the merchant seamen on the ocean liner or the tramp steamers as were his predecessors; I can discover no improvement here.

(7) At the Colonial Office that profuse admirer of the British Constitution, Mr. J. H. Thomas, has not succeeded in checking the recruitment and sending of young girls into brothels in Hong Kong under the seal of the Secretary for Chinese Affairs; nor has he intervened on behalf of the various native races in Africa who are being deprived of their land by various devices in the interests of the concession companies that have been formed to bring the blessings of imperialism, gin, and forced labour into the backward regions of the world.

(8) The difficulties of the situation in India and Egypt are being increased by the policy of "continuity" or inaction by the Labour Ministers concerned, Lord Olivier and Mr. MacDonald.

(9) On the subject of war pensions and old age pensions, one had looked forward with confidence to a great advance in generosity of treatment of these two most deserving classes by the Labour Cabinet. Again, little has been done; yet a competent Minister could have redrafted the Royal Warrant and the regulations governing its administration in a month.

(10) The Government has undoubtedly to its credit a much-needed reform by abolishing the "gap" and improving the allowances to the unemployed; but the Labour Party had assured the country that it was opposed to the "dole" system, as it is erroneously described, and would undertake the organisation of productive work for the unemployed under good conditions. Yet the fact is that nothing has been done in this respect and that unemployment is getting worse.

(11) No power has been taken to set up fair rent courts, a reform which has been urgent in all urban areas in Great Britain for nearly half a century. It remains to be seen whether the Evictions Act will fulfil its purpose; but its terms are so confused that I feel confident that the only persons it will benefit will be the lawyers.

(12) The repudiation of election pledges by the Labour Government has been shameless. Mr. MacDonald, in excusing his breaches about the ex-ranker officers and the police strikers, declared that candidates should not be asked to give pledges! Why should the electors vote for unpledged candidates? A pledge is the honourable bargain on which the member is elected. Honour

## *The Political Defeat of the Working Class* 179

apparently does not remain an element in the character of Labour Ministers *after* election any more than in the characters of Liberal or Tory Ministers.

The attitude of the Cabinet on the subject of titles, salaries, kow-towing to royalism and social functions, I consider important as evidencing the fact that the Cabinet has no intention of bringing about such changes in the methods of government in this country as must precede the development of these fundamental reforms in the social system which I had always believed the Labour-Socialist movement stood for.

There is no sign of any break with the policy of the exploitation of the mass of the people in the interests of a small minority. Yet the rank and file of the Labour Movement have claved for these Ministers in the belief that such a change was intended, not in order that they might merely ape their predecessors.

I have refrained in this review from attacking the Cabinet because no revolutionary demonstration has taken place. That might have been expecting too much from the first Labour Cabinet in present circumstances; but resolute and able men imbued with will and determination can do a great deal in six months, as has been demonstrated historically on many occasions. For instance, in Denmark the Labour Government, also a minority Government, instituted measures to abolish all titles and reduce the army by seven-eighths in its first month of office.

As I have reached the conclusion that the gentlemen composing the Cabinet have neither the spirit nor the wish to resist the political influences of capitalism and the social attractions of royalism, it does not seem to me worth while spending time and money in supporting what is an imposition on the sorely-tried working class of this country.

Yours sincerely,

C. H. NORMAN.

# SOME QUESTIONS FOR J. R. CLYNES

By MANABENRA NATH ROY

**T**HE article of Mr. J. R. Clynes published in the *New Leader* of November 21, while urging the necessity of combating Communism, inadvertently gives occasion for a number of pertinent questions. The strength or weakness of Mr. Clynes' case depends upon his ability to give satisfactory answers to these questions.

(1) Obviously in order not to provoke the hostility of the proletariat by openly denouncing the Russian Revolution, Mr. Clynes makes the concession that the forcible overthrow "of one class by another may be condoned or even approved" in countries not possessing "democratic weapons." The logical sequence of this conditional admission places Mr. Clynes under the obligation of recognising the "sacred right of revolt" on the part of the subject peoples within the British Empire.

Does Mr. Clynes admit this obligation? If he does, will he pledge the Labour Party to support armed revolution in India, Egypt and other parts of the British Empire? Will he further declare that the Colonial policy of a Labour Government whose leadership he shared, was a violation of this principle?

(2) Mr. Clynes will retort that parliamentary institutions are introduced in the countries constituting the British Empire; therefore the people there *are* provided with a "democratic weapon," the possession of which deprives them of the right of armed revolt. But another statement of Mr. Clynes made in the same article does not allow such a retort. This statement is "the organisation of force outside a Parliamentary system, where that system exists, provokes and invites a corresponding organisation of force by other classes." Leaving aside the ruling class of Britain, it can be pointed out that British Imperialism organises and maintains formidable military forces in India and Egypt "outside the parliamentary system," but the military forces flout and coerce the "parliamentary system" in every moment of its existence. The



military budget, which absorbs well over half of the public revenue, is beyond the control of the Indian "parliament" nor has the latter any right over the organisation and command of the army. The hypocrisy of calling the British Army in Egypt a national force can no longer be maintained. This being the case, by virtue of his own statement, Mr. Clynes must admit that the organisation of force by the Indian and Egyptian Nationalist is "provoked and invited," and that such an organisation of force is in the nature of things, so long as the democracy is overridden by Imperialism.

Does Mr. Clynes admit this logical implication of his own arguments, put forward to fight the Communists at home? Will he proclaim that the organisation of armed revolt in the colonies is perfectly constitutional?

(3) Mr. Clynes asseverates that the present political system "is said (by the Communists) to be a form of dictatorship by the exploiting class."

Will he demonstrate how it is otherwise?

(4) Mr. Clynes summarises the Communist argument in favour of direct action as opposed to parliamentary action and dismisses it. But he does not dispute the facts that "ultra-constitutional authorities" were established during the last four years in a number of European countries, to witness, Italy, Germany, Bulgaria and Spain, all of which countries are supposed to possess more or less advanced "democratic institutions." As against the dictatorship of the working class, advocated by the Communists, Mr. Clynes postulates the possibility of amending "our social system in a practical manner, and altering its authority and control in such a way that equity shall be the foundation stone of the social order."

Will Mr. Clynes explain what is this "practical manner"? Will he show how it is humanly possible to believe that the problematical return of a Labour majority to Parliament will induce the commanders of the Navy on the seas and of the army stations all over the world-wide Empire to eschew all war-like resistance? How does the ideal democracy of Britain preclude the appearance of another Cromwell or an English Mussolini?

(5) The most potential argument of Mr. Clynes is that a revolution in Britain will be choked by the stoppage of food supply and unemployment. This is a pre-eminently capitalist argument, the

clever and continual use of which has taught the British proletariat to love its chain—the Empire. Mr. Clynes raises the bogey that the British industries will be ruined by the lack of raw materials, on the one hand, and of markets, on the other. British industries are starved and well over a million unemployed has become a normal state of affairs without a revolution. The search for ever-increasing markets is not caused by the necessity of selling enough manufactured goods to import foodstuffs sufficient for the British people, but to increase profits, which lead to the accumulation of capital, which brings in its train over-production, imperial expansion, rivalry over foreign markets, subjugation of non-European races and war. By far the major part of the raw materials and foodstuffs is imported at present from the colonial and semi-colonial countries; these also provide the greater part of the market, particularly since the destruction of the European markets by the war. The maintenance of British industry in its present top-heavy condition, therefore, means the perpetuation of the Empire. That is, even in the new social order reared upon the “foundation stone of equity,” Britain will fatten on the blood and bone of the colonial masses held forcibly down to a state of economic backwardness and political subjugation. If the Labour Party is known to the Colonies in this nature, the possibility for a socialised Britain to count upon the economic co-operation of the liberated colonial peoples will be deeply prejudiced. The revolt of the subject nationalities is inevitable. Such tremendous reserves of British industry as India, Egypt and the Sudan will eventually break away from the Empire. A pre-eminently capitalist orientation, such as that held by Mr. Clynes, on the part of the British proletariat will only cause the newly liberated peoples to proceed along the lines of capitalism, with its concomitant greedy exclusiveness and counter-revolutionary individualism. So no amount of anxiety on the part of Mr. Clynes can help the British Isles to continue perpetually being the workshop of a vast Empire, inhabited by hundreds of millions of people held forcibly in a backward state of economy. The top-heavy industrial structure of Britain is doomed to destruction by its own inherent contradictions. If revolutionary action of the proletariat does not reorganise it on reasonable proportions—transform it from an octopus sucking the blood of the working class at home and subject

races abroad to an organism producing articles for use, and not mere values increasing capital—then collapse and exhaustion will overtake it, as was the case in Rome.

Does Mr. Clynes desire the overthrow of capitalism in its highest form—Imperialism? In that case, would he have the British working class, in power, step into the shoes of the Curzons and Baldwins, in order to maintain the British industries in their present top-heavy condition? Will a Labour Government, headed by him, counting upon a parliamentary majority secured thanks to the “democratic weapon,” be Socialist or Capitalist? If it would pretend to be Socialist, will Mr. Clynes explain how the admirable feat of fitting Socialism into the framework of Imperialism can be performed?

# LOYALTIES

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

(Karl Radek replies elsewhere in this issue to Mr. Newbold's article which appeared last month; we deal with this final article at its conclusion.—Editor, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.)

**W**HAT an amount of mental energy it must be possible to conserve when once one has entered into that frame of mind that enables one to gather up and to stuff into a single sack all those whose views differ from one's own, and how much effort one must be able to put forth in other directions when one puts them all, as a school-boy does with conkers, upon a string "from Newbold to Price, from Price to MacDonald, from MacDonald to Baldwin" and labels the lot "*le front unique contre-revolutionnaire*"!

If such methods of controversy—in which, by the way, it is also assumed that the other party or parties are defending each other against him as against desperate argumentative odds—are so astounding that one wonders whether the initials "R. P. D." have been affixed to the tirade by mistake. One can at any rate opine that if Baldwin ever picks up THE LABOUR MONTHLY and reads this extraordinary synthesis he will be tickled to death and that one of the dastard quartette will thus be happily despatched.

"R. P. D.," who formerly used to diagnose the month's social and political diseases in his monthly notes, has, since the Labour Party in general and Ramsay MacDonald in particular have been in office, become so obsessed with their miscalculations, malpractices and misdemeanours that he has to drag in Dawes by the hair of his head, if for no other reason but that every argument must end with a flying kick at the Labour Party and its leader. "The triumph of the Dawes Plan was the triumph of the counter-revolution. To-day comes the supreme attack on the revolution." So "the Europe of Chamberlain" must be represented as "the logical sequel of the Europe of MacDonald."

The Dawes Plan must be assumed to have finally triumphed for just so long as it is necessary to pillory MacDonald as the arch-

criminal of all the ages. To detract from the triumph of the Dawes Plan would be to minimise the guilt of MacDonald.

The Dawes Plan cannot, of course, succeed. That is axiomatic with "R. P. D." at any other time but that at which he is chasing the Father of Lies.

Yet it is so obvious that the Dawes Plan is in jeopardy. It is so plain that "the Europe of MacDonald" has vanished like the mists of the morning. The Dawes Plan is no longer an issue of paramount importance. It belongs to the past. But because the premiership of MacDonald, also, lies in that past one must, above all others, execrate and attack MacDonald. "R. P. D." passes by the Commercial Treaty of the new Government, cold-shoulders the problem of inter-allied debts, ignores the Safeguarding of Industries legislation and continues sharpening his teeth on the same old knuckle-bone. "To-day comes the supreme attack on the Revolution." Real'y, "R. P. D." takes himself and "papa" Zinoviev much too seriously!

We are asked to believe that the whole capitalist world is converging on one objective of early attack—the Communist International and, as a means to that end, upon Soviet Russia.

We are asked to believe, mark you, that the financial houses of London and New York having, after many extremely anxious years, propped up the gold standard and revived the credit system are going to detonate them both, as they assuredly would, by a Continent and world convulsing attack on Soviet Russia.

Finance capital is going to do nothing so ridiculous. Not, at any rate, at this juncture.

The Communist Party and the Communist International must not think that, because they make an excellent framework on which to tack the lurid canvas of the Tory stage-dragon, they frighten the actors to anything like the same extent that they terrify the old ladies in the stalls.

The reaction triumphed in this country so signally, first in the overthrow of the Labour Government in the House, and then in the General Election, by reason of the lunatic antics of the Communist Party of Great Britain and the rhodomontade of "papa" Zinoviev.

The noisy and spectacular "anti-militarism" in which the

Communist Party (under pressure) only began to engage when the Labour Party was in office, and Lansbury was available to use—a pacifist—to pull chestnuts out of the fire, was a veritable godsend to the reaction.

The Campbell "case" gave to the reaction the opportunity it wanted. Here was the basis for a first-class "scare." The language of the Communist Party (the echo) and of Zinoviev (the thunder) was not so distinct from that of the forged Zinoviev letter that nine out of ten electors could find sufficient difference to discredit its authenticity.

The whole thing was plausible to a degree—if "R. P. D." was "in touch with the masses," instead of always talking about it from an editorial chair, he would know that.

Zinoviev and the inner circle of the Comintern, that anyone who knows anything is perfectly aware manipulates the policy of the Communist International not only between Congresses and enlarged executives but all the time, were the real authors of the overthrow in circumstances so untoward of the Labour Government.

It is all very well to heap the sins of all upon the single scapegoat, Ramsay MacDonald, and to drive that harassed and hated man into the wilderness.

MacDonald's chief fault was, on this occasion, that he took Zinoviev nearly as seriously as that individual takes himself, and weary with effort and loaded with care, lost his very attenuated stock of patience and temper.

MacDonald is my leader. He is the leader of the Labour Party. Were he the devil himself and yet had been elected to lead the party to which I belong and to which, over sixteen years, I have never been ashamed to owe my allegiance I should, were he leading that party into an electoral battle, call him "my leader" and try to be over the top with the first, fighting loyally by his side.

For the first time last year the Labour Party took office. For the most part, the Ministers were men without any prior experience, for the first time fingering the tiller of the ship of State. They had a task of terrible difficulty. They were sailing to them almost uncharted seas, in dirty weather, their crew was inadequate and untrained.

Those of us who are bone of the bone of the Labour Party

could, under those circumstances, only with the uttermost reluctance bring ourselves to criticise much less to attack them. We have believed them often in the past to have been terribly misguided, erroneous in judgment of the enemy and mistaken in their strategy of advance and tactics of assault. We have, however, not believed them to be thorough-paced scoundrels and traitors.

We are Englishmen who treat a man as innocent till we have proof that he is guilty. When he is one of our own men, with whom we have worked, we give him the widest latitude we can.

MacDonald is my leader. He is, also, if "R. P. D." is in the Labour Party professing to be prepared to abide by its constitution and accept its decisions, his leader. "R. P. D." is entitled to try to replace his leader by another, but, whilst criticising and admonishing him, he is required to give him loyalty and to fight under his orders so long as he is the leader.

The members of the Communist Party must work in our ranks to strengthen the Labour Party, not enter it or continue within it to disintegrate it and destroy it. If they honestly strive to alter from within, bringing forward their motions at the conferences, accepting defeat and abiding by decisions given against them until these are reversed, there is no valid ground for refusing them the fullest rights within our Party.

But it is no reproach to us, it is no offence to me, to be accused of being loyal to—"my leader," the leader, the chosen leader of the Labour Party.

*(The following are the concluding paragraphs of an article on "The Illusion of MacDonaldism" which Mr. Newbold wrote in THE LABOUR MONTHLY so recently as last September:—*

*How miserably has Ramsay MacDonald, that "astute" wire-puller been hanged in his own braces! He has aimed, above all, at achieving success as the man who made peace in Europe, stabilised the exchanges, made safe the Continent for credit, and so set running smoothly again the wheels of trade. Following that will-o'-the-wisp, he has plunged deeper and ever deeper into the quagmire of compromise and the bog of broken promises.*

*He has jettisoned (always "for the time being," and never with any other thought than that "presently" he would redeem his pledges) his programme of unemployed relief schemes; his project of nationalisation; his policy of the capital levy. He has sought to be more respectable and more conservative than his predecessors. He has endeavoured to excel*

*the bourgeois politicians at their own game. He has believed in making gestures, penning notes, drafting resolutions, proclaiming aloud his belief, in "the eternal verities." He has been the brightest bubble that bourgeois democracy has so far blown. As he goes wafting down the wind the dreamers and illusionists call us to wonder at the fairy fantasies, the iridescent hues of this magic creation. But the bubble is just about to be—pricked!*

*The discussion with Mr. Newbold is now ended.—Editor, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.)*



# The World of Labour

PAGE

ITALY: Trade Union Congress . . . . . 189

## ITALY

### Trade Union Congress

THE Italian C.G.L. (General Confederation of Labour) held its sixth Congress at Milan from December 10-13. This is the first Congress that has been held for four years. The membership is reported to be 400,000, as against 3,500,000 in 1921; but a year ago it was stated to be as low as 100,000.

A victory for the Right Wing leaders of the Confederation was anticipated, and their resolution—the “Confederalist” resolution—on the report of the activities of the Confederation was finally adopted by a large majority against both the Socialist (Maximalist) and Communist resolutions. The voting was as follows:—

	<i>Votes</i>
Confederalist resolution . . . . .	153,316
Maximalist „ . . . . .	54,792
Communist „ . . . . .	32,596

The scales were weighted against the Communists by the vote being taken on the 1923 affiliation lists: the increase in membership during 1924 being largely due to the vigorous “Back to the Union” campaign, in which the Communists played a most active part.

The vote itself was not above suspicion, as not a single Communist or Maximalist vote was cast by important unions such as the Telegraphists and Lithographic Printers, or by the Chambers of Labour of Modena, Alessandria, Parma or Florence.

The Confederalist resolution aimed at “systematic Trade Union work” (as the I.F.T.U. *Press Service* calls it) and declared for political “neutrality.” However, Communists are still to be admitted into the C.G.L.

The Congress discussed in general terms certain proposals that have been hinted at for the formation of a new “non-political” “Labour Party,” independent of all existing political organisations. No definite steps were taken.

New rules were voted, which greatly increase the power of the C.G.L. National Executive and rigidly limit the powers and influence of the Chambers of Labour (Trades Councils). The Chambers of Labour have been the historical basis of the Italian Trade Union and working-class movement and its fighting unit in every locality. They are now to be reduced to mere local

administrative Committees of the C.G.L. They are to have no power henceforth to call a strike on their own initiative.

The I.F.T.U. *Press Service* remarks:—

This change will mean a great improvement in Italian trade union policy, for the excessive independence of the Chambers of Labour and their eagerness to intrude in politics has made it difficult for them to do good systematic trade union work.

A comment by a Fascist newspaper, *Il Nuovo Paese* (Rome), is instructive. It wrote after the Congress:—

Our sympathies and our hopes go out to-day to the Confederalist leaders, who, by showing to the workers the broad and sure path of their demands, are not acting solely in the interests of organised Labour but also in that of the Italian Fatherland and of Italian civilisation.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Christian Missions and Oriental Civilisations.* A Study in Culture-Contact. By Maurice T. Price, Ph.D., with a Foreword by Dr. Robert E. Park. (Edward Evans & Sons, Shanghai; G. E. Stechert, London. 16s.)
- Work Among Women.* By S. Smidovitch, O. Sakolova, Moirova, F. Nurina, R. Kovnatov, O. Chernishova, V. Kasparova, V. Lefedera, and Artem Khataloff. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1s.)
- Can Labour Govern? The First Labour Government and the Struggle of the Workers.* By W. Gallacher. With an Introduction by Thomas Bell. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1d.)
- What is the Use of Parliament? The Limitations of Parliamentary Democracy as Disclosed in the General Election, 1924.* By J. R. Campbell. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 2d.)
- Towards Trade Union Unity.* By G. Zinoviev. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 2d.)
- Fight the Slave Plan. The Dawes Report Exposed.* By R. Page Arnot. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1d.)
- My Case.* By J. R. Campbell, Acting Editor of *The Workers' Weekly*. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1d.)
- Anti-Labour Legislation: Why the Workers Should Demand Their Repeal.* By W. T. Colyer, Secretary, Labour Defence Council. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1d.)
- Lettres aux Membres du Parti Communiste. I—Avant le Congrès de Janvier. Quelques Documents.* By P. Monatte, A. Rosmer, and V. Delágarde. (P. Monatte, Paris. 50 c.)
- The People's Year Book, 1925.* The Co-operative Press Agency. (Co-operative Wholesale Society, Manchester; Scottish C.W.S., Glasgow. Cloth, 3s.; paper, 2s.)
- Robert Burns and His Politics.* A Study in History and Human Nature. By John S. Clarke, F.S.A. (Scot.) (Published by J. B. Payne, for the Glasgow Labour College.)
- Fifth Congress of the Communist International.* Abridged Report Meetings held at Moscow, June 7 to July 8, 1924. (Communist Party of Great Britain.)
- What is the British Empire to You?* By T. A. Jackson. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1d.)
- Sonnets.* By M. C. S. With a Preface by Upton Sinclair. (Upton Sinclair, California.)
- Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv.* Zeitschrift des Instituts für Weltwirtschaft und Seeverkehr au der Universität Kiel. Edited by Dr. Sc. Pol. Bernard Harms. (Verlag un Gustav Fischer, Jena.)
- Socialism and the Historic Functions of Liberalism.* By Harold Langshaw. With a Preface by Rt. Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P. (Cecil Palmer. 6s.)
- Britain's Coming Crash. Being Letters to my Son on Currency.* By A. S. Baxendale. (Cecil Palmer. 5s.)
- Sexual Health and Birth Control.* By Ettie A. Ront. With a Foreword by Sir Bryan Donkin, M.D. (Pioneer Press. 1s.)
- The Problem of a Second Chamber.* Fabian Tract No. 213. By Harold J. Laski. (Fabian Society. 2d.)

- British Policy in Egypt.* Labour White Papers, No. 7. (Labour Research Department.)
- The Extent and Character of the National Housing Needs.* The Second "Kibble" Lecture on the subject delivered by Henry R. Aldridge at the Co-operative College, Leicester, June 21, 1924. (The Co-operative Union, Manchester. 2d.)
- P. T. Daly's Libel Action.* A Report of the Legal Proceedings against the *Voice of Labour* and the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and Appendix of Documents. (National Executive Council of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin. 2d.)
- Socialism and the Railways.* I.L.P. Study Courses, No. 9. By F. E. Lawley. (I.L.P. Information Committee. 6d.)

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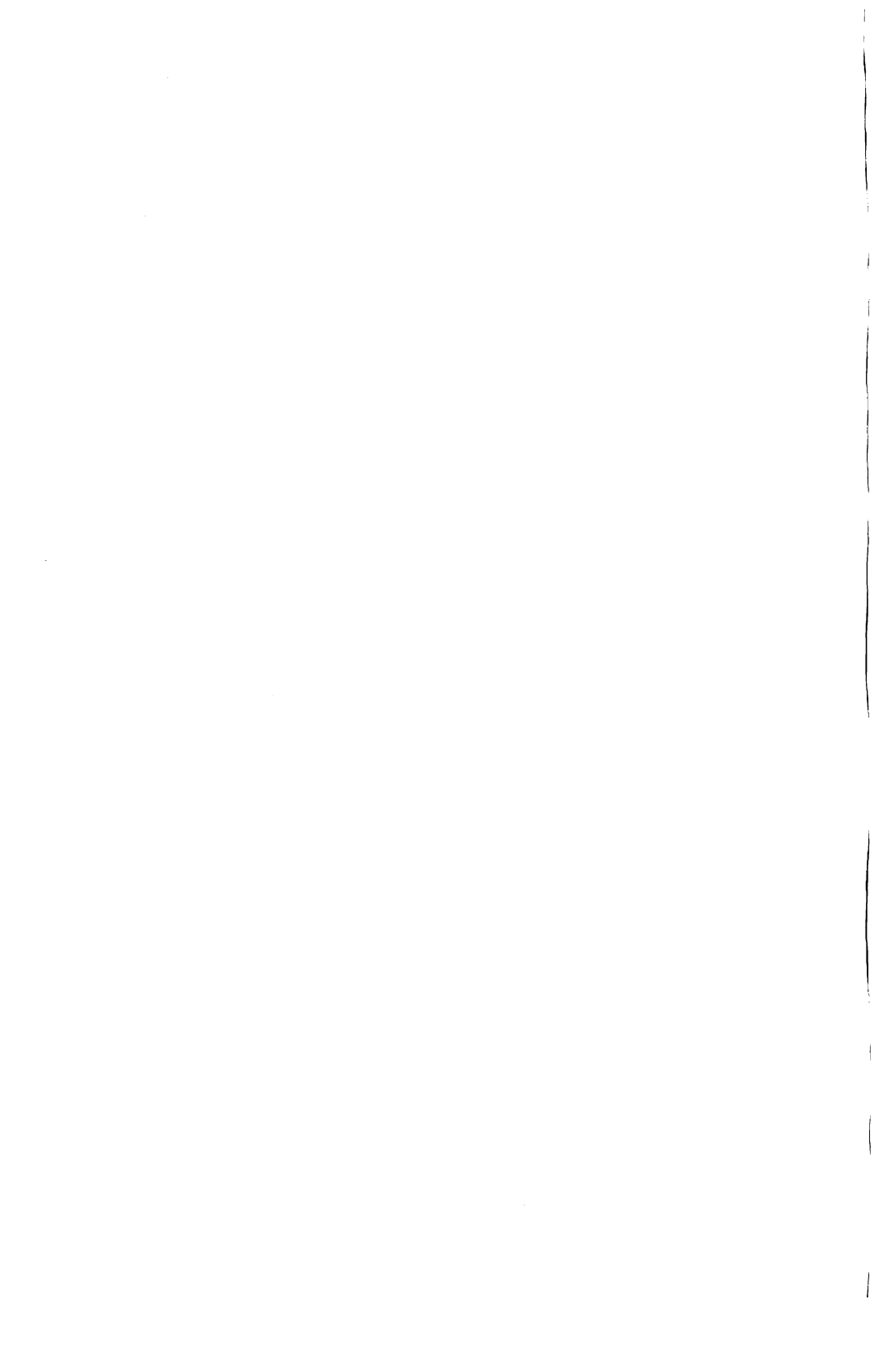
## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - -	Page 195
<i>THE LABOUR PARTY OUTLOOK</i>	
Indian Political Exiles in France - -	„ 205
<i>By EVELYN ROY</i>	
On the Road to Insurrection—VI and VII -	„ 210
<i>By V. I. LENIN</i>	
The Trust of Empire and Mr. MacDonald a Trustee - - - -	„ 222
<i>By M. ABDULLAH</i>	
The Unemployed - - - -	„ 227
<i>By E. STANLEY</i>	
The World of Labour - - - -	„ 234
International—France—Esthonia—Hungary—Poland	
Book Reviews - - - -	„ 249
A Study of Dramatic Art in the Workers' Republic M. E.	
The Twilight of Trotsky W. N. E.	

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*A Decisive Change—What is Happening in the Labour Party?—Not a Question of Leadership—Not a Question of Splits—Unity in Two Lobbies—What is Unity?—The Unity of the Working Class—Working-Class Socialism—The Illusion of “Pure Socialism”—The Real Issue—An Inescapable Issue—The Right Wing—The Left Wing—The Future*

**W**ITHIN less than six months of the fall of MacDonald a decisive change has taken place throughout the British working-class movement. Heavy struggles in the economic field are now in front: and the force of necessity is driving the workers, in the face of capitalist concentration, to endeavour to combine and mass their strength in a single battlefront. The approach of the Miners to the other workers is the signal of the new period on the home front. Internationally the same process is taking place. The same necessity is driving irresistibly to International Trade Union Unity to face the power of world imperialism. The British working class has broken loose from the old moorings of unquestioning acceptance of the reactionary lead of Amsterdam, and entered into open alignment with the Russian working class against the reactionaries in the world movement. The force of the Class Struggle has driven its way into the very midst of the British working-class movement.

**I**T is inevitable that this process should be reflected in the Labour Party. Important as are the many issues now in front of the workers, there is none more important than the issue of the Labour Party; for in that is contained the political leadership of the British working class, that is, the fundamental question whether they shall separate from capitalism or not. To attempt to deny or conceal the magnitude of the issues now developing in the Labour Party would be foolish, for the future of the

British working class depends upon them. We must not let ourselves be turned aside by the malicious chatter of the capitalist Press from facing our own problems. The talk of the Fleet Street gossips about impending "splits," "change of leadership," &c., in the Labour Party is of course childish, and reflects simply the ignorance of lobby correspondents who are only aware of the Labour Party as a miscellaneous collection of ambitious politicians at Westminster, and know nothing of the real Labour Party as it exists throughout the country. But let us be frank. The attempt to cover up and minimise the differences that exist, the loud protestations of eternal unity and devotion to existing leaders, the old-maidish anxiety to keep up appearances, the pouncing upon the unhappy official organ for daring to print working-class resolutions or to suggest that a minority view (actually a majority view) exists, and the prohibition of future printing of working-class resolutions—all this is equally childish, for it convinces no one, and is the surest way to provoke a real crisis. After all, something is happening in the Labour Party; something that is in fact of world historic importance; and the issues at stake are the concern and property of the whole working class. It is therefore desirable to consider quietly and dispassionately what is the process that is taking place in the Labour Party, and what must be the future.

**I**T is not a question of leadership—not at any rate in the sense of whether this man or that man should be leader. The extreme, and what to some may appear exaggerated, attention paid to MacDonald is not a tribute to his personality. Had any other man of the leading group of the Labour Party been in MacDonald's place, results would not have in the main been appreciably different. The Labour Ministry was a ministry of puppets; and between puppets there is nothing to choose. But MacDonald typifies and embodies in his person a policy; and that policy is the enemy we are fighting. That policy is the liberal policy of enslavement to capitalism under fine phrases of emancipation, *i.e.*, the denial of class politics. That policy is the enemy, because it leads to every kind of daily betrayal and surrender of the cause of the working class. Theories never reach general circulation until they are embodied in men and events. MacDonald,



with his eloquent spiritual aspirations and practical impotence before the hard realities of the class struggle, has illumined a whole phase of theory for the British working class. Labour M.P.'s, who would have yawned at "empty" talk of opportunism and false theories of society and the State, woke up with a start when they found the incident of the Zinoviev forgery losing them fifty seats. MacDonald became the centre of controversy, because that is the form in which theories reach the burning fire of trial in social development. In that sense, and in that sense only, the personality of MacDonald is in question. But for that same reason the question is a wider one than of replacing the individual, MacDonald. It is necessary to replace the policy by a positive class policy. When we say that the leadership or deposition of MacDonald is not the central issue, we say that, not to diminish the scope of the issue, but to enlarge it.

**I**T is not a question of splits. If any split comes in the Labour Party, it will come from the Right. The Right Wing has already shown itself willing to shatter the historic working-class basis of the Labour Party in the interests of their doctrines of capitalist democracy and imperialism, and to proceed to the exclusion of class-conscious workers: an attempt which the working-class movement has repudiated, in fact, with indignation. The Right Wing has flouted every principle of independence for which the Labour movement stands, voting along with the capitalists in the opposite lobby to the mass of the Labour Party, writing wholesale in the capitalist Press attacks on the Left Wing, entering into open alliances with the employers, and in every way repudiating their allegiance and acting as if to provoke a split of the Left, which they probably in their hearts desire. But the Right Wing does not represent the mass of the movement. The failure of the policy of expulsion, which it has not been possible to put into execution in a single important industrial centre, reveals that the instinct of the masses is sound, and that the tactics of the Right Wing to break it have failed. The British working class has learnt the lesson of solidarity in a hard long school, and they are not going to be robbed of it in a hurry. As the *New Statesman* has said with perfect

correctness: "The Labour Party is based on the Trade Unions, and it cannot easily split unless they split."

**B**UT Unity does not mean going into opposite lobbies. When this happens, the Labour Party is neutralising itself. The workers sent their representatives into Parliament to be an Opposition. But when those representatives dissolve into a series of plus and minus the result is zero and there is no Opposition. When the Front Bench joins with Baldwin against the mass of the Labour Party, the workers are being defeated. In war that kind of strategical movement is called treachery. If MacDonalld feels himself closer to Baldwin than to Maxton there is something wrong. When issue after issue reveals that division again and again, there is something deeply and fundamentally wrong. The Unity of the Labour Party appears as a myth and a fetish, one of those old rallying cries that remain after the reality is gone. In the fight, where alone it matters, the Unity is lacking. To speak of Unity in these conditions is to prefer the form to the reality: to plead for brotherly love and the overlooking of differences is to act as pimp and pander for traitors. We have no wish for Unity with the friends of the bourgeoisie. We have no use for a stage "Unity" which means impotence in action.

**W**HAT, then, is the Unity of the Labour Party? Has the Unity of the Labour Party become a sham, covering totally different policies, and leading only to the paralysis of the militant forces, just as in the old Liberal Party of 1906 the unity was only a façade behind which the Imperialist minority of Asquith-Haldane-Grey duped, out-manceuvred and controlled the unwieldy pacifist Radical majority—a system that inevitably led to the final shattering of that once powerful "democratic" party? Or is there something different in the basis of the Labour Party which can provide a guard against such a process and give a real meaning to Unity? This is the question that brings us to the heart of the issue. What is the Unity of the Labour Party? What is the basis that makes the Labour Party different from the old Liberal Party?

IT is often said that the basis of the Labour Party which makes it different is the possession of the common ideal of "Socialism," *i.e.*, the acceptance of the aim of a Society based on the common ownership of the means of production. The differences that exist are only differences of "method"; some sections are more "impatient" or extreme in expression, others are more "cautious"; but all sections should exercise mutual tolerance and allow the widest possible liberty in essential questions on the basis of unity in the fundamental aim of "Socialism." A moment's reflection will show that this statement is both inaccurate and valueless. It is hopelessly inaccurate both as to the past history and the present basis of the Labour Party. The Labour Party was not built up on the basis of Socialism (which was expressly excluded), but on the basis of working-class solidarity. And to-day 99 per cent. of its members belong to it through the organs of working-class solidarity. The fact is painful and anomalous, and the very presence of the Unions a kind of offence and necessary evil, to the "democratic" outlook. But it remains a fact. Whatever its programme (which has changed before and can change again) the Labour Party in its fundamental anatomy is a party of the organised class. But this is not only a fact, but the most important fact about the Labour Party, which alone makes it different from the old Liberal Party and alone can give meaning to any programme of "Socialism." When the *New Statesman* writer said that the Labour Party held together *because* it was based on the Trade Unions, he was stating a far more wide-reaching thing than he probably had in mind at the time. For this recognition that the fundamental basis of the Labour Party which holds it together is—not any classless transcendental ideal of so-called "democracy" or "Socialism"—but the solid reality of the class organisations of the workers in the struggle against capitalism: this recognition by the *New Statesman* of the true basis of the Labour Party destroys at one blow the whole philosophy for which the *New Statesman* and its like stand, and which they are trying to impose upon the Labour Party.

SOCIALISM save as the politics of the working class fighting the bourgeoisie has no meaning in practical politics. "Socialism" as an abstract ethical idea divorced from the

class struggle is as meaningless and deceptive as "Liberty," "Humanity" and all the other Liberal trick words which conceal class realities and so hold men enslaved. In fact it is in practice even more conservative and reactionary in effect: for by its appeal to the "social" "communal" conception as against class struggle in relation to the present regime of class domination, it sanctifies the present slave regime, holds men to their servitude in the name of social duty, and even is ready to oppose the working-class struggle and to use violence to uphold the existing slave regime against the workers.

"**W**E are all Socialists nowadays." A few weeks ago, M. Millerand, the leader of the reactionary Right and the preparer of Fascism in France, declared that he was "still a Socialist." Mr. Lansbury has recently been repeating his old appeals for Unity of all Socialists without regard to questions of "methods." Does Mr. Lansbury desire Unity with M. Millerand without regard to his little question of "method"? Or, if it be complained that M. Millerand is outside the organised Socialist ranks, let us take another example—M. Paul Boncour. Recently the diplomatic correspondent of one of the great bourgeois dailies had occasion to write in the most normal manner :—

M. Paul Boncour, the Socialist leader, who is now one of the principal directors of French foreign policy.

"French foreign policy" is simply the polite expression for one of the big militarist-imperialist machines representing the interests of a few small financial groups which rule the world to-day. Do we want unity with the militarist-imperialist machine? Certainly not. What is the inevitable conclusion? The only real line of political division is not between "Socialism" and "Anti-Socialism," but between the Bourgeoisie and the Working Class. The only Unity that matters is not the Unity of "Socialists," but the Unity of the working class in the struggle against capitalism at every stage. The "Idea" of Socialism, like any other social "Idea" in the present epoch, has no proud, absolute, independent existence, but exists only in material reality as the Idea of a Class, *i.e.*, the action, struggle and outlook, the fused theory and practice, of a Class.

**A**ND this brings us to the very heart of the problem of the Labour Party. For the Labour Party is in fact a class organisation of the workers (however still undeveloped), but it is led by leaders who deny the class basis of their own organisations and the class struggle of the workers. This inevitably produces a situation of continual conflict, and the root of this conflict lies, not in the "extremism" and agitation and "attacks on leaders" of individuals, but in the very fact of the Class Struggle. For *if* the Labour Party is a party of the workers, built on the workers' organisations, existing to serve the interests of the workers, then every action against that working-class basis, every act of opposition to the daily struggle of the workers, every affirmation of a different allegiance, to "State," "Empire," "Royalty," &c., as superior to the allegiance to the working class, every declaration of separation from the working class and hostility to the working-class struggle is in fact a shattering of the Unity of the Labour Party. This, and not the "wildness" or "impatience" of the Left elements, is the real question. If once the basis of the organised working class is finally established and accepted to the full limit of the class struggle without reservation, then every question of policy can be fairly and squarely hammered out on that basis—there is no crisis. But if the leaders owe their allegiance elsewhere, crisis is inevitable, not every time that A or B makes "trouble," but every time that the class struggle takes a sharp turn and automatically reveals the tight-rope-walking and impotence of those leaders who deny the class struggle.

**T**HIS position is not static. In the early days of the Labour Party the questions at issue could remain theoretical because in a common opposition future differences can be merged. But every development of the class struggle makes the position increasingly impossible, and puts sharper and sharper questions which cannot be escaped. The Labour Government already opened the eyes of large numbers of the working-class movement to the ultimate dilemmas. Every experience since has intensified this process. We are still a little way off from the culminating stage of the revolutionary struggle, when the supporters of "democracy" against the working class join their guns with the

White Guards against the workers. But the logical process is already not so dim to sight when we see these same "democrats" uniting their pens with the White capitalist Press against the workers on strike, and look abroad to see the action of their esteemed colleagues throughout White Europe. The issue is already here, and cannot be cured by sermonising and Christian adjurations to brotherly love, while the workers' struggle is being sabotaged. Either the "democrats" will destroy the Labour Party and turn it into a Liberal Party and an enemy of the workers, like the German Social Democratic Party, or the Labour Party must destroy them. Either the Labour Party will become a new version of the Liberal Party, and share its fate, or else the Labour Party must become an open Class Party.

**T**HE Right Wing stands for the State and the Empire (which they call "democracy" after the usual lying bourgeois cant) against the Working Class. This is the practical line of division as it occurs in every actual issue. The Right Wing is not only the ruling force, but is at present the *innovating* force in the Labour Party. This aspect is still not sufficiently realised. The Right Wing is conducting a continuous offensive to impose a whole set of new conceptions on the Labour Party, and to destroy the vestiges and traditions of the old—the "Red Flag," working-class associations, anti-imperialism, &c. They have continuously worked out during the past three years in particular, in close association with the bureaucracy and the universities, an elaborate "constructive" policy for the Labour Party, of which probably not ninety-nine out of a hundred members of the Labour Party have the slightest conception. Despite the setback of the election, the offensive of the Right Wing has been continuously pursued in defiance of growing working-class opposition, and points straight to fusion with the remaining fragments of Liberalism, and growing independence of the Trade Unions, as the party can begin to build on rich men's funds. The first declaration on policy of MacDonald after the election was an article in the *Conservative Spectator* on Continuity of Foreign Policy (Clynes followed immediately after in the same journal with an article on Increasing Output). MacDonald sends to India (with the sanction of the

Labour Party Executive ?) a message demanding a "firm stand against subversive methods." Thomas declares, at the moment that his organisation has put in a programme of demands under threat of a strike, that he will see to it, so far as lies in his power, that there is no strike. Snowden attacks the Miners' elected Secretary in some Rothermere Sunday journal for advocating strike action. And so on endlessly. When this kind of thing can happen with impunity from the leaders in the working-class movement, it is a very serious thing.

**T**HE Left Wing consists of all those who seek to stand for the Working Class. This is the supreme actual issue which runs through every other issue. The Left Wing has not yet achieved the coherence and consolidation which can only come with a greater clearness of outlook, and to that extent is still at a disadvantage against the Right. The Right Wing is perfectly clear that they stand for the State and the Empire against the Working Class, and they have already accepted all the implications of that position. The Left is not yet equally clear that they stand for the Working Class against the State and the Empire, and are still tied by many bonds to the State and the Empire. From this arise many dangers, dangers of National Socialism and of imperialism, to which we can never afford to shut our eyes. These dangers must be fought, for they are in fact the greatest obstacles to the consolidation of the Left. The origin of them may often lie in a shortsighted view of working-class interests. The failure is the failure to see that a too hasty reaction from some form of liberal identification of working-class interests with the bourgeoisie has simply led to another form of identification of working-class interests with the bourgeoisie, that is in fact equally far from the path of the class struggle. But on the basis of the class struggle these dangers can be fought and overcome.

**T**HE immediate fight of the Left Wing is to win the working class to a new leadership, which will replace the domination of the Right Wing; and for this the combination of every force will be needed. This fight, which needs to be recognised, not as a sectional fight, but as a fundamental fight of the working

class, will need to be far more continuous, combined, fundamental and aggressive than it has so far been. So far the fear of the Left of incurring a charge of sectionalism has held in more positive action, even where individual feeling and working-class feeling have been strong. But the recent actions of the Right have shown the danger of letting things drift, when big working-class struggles are in front, and have certainly absolved the Left from any charge of sectionalism. Against the open disloyalty, the open sabotage of the working-class struggle and co-operation with the bourgeoisie on the part of the Right, we can raise the banner of the Unity and Discipline of the Labour Party—on the basis of the working class.

R. P. D.



# INDIAN POLITICAL EXILES IN FRANCE

By EVELYN ROY

**T**HE increasing severity with which Indian political exiles are treated in French territory leads one to believe that it is due to the policy of close co-operation entered into between the French and British Governments since the advent of the Conservatives to power in Great Britain.

Three such cases have been brought to our attention in the past few weeks, and a fourth one has just been added.

The first and most shocking is the expulsion from France of Manabendra Nath Roy, political exile and well-known revolutionary from British India, whose writings and organising activities have done so much to bring India into close touch with the outside world, and whose ideology has deeply impressed itself upon the Indian liberation movement, especially during the past four years. Manabendra Nath Roy has been actively associated with the nationalist and revolutionary movement in India since the age of fourteen years, that is to say, twenty years of his life have been dedicated to the cause of the suffering millions there. Severely persecuted on account of his activities by the British Indian Government, he was several times imprisoned and finally forced to escape in 1915 to avoid a heavy punishment. Since that time he has continued his activities on behalf of his country by means of writing, organising and arousing public opinion in various countries on behalf of his country's cause. He is the author of several books—*India in Transition*, *One Year of Non-Co-operation*, *India's Problem*, *What Do We Want ?* and *Political Letters*—all severely prohibited in India. He came to Europe in 1920, and has travelled extensively in nearly every European country, his life tormented by the ceaseless activities of the British Secret Service, which has dogged his footsteps from the Orient to America, from America to Europe. The German Government, acting under British pressure, issued an order for his arrest in 1923, but he left Germany

before it was executed and took up his residence in Switzerland. Here, also, pressure was brought to bear to bring about his expulsion, which was refused by the Swiss Government. He came to France in July of 1924, after the Herriot Government came to power, hoping to find here a wider field of activity and a safe refuge on the soil of France. His expulsion, executed on January 30, can only be attributed to British pressure brought to bear upon the French Government, which has refused him the right to remain on French soil.

A very ugly feature of his expulsion lies in the fact that reports were telegraphed out to India by Reuter, from an obviously inspired source, on February 6, "That M. N. Roy was on his way from France to India, under arrest on a warrant issued in India against him as a result of the Cawnpore Conspiracy Trial." It appears that only a slight miscalculation of time prevented the British authorities from seizing him and putting him aboard a steamer bound for India, before any public protest could be made, or any preventive action taken on the part of his friends. The manner of his arrest and expulsion bears this supposition out. M. N. Roy was taken in the street, on photographs and information supplied by Scotland Yard; he was hustled to the nearest local police station by a detective and three policeman, without any warrant of arrest being shown to him, nor any proof of identity being provided. From there he would have been taken to the frontier without further formality had not the impatience of the detective to get rid of him obliged him to send his victim to the Prefecture of Police, where the writ of expulsion was executed with the same brutal haste. His demand for a delay of twenty-four hours, in order to arrange his affairs and to consult a lawyer, was roughly denied; he was not allowed to communicate with anyone before his departure, and was sent under escort to the frontier by the first train. His wife, who was arrested with him, was kept in detention until his departure, without being allowed to see or speak with anyone. He was told by the detective who arrested him that he was going to be sent to England. The fact that he was sent to Luxembourg only shows that a country was selected where his abduction by British Secret Police would be an easy matter. His escape may be regarded as a miracle of good luck.

The other cases which have been brought to our attention of the persecution of Indian political exiles at the hands of the French authorities include two refugees in the French colonies of Pondicherry and Chandernagore. Mr. R. C. L. Sharma, political refugee from British India since before the war, has been constantly harassed by the French and British Secret Police, acting in common. In September-October, 1924, he received a verbal order to leave French territory without delay, no reason being given. Through his lawyer, he was able to secure a delay by demanding a written order from the Governor, who gave him the choice of leaving French territory or going to live in a small village of the interior, Canouvapeth. Here he has lived for the past six months, closely watched by the French and British Police, unable to leave without authorisation. No offence against French law has been alleged against him; he has done nothing to justify these arbitrary measures.

At British instigation, the introduction, distribution and circulation of literature printed in English and freely circulated in Great Britain is severely prohibited in French India, because in these publications the truth about British rule in India is told.

A third case, now occupying the attention of the Indian public, is that of Mr. Moti Lal Roy, political exile in Chandernagore from British India, the founder of an Ashram or religious school, and editor of a newspaper *Prabartak*. Mr. Moti Lal Roy is a highly religious man, whose pupils revere him as a "guru" or spiritual teacher. Besides religious instruction, his school aimed to teach the students to become self-supporting in after-life. He is the author of several religious books, and of *Hundred Years of Bengal*, proscribed in British India. At the instigation of the British-Indian government, the French authorities of Chandernagore suddenly began prosecuting Mr. Roy. He was called before the local Administrator and severely interrogated about his activities, in rude and insulting language. His school was searched, its pupils subjected to cross examination by the police, and his paper suspended. We will quote his own appeal to French public opinion at this unmerited treatment :—

The great determination that for the last fifteen years has led me to dedicate myself to the service of God and country; the fire of sacrifice which has consumed my all, while ceaselessly labouring and

waiting for its fruition ; if all this is deemed to mean nothing else but a disturbance of law and order in the land, then must I not declare from the housetops that even the path of true self-discovery for this nation is closed, and its sadhana (realisation) of manhood in danger. Should I not then, even at the cost of my very life, demonstrate that a pure, blameless seat of religious culture is being made the target for destruction by the power of Europe priding itself upon its twentieth-century civilisation ; that the sword of oppression hangs not only over British India, challenging the national manhood there, but the same menace shadows the face of French India was well ? I appeal to the French nation, who preached the gospel of *Equality, Freedom and Fraternity*—to the national leaders and to my countrymen, and hereby draw their attention to see that the holy seat of national culture and spiritual sadhana is not endangered or baffled in its object under the ban of unjust oppression.

We believe that the French people, once aware of these wrongs inflicted upon the sons of India who are struggling to free their country from one of the blackest tyrannies in history, will demand the protection of those exiles who have sought refuge from British persecution on the soil of France or her colonies. The position of Indian political refugees is seriously menaced ; it lies with the French people who still believe in the rights of man to demand their protection at the hands of the French Government.

*Paris, March 10, 1925*

*The following letter has been addressed by M. N. Roy to the French "Ligue des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen," in protest against his expulsion from France (described in the article above).*

SIRS,

Permit me to submit the following facts for your consideration, thinking that they demand an intervention on your part.

On January 30 I was arrested in Paris in fulfilment of an order of expulsion signed by the French Ministry of the Interior on January 3, and was immediately conducted to the frontier, without having been informed of the reasons for my expulsion, and without being given the means to consult a lawyer for my defence.

Thus, by one stroke of the pen, the right of asylum for Indian political refugees has been destroyed, and with this right, the idea which Indian revolutionaries hold, that France is the home of Liberty and Democracy for all the oppressed peoples of the world.

I appeal to the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme to obtain redress, and to this end I shall briefly recount the facts.

For twenty years, that is to say since the age of fourteen, I have fought in the ranks of Indian revolutionaries to free ourselves from foreign rule. My activity, dedicated to the cause of the 320,000,000 oppressed people of my country, has brought upon me, as upon all Indian revolutionaries, the brutal persecution of the English police. I have been imprisoned several times. In 1915, I was forced to fly from India to escape the extreme penalty of the so-called "law" which holds the Indian people in their present state of slavery.

The British police have not left me in peace, even in my exile. They have pursued me step by step, from one country to another, from Java to Japan, from China to the Philippines, to America, to Mexico and through most of the countries of Europe. Having taken refuge in Mexico in 1917, President Carranza, then at the head of the Government, gave me protection, and twice refused a demand for my expulsion presented by the British authorities. The exigencies of a revolutionary life have forced me on several occasions to adopt different names. The sympathy of the Mexican people and Government enabled me to live and travel with a Mexican name, which protected me to a certain extent since 1919, when I left for Europe with my wife. Since that time, we have lived and travelled in most of the European countries, writing, studying, organising and making propaganda for the liberation of India.

We left Switzerland for France in 1924, and have lived here six months, working for our cause, without ever mixing ourselves in the internal politics of this country.

My expulsion can only be attributed to foreign pressure brought to bear upon the French Government, as it was brought to bear upon the American, Mexican, German and Swiss Governments. The French authorities know whence this pressure comes, but it is difficult to believe that France has voluntarily agreed to become an instrument of British Imperialism. My case is not the only one. Acting under British pressure, the Government of M. Poincaré expelled and interned Indian political exiles who had sought asylum in Pondichery and Chandernagore. Two such cases were brought before the attention of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme during the summer of 1924. Can the revolutionary traditions of the great French people accept such acts of oppression against Indian political refugees, seeking shelter from British persecution on French soil?

In the name of all Indian revolutionaries, I call your attention to this violation of the right of asylum, and demand the annulation of the order of expulsion against me, and the right to enter and to live in France.

With assurances of the highest esteem, I remain,

Very truly yours,

(Signed) MANABENDRA NATH ROY.

*Luxembourg, February 1, 1925.*

## On the Road to Insurrection—VI

# THE AIMS OF THE REVOLUTION

By V. I. LENIN

[TRANSLATION COPYRIGHT]

PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 26 & 27, 1917.<sup>1</sup>

**R**USSIA is a country dominated by the petty bourgeoisie. The vast majority of the population belong to this class. It is inevitable that it fluctuates between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is only by this class joining the proletariat that the victory of the revolution, that is to say peace, freedom, the re-division of the land among the workers, can be peacefully brought about with ease and speed, and without hardship.

The whole course of our revolution reveals the hesitations of the petty bourgeois class. Let us have no illusion about the Social Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, but hold fast to our proletarian track. The poverty of the poor peasants, the horrors of the war and famine clearly reveal to the masses the rightness of our policy, and the necessity of supporting the proletarian revolution.

The progress of the revolution mercilessly destroys the "pacifist" petty bourgeois trust in any "coalition" with the bourgeoisie, or in any agreement with them, and in the possibility of waiting "quietly" for the "next" convocation of the Constituent Assembly, &c. Kornilov's insurrection was the last important and cruel lesson which completed the thousands and thousands of daily lessons given to the workers and peasants by the capitalists and the landed gentry, and to the soldiers by their officers.

Discontent, indignation, exasperation continued to grow in the army, and among the peasants and workers. The "coalition" of the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie, a coalition which makes ceaseless promises only to

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<sup>1</sup> The text shows that this article was written before the end of the Democratic Conference, therefore before September 22.

break them, irritates the masses, opens their eyes and urges them to insurrection.

Among the Social Revolutionaries of the Left (Spiridonova and others), as among the Mensheviks (Martov and his group), opposition is increasing. It has already reached 40 per cent. of the Council and the Congress of these parties. And below, in the proletarian and peasant class, particularly among the poor peasants, the majority of the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are Left Wing.

The Kornilov regime instructs the masses. It has already taught them a great deal.

It is impossible to say if the Soviets will now be able to remove their Social Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders and thus insure the peaceful development of the revolution ; or whether they will continue to mark time and thus render the insurrection of the proletariat inevitable.

We must do our best to insure an eleventh hour peaceful development to the revolution ; and for this we must expound our programme, bring its popular character to light and prove that it corresponds entirely with the interests and demands of the vast majority of the population.

The following lines are an attempt to explain this programme.

Let us forge ahead with it ; draw nearer to the masses. Let us go not only to the employés, the workers and peasants who are on our side, but to those who follow the Social Revolutionaries ; to the Non-party people, and to the elements as yet unconscious. Let us endeavour to teach them to judge for themselves, to draw up their own resolution and send their own delegates to the Conference, to the Soviets and to the Government. Thus our labours will not be in vain whatever may be the result of the Conference. It will be useful both for the Conference, for the Constituent Assembly elections and also for all political action in general.

Experience proves for us the validity of the programme and tactics of the Bolsheviks. The time between April 20 and the Kornilov insurrection is very brief, but how full of incident.

The experience of the *masses* and the *oppressed* classes has given them, during this short lapse of time, an immense amount of instruction. Meanwhile the leaders of the Social Revolutionaries

and the Mensheviks are completely detached from the masses whose interests they have not supported. It is the point of our practical programme that it will clearly show to the masses the measures by which we will secure their participation in its discussion.

### 1.—*The Fatal Consequences of the Policy of Compromise with Capitalism*

To have the power in the hands of the representatives of the bourgeoisie, however small the number, to leave it to the avowed Kornilovians like the generals Alexeiev, Klembovsky, Bragation, Gargarire and others, or to the men who have, like Kerensky, proved their complete impotence in the hands of the bourgeoisie and their tendency towards Bonapartist methods, is to throw open the gates to disaster of every kind. On the one hand you invite famine and economic collapse, which the capitalists intentionally aggravate and accelerate, and on the other military collapse; for the army detests the G.H.Q. and only under force participates in the imperialist war.

Moreover, if they maintain power the Kornilovian officers *will certainly open the lines to the Germans*; they will do this *intentionally* as they did in Galicia and at Riga. Nothing short of the creation of a new government, formed on a basis that will be explained later, will be able to prevent the imminent economic and military disaster. After all that has occurred since April 20 it will be not only a mistake on the part of the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, but a direct betrayal of the people and the revolution, to continue an alliance with the bourgeoisie under any form whatever.

### 2.—*Power to the Soviets*

The whole undivided power of the State should be given over to the representatives of the Soviets of deputies, workers, soldiers and peasants on the basis of a pre-determined programme. This power should be entirely responsible to the Soviets.<sup>2</sup> This action should be immediately followed by the re-election of the Soviets so that the experiences acquired by the people during the last and particularly instructive weeks of the revolution may be turned to account, and so that various appalling injustices can be suppressed,

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<sup>2</sup> Decree of October 26, 1917.



such as the ill proportioned electoral districts, electoral inequality, &c., which still persist in certain places.

In the provinces where democratically elected institutions do not yet exist, as in the army, all power should be transferred exclusively to the local Soviets and to the commissars elected by them, or to other institutions, but only to the elective ones.

Everywhere it should be carried out with the complete support of the State, by the winning of the workers, of the revolutionary troops, that is to say the troops who have proved in action their will to crush the Kornilovians.

### 3.—*Peace for the People*

The Soviet Government must *immediately* formulate proposals to *all* the belligerent countries (that is simultaneously to their governments and to the masses of workers and peasants) to negotiate general peace on the spot on democratic terms, and to conclude an armistice at once, even if it is for only three months.<sup>3</sup>

The principal condition of a democratic peace is the renunciation of claims to annexation. This must not be wrongly understood in the sense that all the powers should recover what they have lost, but according to the only true meaning, which is that *every* nationality without exception, in Europe and in the colonies, should obtain freedom and the opportunity to decide themselves if they will form a *distinct* State or enter as a constituent member of some other State.

The Soviet government in proposing peace conditions should immediately proceed itself to their realisation. That is to say, to publish and to break the peace treaties concluded by the Tsar, which bind us at present and which promise the spoils of Turkey, Austria, &c., to the Russian capitalists.

Further, we must do immediate justice to the claims of the Ukrainians and Finlanders, and to assure them, as well as all other nationalities in Russia, complete liberty including that of secession.

This ought, in the same way, to be our attitude towards *the whole* of Armenia, which we should agree to evacuate as well as the Turkish territories occupied by us, &c.

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<sup>3</sup> It was precisely in this form that the Decree on Peace of the Second Congress of the Soviets, of October 26, was issued.

These peace conditions will not have the good fortune to please the capitalists, but they will receive such a warm welcome from the people, they will evoke such an explosion of enthusiasm in the whole world, such indignation against the interminable war of plunder waged by the bourgeoisie, that very probably we shall obtain at one stroke both an armistice and the opportunity to broach peace negotiations. For the workers' revolt against the war grows everywhere with undiminished vigour, and it is not by mere talk about peace (by means of which all the imperialist governments, including our Kerensky government, have deceived the workers and peasants for so long), it is only by a break with the capitalists and resolute peace proposals that can help on this revolt.

If the most unlikely thing were to happen, that is, if any of the belligerent States refuse even an armistice, then the war would be shown to have been one that was forced upon us—a just war, a war of defence. The proletariat and workers will realise this, and the mere knowledge of the justice of our cause will render Russia infinitely more powerful, even from the military point of view. Moreover, this war will bring about on our side a union with the oppressed classes in all countries, the oppressed peoples all over the world.

It is particularly necessary to warn the people against an assertion of the capitalists which has led astray from time to time the timid elements and the petty bourgeoisie ; it is affirmed that in the eventuality of our breaking our alliance with them the English and other capitalists could deal a serious blow to the Russian revolution. This assertion is utterly false, because the " financial support of the allies," in that it enriches the bankers, " supports " the workers and peasants in exactly the same way as the gallows support its victim. Russia has enough corn, coal, oil, iron, and it will suffice to rid the people of the big proprietors and of the plundering capitalists to be able to assure the fair re-division of these products. As for the event of a military action being let lose against the Russian people by her present allies, it is manifestly absurd to suppose that the French and Italians could join forces with the Germans, and launch them against Russia, since it is she who has proposed a just peace. Then even if England, America and

Japan declare war on Russia (which would be very difficult for them owing to the unpopularity of such a war as well as the divergence of interest which divides them on the question of the distribution of Asia, and particularly the plundering of China) they could only cause Russia the hundredth part of the affliction and distress caused by the war with Germany, Austria and Turkey.

4.—*The Land for the Workers*

The Soviet Government must immediately proclaim the confiscation without compensation of private property in connection with the estates of the big landed proprietors. They must be transferred to agrarian committees. These will be responsible for the administration of this land, pending the decision of the Constituent Assembly.

In the same way the arrangements concerning the lease of cattle of the big landed proprietors must be handed over to the administration of these rural committees, so that they can be placed at once at the free disposal of the poor peasants.<sup>4</sup>

These measures are urgently necessary. The vast majority of peasants have already demanded them for a long time, in the resolutions of their congresses and in the hundreds of their instructions to local delegates (it arose, amongst other things, from the examination of the 242 instructions published in the *Isvestia of the Soviets of Peasant Representatives*).<sup>5</sup> None of those delays of payment from which the peasant class suffered so much during the "coalition" ministry can be allowed any more. Every government who puts off the realisation of these measures will be recognised as being against the people, and would deserve to be overthrown and crushed by the revolt of workers and peasants. And, on the contrary, every government that brings about these measures will be considered really popular.

5.—*The Struggle Against Famine and Disorganisation*

The Soviet government must immediately institute workers' control over production and consumption. Without this control,

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<sup>4</sup> This was practically the literal terms of the Decree on the Land of October 26, 1917.

<sup>5</sup> "Instructions" added precisely to the Decree on the Land, under the title of unobligatory regulations.

as has been shown by the course of events since May 6, all promises and attempts in connection with reform are powerless, and from one day to the next famine and disaster threaten to overwhelm the country.<sup>6</sup>

It is essential to proceed immediately to the nationalisation of the banks,<sup>7</sup> insurance companies and the most important branches of industry (oil, coal, metal, sugar, &c.).<sup>8</sup> In the same way commercial secrets must be suppressed and a vigorous inspection instituted on the part of the workers and peasants over the tiny minority of capitalists who, enriching themselves by means of supplies made to the State, arrange so as to keep no accounts, and avoid all taxation of their profits and property.

These measures, which will not deprive the peasants of the least portion of their goods nor take away the means of the Cossacks and small artisans, are absolutely necessary for the equal division of the burden of the war and extremely urgent in the struggle against famine. It is only by curbing the appetite of the capitalists and by preventing them from intentionally hindering production<sup>9</sup> that one can obtain the best return for labour, and that general obligation to work, the normal exchange of corn for industrial products, and the return to the Treasury coffers of the thousands of paper money hidden by the rich.

Without these measures the confiscation without compensation of big estates is impossible, for most of these properties are mortgaged to the banks and the interests of the landed proprietors are linked up with those of the capitalists.

The last resolution of the economic section of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of workers' and soldiers' representatives (cf. *Rabotchaia Gazeta*, No. 152<sup>10</sup>) recognises not only the uselessness of the Government's measures (such as the doubling of the tax on corn, destined to enrich the big landed proprietors and the Kulaks) as well as the "complete inaction" of the central organs created by the government to

<sup>6</sup> The *Regulations on Workers' Control* was published on November 16, 1917.

<sup>7</sup> The decree on the nationalisation of the banks, December 17.

<sup>8</sup> The sugar industry was nationalised on May 3, 1918; oil on June 30. In June also the principal mining and metal, textile, &c., concerns were nationalised *en bloc*. In all these branches nationalisation was prepared for by the existence of large trusts and syndicates of the owners.

<sup>9</sup> On August 1, 1917, 568 concerns, employing 105,000 workers, were closed by their owners, (206 of these in July alone) for various pretexts, lack of fuel, excessive demands of the workers, &c.

<sup>10</sup> Menshevik journal.

regularise economic life," but also the "violation of the laws" by this Government. This confession from the parties in power, the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, proves once again how criminal is the policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie.

6.—*The Struggle Against the Counter-Revolution of the Big Landed Proprietors and Capitalists*

The insurrection of Kornilov and Kaledin was supported by the whole landlord class and the capitalists led by the Cadet Party ("Party of Popular Freedom"). This has been definitely proved already by the facts published in the *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee. But nothing of any importance has been, or can be, done towards a complete suppression of this counter-revolution or an effective inquiry without the transfer of power to the Soviets. A commission that had not power at its disposal could neither carry through a complete inquiry nor arrest the guilty.

The Soviet Government alone could and should do it. It alone could save Russia from the inevitable repetition of the Kornilovian attacks by arresting the Kornilovian generals and the leaders of the bourgeois counter-revolution (Goutchkov, Miliukov, Riabouchinsky, Maklakov and their associates), by dissolving the counter-revolutionary societies (Duma of the Empire, League of Officers, &c.), by submitting their members to the inspection of the local Soviets and by disbanding the counter-revolutionary units. It alone could create a commission capable of making a full public inquiry into the Kornilovian and other affairs, even those stirred up by the bourgeoisie. It is moreover to such a commission that the Bolshevik party from its side will ask the workers to submit completely and to lend their co-operation. The Soviet Government is the only one that could struggle successfully against such an appalling injustice as the seizure, by means of the millions stolen from the people, of the big printing presses and the majority of the newspapers perpetrated by the capitalists. The counter-revolutionary bourgeois papers (*Rietch*, *Royskoye Slovo*, &c.) must be closed down, their presses confiscated; advertisements must be declared a State monopoly and reserved for a governmental paper, published by the Soviets to offer truth to the peasants. This is the only way to snatch from the hands of the bourgeoisie the

powerful weapon of the Press which they use to lie, slander and deceive the people, lead the peasants astray and to prepare the counter-revolution.

7.—*The Peaceful Development of the Revolution*

The Russian democracy, the Soviets, the Social Revolutionary and Menshevik parties have before them now an opportunity which is extremely rare in the history of revolution. They can assure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed without further adjournment ; they can preserve the country from military and economic disaster ; they can safeguard the peaceful development of events.

If the Soviets seize power now in order to carry out the programme expounded above, they can be certain not only of the support of the working class and the great majority of peasants, but also of the revolutionary enthusiasm of the army and of the majority of the people ; without which enthusiasm victory over famine and war is impossible.

There could be no longer any question of resistance to the Soviets, but for their hesitations. No class will dare provoke insurrection against them, and, enlightened by the Kornilov experience, the big proprietors and capitalists will peacefully surrender power before the Soviet ultimatum. In order to overcome the capitalists' resistance to the Soviet programme it will suffice to institute a vigilant supervision by the peasants and workers over the exploiters, and to inflict such punishments as total confiscation of their possessions and short time imprisonment upon the recalcitrants.

If the Soviets seized power they could still—and it is probably the last chance—assure the peaceful development of the revolution, the peaceful election by the people of their representatives, the peaceful competition of parties in the bosom of the Soviets, the experiments of the different party programmes, and the peaceful transference of power from one party to another.

If this opportunity is not taken, civil war in its most acute form between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is inevitable. The whole course of the revolution from April 20 down to Kornilov demonstrates this. The impending collapse of the country will

accelerate the approach of this war. As far as one can judge from the facts accessible to human intelligence, this war will result in the complete victory of the working classes. It will be supported in the carrying out of the programme explained above by the poor ranks of the peasant class, but it may be extremely bitter and bloody, and cost the lives of tens of thousands of big proprietors and capitalists as well as of the officers who side with them. The proletariat will shrink from no sacrifice that will assure the safety of the revolution, a safety which can only be secured by the carrying out of the above programme. But it will sustain the Soviets by every means in its power if they grasp this last chance to secure the peaceful development of the revolution.

## VII.—THE BOLSHEVIKS MUST SEIZE POWER

LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, TO THE PETROGRAD COMMITTEE AND TO THE MOSCOW COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY OF RUSSIA (BOLSHEVIK)

*(Written during the Democratic Conference)*

**T**HE Bolsheviki, who have obtained the majority of worker and soldier deputies in the Soviets of the two capitals,<sup>1</sup> can and must seize power. They can do it because the active majority of the revolutionary elements of the two capitals is sufficient to rally the masses, to vanquish and crush hostile resistance to conquer power and to hold it. For, by the immediate proposal of a democratic peace, the immediate gift of the land to the peasants and the restoration of the democratic institutions and the liberty that Kerensky mutilated, the Bolsheviki will found a government which no man on earth could overthrow.

The majority of the people is for us. The course of events since May 6 up to August 31 and September 12 has proved it: the majority won in the Soviets of the two capitals is the *result* of the people's evolution *towards bolshevism*. This is equally proved by the vacillations of the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviki and the strengthening of internationalists in the bosom of the two parties.

The Democratic Conference does not represent the majority

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<sup>1</sup> On August 31 the Petrograd Soviet and on September 6 that of Moscow adopted for the first time the general bolshevik political resolution.

of the people, but merely the acme of petty bourgeois class conciliation. The votes of this conference must not affect us, they prove nothing. Compare the elections of the Petrograd or Moscow municipal councils and the Soviet elections ; compare the Moscow elections and the strike of August 12<sup>2</sup> and you will realise the true facts concerning the majority of the revolutionary elements that lead the masses.

The Democratic Conference deceives the peasant class by giving them neither peace nor the land.

A Bolshevik government alone will satisfy the peasants.

Why must the Bolsheviks seize power exactly *now* ?

Because the next surrender of Petrograd will considerably lessen our chances.<sup>3</sup>

Now, with an army led by Kerensky and his associates, it is absolutely impossible for us to avoid this surrender.

Nor can one "wait for" the Constituent Assembly, for, by means of the Petrograd surrender, Kerensky and his acolytes will always be in a position to postpone its summons. Our party alone, once in power, could assure the convocation of the Constituent, and then we will accuse the other parties of having delayed it and we will prove our assertion.

It is only through rapid action that one must and can bring about the conclusion of a separate peace between the English and German imperialists.<sup>4</sup>

The people are tired of the Menshevik and Social-Revolutionary hesitations. Only our triumph in the capital cities will attract the peasants to our side.

It is not a case of "the day" nor of "the moment" of insurrection in the narrow sense of the word. The exact date can only be fixed by the agreement of those who are in contact with the workers and soldiers, with the *masses*.

<sup>2</sup> The general strike was started in Moscow by the trade unions and bolsheviks, against the majority of the Soviet, against the re-union of the Democratic Conference, a screen for reaction.

<sup>3</sup> At that time an offensive of the Germans on Riga and afterwards Petrograd was feared.

<sup>4</sup> The French military circles equally examined the possibility of a peace at the expense of Russia.



The point is this : our party has now at the Democratic Conference its *own* congress, and this congress must, whether it wishes to, or not, decide the *fate of the revolution*. It is necessary to make clear to the party its task for issuing marching orders for the *armed insurrection* at Petrograd and at Moscow (and in the neighbourhood), the conquest of power and the overthrow of the government. Our party must consider how to accomplish this aim without open proclamation of it in the Press.

Remember, ponder deeply on the words of Marx on insurrection : " Insurrection is an art . . . "

It would be childish on the part of the bolsheviks to wait for a " formal " majority. Kerensky and his associates, they will not wait but prepare the surrender of Petrograd. It is precisely the pitiable hesitations of the Democratic Conference which should arouse, and will thoroughly arouse the workers of Petrograd and Moscow. History will not forgive us if we do not seize power now.

There is no machinery ? There is one ; the Soviet and the democratic organisations. *Precisely* now, on the *eve* of the separate peace between the English and Germans, the international situation is in our favour. At this moment to propose peace to the people is to conquer.

Seize power now simultaneously at Moscow and at Petrograd (little matter which begins ; perhaps Moscow can do so), we are *certain* of victory.

# THE TRUST OF EMPIRE AND MR. MACDONALD A TRUSTEE

By M. ABDULLAH

THE Viceroy's speech at the opening of the Indian Legislative Assembly, in which reference was made to the existence of a "terrorist movement" and in which repressive legislation was foreshadowed, brought India to the front in British journals for one brief moment. Brilliant leaders and leaderettes have appeared in almost all newspapers in praise of the Viceroy and in condemnation of the "terrorist movement." But, according to the characteristic practice of Imperialists, no attempt has been made to go deeper and consider the ultimate effect of the proposed repressive measure which is already in operation in one of the provinces—Bengal—nor has anybody taken the trouble to pause and inquire into the reasonableness or absurdity of the terrorist movement. The reason is obvious.

The British policy is to fleece India in all possible ways, but to dupe the world into the belief that British rule in India is directed solely to the good of Indians themselves. With a judicious mixture of facts and fictions, a picture of the country is therefore drawn in alarming colours and presented to the world as a justification in advance of the policy of blood and iron in India's own interest.

But what are the real facts ?

The British went to India as traders, but claim to be there as a "Government established by law." They also claim that they are the "trustees" of the Indian people and that their governance of the country is nothing but the process of discharging that "trust." Those Indians who protest against this theory of "trust" or the more absurd one of "Government established by law" are dubbed enemies of the Indian people, whose welfare is proclaimed to be the

sole monopoly of the Englishman in India. If any unfortunate Indian dares persist in his protest, then the jail or the internment camp is the only fit place for him.

Repression and coercion in India are easy. The Governor-General embodies, directly or indirectly, in himself the triple powers of a legislator, an executive officer and a judge ; and the Governors are his exact replica for the provinces. All that has therefore got to be done is to pretend aloud that danger is imminent and then go ahead. The conscience of the rulers of India is too elastic to trouble them with the rigid ideals of justice. Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent movement was to be suppressed. The plea employed was danger of disorder, although even the British Imperialist has had the decency to acknowledge its non-violent character. The bogey of secret conspiracy and terrorism has been raised, but among the first persons to be arrested is the Executive Officer of Calcutta Municipal Council, a member of the Swaraj party, which has nothing to do with terrorism. The fact is that the British Government, imperious and impervious as it is, cannot stand Indian aspirations to freedom. It must employ, as it has so often done, every means, however brutal, to silence India. The instance of the massacre at Amritsar and the subsequent attempts to explain it away will suffice.

But to revert to the "Trust" theory. Let us see how the "trust" has been discharged. When the British "conquered" India, the country, though backward relatively to European states, was self-contained. It was the British who began the process of making it dependent, for its very means of existence, on others. What constitutes the history of Indian progress under British rule is really a pathetic tale of India's subservience to England.

India, which used to compete in textiles with any country in the latter's own market, must, notwithstanding its cotton, now fill the pockets of the Lancashire and Manchester capitalists to clothe herself. The Indian agriculturist, although ignorant of scientific methods of production, sowed his seeds and reaped the harvest in the full certainty of enjoying plenty and of securing himself against difficulties in times of scarcity. To-day, after almost a century of British rule "established by law," the condition of the Indian peasant beggars description. He must starve so that the produce of

his labour may go to enrich others. He must live and die in dingy and abominable slums, or mud huts, so that the money which should have been spent on sanitation may be utilise by the Army department. Indian youth must remain uneducated because it involves money and also because the European "pioneer" of industry has to be supplied with cheap labour with the object of "developing India's vast resources." No provision for technical and higher education must be made because it will open avenues to competition with the English masters. Besides, economy in education and other kindred matters is absolutely necessary ; else, how can the Army and the foreign Civil Service be maintained ?

It is asserted that British rule in India has been the main factor in the development of her economic resources and it is further asserted with an admirable amount of self-satisfaction that Indian trade leaves nothing to be desired, that, in fact, there is a balance in favour of India. The facts are true. But will any honest supporter of British Imperialism be sufficiently honest to take the world further into his confidence and say what proportion of the gain is enjoyed by Indian workers and peasants, and what by the British tea planters, the Dundee jute kings, the Lancashire textile manufacturers, the British members of the army and the services and the rest of the breed ? A century of British "benevolent" rule to "discharge the trust," characterised by economic development at the time of billions, and yet the Indian is where he was 200 years ago ! The world has progressed by leaps and bounds, but India is kept stationary and, therefore, immeasurably worse off in comparison.

India has begun to realise all this. It has been disillusioned. It now understands what British rule, despite protestations of benevolence and sincerity, means. Recent post-war events have furnished fresh proofs if any were needed at all. The scandalous treatment of Indians in British colonies, the partitioning of the Turkish Empire to grab Arabia and Mesopotamia, countries of great strategic importance to Imperial Britain, the unholy and ignoble attempt to force Egypt into subjugation to sit tight on the Suez Canal, have not gone unnoticed by India. India has at last begun to feel that "solemn pledges" and "august declarations" are no better than sanctified camouflaged humbugs and that the

British govern India simply and only because the country is the most fertile field for capitalist exploitation.

The closing months of the year 1920 saw India fully awakened. The Indian National Congress, which had up to that time been a parade ground of sartorial fineries and oratorical skill, became the council of action. It changed its creed from that of "Self-Government on Colonial lines" to "Swaraj," *i.e.*, Self-rule, thereby proclaiming its disbelief in the superstition that the British connection was *necessarily* a panacea for Indian ills. The creed has been most expressively described as "Swaraj" with British connection if possible and without it if necessary. The implication is clear. India, knowing as it did the nature and record of British Imperialism, yet wanted to give Britain a chance. Non-co-operation, a programme of *active* struggle with progressive intensity, was conceived in the spirit of that implication. At every stage of this struggle the door for peace has always been open. At the back of India's mind was the idea that if British Conservatism and British Liberalism were, in her case, sure to spurn the ideals of justice and liberty, British Labour, that gathering force and influence, was equally certain to respond to India's demands. And she had reason to expect Labour support. The pre-Labour Government speeches and writings of Labour leaders are full of good wishes for India. It was only when the time for giving at least an earnest of their good wishes came that they as a Government failed. They failed India and they failed their own principles. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who had once been invited to grace the chair of the Indian National Congress, when on the eve of assuming the office of Prime Minister, condescended to send a message to the people of India, which message was a threat of reprisals. Reprisals for what and on whose behalf? It is astonishing that a Labour Premier should take up arms on behalf of Capitalism against those who were and are struggling to assert their rights in their own country, but this is what the first Labour Prime Minister did. His right-hand lieutenant, Mr. J. H. Thomas, from whom Indians in colonies had expected equitable treatment, became so dazzled by the false glamour of "the Empire" that he lost the vision which ought to have been his as a socialist leader. Colonel Wedgwood and Mr. Ben Spoor, the two Labour delegates to the Indian National

Congress in 1920, found themselves too much absorbed in their duties in 1924 to bestow a thought on India. Finally, India received the blessings of the Fabian Secretary of State for India in the shape of coercion of Sikhs and Regulation XVIII of Bengal.

It has been suggested that the first Labour Government was frankly not so forward or strong as its supporters wished it to be, and that its policy in regard to India, as in so many other matters, was not representative of the policy of the Labour Movement. It may be so, but the proof of real Labour intentions must come from Labour itself. In the meantime, who can deny the justice of India seeking freedom through its own methods and resources, good, bad or indifferent? The grave reality must not be forgotten that India is on the verge of economic ruin. Her struggle for freedom is not only for the purpose of getting opportunities to progress towards moral and material prosperity, but also because, if she is to live, she must arrest her rapid and destructive decline. And this is so desperately urgent that she cannot afford to wait for the propitious time when expediency may, with diplomatic safety to Labour leaders, be replaced by principles. If Labour has any sympathy with India, it should help, rather than allow its spokesmen to hinder her in her life and death struggle.

*Benares, India. January 20, 1925.*

# THE UNEMPLOYED

By E. STANLEY

**D**URING 1921-22 and for a short period in 1923, the unemployed were organised on a scale hitherto unknown, and mass demonstrations, often culminating in brutal attacks by the police, were the order of the day in every industrial centre. Committees were thrown up by the conditions then existent all over the country, every day bringing forward the news in the capitalist Press that the militant unemployed in some centre had been demonstrating on some working-class issue.

Undoubtedly, this mass organisation of the unemployed that arose in the struggle caused the authorities considerable uneasiness, and relief on a scale hitherto unknown was granted to the rebellious unemployed. When even relief failed to render the unemployed quiescent in some centres, the boss class, nakedly, and often without the slightest provocation, batoned masses of unemployed workers, and arrested the leaders on the slightest pretext.

For a time this brutality towards the unemployed failed to stop them demonstrating in support of their demands, and, as is well-known, during this period (and up to the present time) the unemployed consistently assisted the employed who were striking or locked out by the employers. *In contradistinction, the employed have rarely assisted the unemployed in their fight against the same common enemy.*

Thus, whilst the mass activities of the unemployed forced concessions in the form of relief and unemployment benefit from these respective capitalist institutions, they failed to obtain support from the employed workers, and failed to obtain recognition and support from the rest of the working-class movement. This lack of support and the refusal of the Trades Union Congress, National Labour Party and other workers' organisations to recognise the Unemployed Organisation as an integral necessary part of the workers' movement was a grave mistake, and has reacted upon the whole movement.

Since the enthusiastic period of 1921-22, the unemployed have become more and more apathetic. It was not very noticeable at first, because the organised unemployed continued their support of the workers who on any front were opposing the common enemy, but after the National March on London the apathy became more and more apparent.

The return of a Labour Government added to this apathy, masses of unemployed placing their faith in parliamentary action, as against mass action, until we find with a strong capitalist Government in power, the organised unemployed are practically non-existent as a political or industrial force.

In the Conservative Government, we recognise a real class opposition Government, determined to reduce the standard of maintenance obtained by the unemployed from the Poor Law and Ministry of Labour. With this Government in power the unemployed are under no delusions regarding the attempts that will be made upon them. They realise that any resistance will be mercilessly crushed by the present Government, should it be deemed necessary in the interests of capital.

Naturally a revival in trade would easily crush the unemployed, but despite all the newspaper talk, the unemployed figures nationally on the "live register" will persist in remaining just above or below a million and a quarter. Trade is what the capitalist class of England would love to use as the best method of reducing unemployment to a minimum, but the international situation does not as yet provide this solution to the unemployed problem of Great Britain.

No, to-day we can speak of the permanency of unemployment in this country. This is the fifth year of unemployment on a scale hitherto undreamt of. And the figures on the "live register" have never dropped to one million. It is well that we should recognise that a huge unemployed army is a permanent thing from now on. We shall then see the need for permanent machinery and a permanent place in the workers' movement for the organised unemployed.

Yet the return of a strong capitalist Government has had no other effect upon the unemployed than that of convincing them that attacks can be expected shortly from this quarter. On the other hand, the organised unemployed have little or no contact with the



rest of the working-class movement, and to-day are more ignored than ever. This is a dismal prospect for the unemployed who have to face the attacks of capitalism again practically unaided.

No one, of course, denies that the unemployed themselves are apathetic and quiescent, despite the systematic attacks of capitalism. Whoever hears of unemployed mass demonstrations to-day? Whoever hears or reads of the unemployed demanding anything from the capitalist institutions? Whoever hears of any working-class organisation (except in very few instances) measuring up to the unemployed situation and offering a united front to the organised unemployed?

It is now, also, most apparent that employed and unemployed have to a dangerous degree adapted themselves to unemployment. The fact that there is a standing army of unemployed over one million is not considered serious. The huge unemployed army outside the factory gates is accepted complacently by the employed workers, whilst the employers in some cases pay their workers less than the standard of maintenance received by the unemployed.

The unemployed have to accept unemployment as an inevitable evil of the system, drawing their relief and Unemployment Benefit, hoping that the newspaper trade revivals will become realities, and in the meantime carrying on below the poverty-line.

This adaptation of employed and unemployed to unemployment and its attendant miseries is dangerous to the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, which of necessity must base its existence upon militant action against the capitalist class.

In addition, the boss class through four years of unemployment have learned how to render the unemployed apathetic and quiescent. Having got the measure of the unemployed, they continue to fill them with dope from their Press regarding trade revivals, overawe them with parades of police when necessary, systematically reduce their standard of maintenance, and sweeten this punishment by their capitalist organisations, such as the British Legion, &c.

Yet despite the apathy existent amongst the unemployed and the lack of contact with other working-class organisations; despite the lack of recognition and often complete ignoring of the unemployed by the Trade Unions, Labour Party, &c., the fact

that an avowed capitalist majority Government is in power, and committed to attacks upon the unemployed, means that the conditions for mass action on the part of the unemployed is again to be provided.

This means that the conditions (of necessity imposed by the present Conservative Government) will provide a similar situation for the unemployed as was seen in 1921—similar, in that again the unemployed will be forced by circumstances to resort to mass action to defend themselves against the attacks of capitalism. With the conditions existent for mass action, what will be the actions of the organised unemployed in the N.U.W.C.M. ?

Hence the reason for this article. The unemployed are to pass through a trying period similar in some respects to that of 1921. Yet, during the 1921 phase, mistakes were made that if repeated during the coming period will react again, but to a greater extent, against the organised unemployed. For the unemployed to-day have to face an employing class that have learned many lessons during the past four years, and are not to be intimidated merely by mass enthusiasm.

It is for this reason that the writer reviewed the activities of the Unemployed Organisation since its inception of 1921, and from this review outlined a policy that the organised unemployed in the N.U.W.C.M. must pursue to obtain greater contact with the rest of the organised workers, to meet the coming attack of the boss class. This policy was practically wholly adopted by unemployed delegates assembled at their fourth National Unemployed Conference in December last.

The policy was put forward by the writer in the form of resolutions at this Conference, and at the time, though obtainable in the December *Communist Review*, few delegates had read same before attending the Conference. The fact that it was accepted therefore under these circumstances shows that the delegates recognised that it was the best policy put forward to meet the present problems of the N.U.W.C.M.

In addition, though certain delegates were members of the Communist Party, they were in a minority, but they also, using their own discretion, as they were not acting under a central lead (which was very unfortunate), fully agreed with the policy. It is

necessary to add that though the Communists were in a minority their practical outlook and policy dominated the Conference, a testimony to their activities in the N.U.W.C.M.

The policy adopted was, in a nutshell, greater working contact with all sections of the working-class movement, political and industrial, towards joint efforts for defence and attack against the common enemy ; a united front of employed and unemployed in every fight ; affiliation to the Trades Union Congress, National Labour Party, National Minority Movement, and Trades and Labour Councils throughout the country ; the recognition of the organised unemployed, and a place in the ranks of the workers' movement.

It is recognised that affiliation to the Trades Union Congress, Labour Party, Trades and Labour Councils, &c., would be of little value to the unemployed if affiliation was simply the end in view. The support of the Trades Union Congress, as at present constituted, has not proved of much value to any Trade Union engaged in a dispute with the employers, yet greater hopes of action are expected from the industrial side than from the Labour Party.

The reactionary policy of the Labour Party leadership is fully realised. Trades and Labour Councils also at present are merely used as springboards for political opportunists to obtain positions, using the industrial masses for this purpose. But all are workers' organisations, set up by the workers in struggle against the boss, and were erected by the workers as weapons of struggle against the boss. For this reason we seek greater working contact with these organisations against the common enemy—capitalism.

On a different plane would be the affiliation of the N.U.W.C.M. to the National Minority Movement. Here is an acknowledged left wing organisation of Trade Unionists in every industry, with a fighting policy, entirely different to the make up of the Trades Union Congress and the National Labour Party. Here is an organisation whose policy is very similar to that of the N.U.W.C.M., who recognise the need for unity, especially in action, between the employed and unemployed.

United action between this organisation and the N.U.W.C.M. is necessary to obtain better contact between the latter and other

working-class organisations. This organisation is already in favour of the free affiliation of the N.U.W.C.M. to the Trades Union Congress, and believes in the operation of the Six-Point Charter in favour of the unemployed workers. Being composed of left wing Trade Unionists it is able to take steps throughout the Trade Union Movement jointly with the N.U.W.C.M. to bring victory to certain unemployed demands.

It is necessary that this policy must be operated as speedily as possible to enable the organised unemployed to present something of a united front against the attack of the boss class. *It will be impossible before the offensive commences to obtain that real contact that must be obtained before the unemployed can successfully combat the attacks of capitalism.* The first united attempts, of necessity, will come from a joint campaign of the National Minority Movement and the N.U.W.C.M.

These two organisations, operating together with the support of the Communist Party, can do much to resist the attack of capitalism that will be initiated by the present government. Unitedly, they are much more likely to obtain the support of the rest of the working-class organisations attached to the Trades Union Congress and the National Labour Party, in the interests of the organised unemployed.

To sum up : unemployment is now a big permanent feature of capitalism. Great Britain is no exception to the rule internationally. The official figures as given by the Government show the permanency of unemployment during these past five years, and the future gives a darker outlook, short periods of boom being perhaps manufactured, only to be followed by lengthened periods of increased unemployment.

The lesson is obvious. There needs to be an organisation permanently set up that caters for the unemployed and that will have a recognised place in the general working-class movement.

The unemployed must not sink their identity in the working-class movement. Even recognised as a live section in the Trade Union movement, the N.U.W.C.M. must not fall into the rut that many Unions are now in. If they do allow themselves to be submerged in the general working-class movement during

this phase, the policy will have failed in its object, and the N.U.W.C.M. will also fail to force capitalism to take notice of it.

Above all the N.U.W.C.M. must remain an organisation of mass action, determined to adopt a fighting militant lead, and give a lead to the rest of the working-class organisations. An effective Unemployed Organisation must have contact with the employed ; must compel attention from all sections of the movement, to meet the attacks that are being made upon them, and to emerge from this phase strengthened and not apathetic like they emerged from the attacks of 1921-22-23.

# The World of Labour

	PAGE
INTERNATIONAL : The Amsterdam Meeting .. .. .	234
FRANCE : Socialist Congress .. .. .	239
ESTHONIA : White Terror .. .. .	240
HUNGARY : Social-Democrats' Treaty with Government ..	242
POLAND : The Lantzutsky Case .. .. .	245

## INTERNATIONAL

### The Amsterdam Meeting

THE progress of the movement for International Trade Union Unity has already been described in these notes up to the joint meeting of the I.F.T.U. and the Labour and Socialist International at Brussels on January 3-4.<sup>1</sup>

On January 29, the General Council of the Trades Union Congress met and decided to urge the calling of an immediate conference of the Russian Unions and the I.F.T.U. This decision was conveyed to the I.F.T.U. by the following letter<sup>2</sup> :—

THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS GENERAL COUNCIL,  
London, S.W. 1,

January 31, 1925.

DEAR MR. OUDEGEEST,—The Trades Union Congress General Council at their last meeting considered the correspondence which has been passing between the I.F.T.U. and the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions at Moscow, and have instructed us to inform you that the Council are deeply impressed with the importance of a Conference between the representatives of the I.F.T.U. and the All-Russian Council at Moscow being held as speedily as possible.

The General Council are also convinced that there should be no waste of time in attempting to settle differences prior to such a Conference taking place, as the main purpose, from our point of view, of such a Conference is to settle differences, and for this reason we strongly press for the convening of an unconditional conference for informal discussion purposes at which both sides would be free to express their representative opinion without being tied to any formulæ or constitution, it being understood of course that the findings of such a Conference should be considered as a preliminary to a mandatory Conference, to follow after reports of the preliminary discussions had been given to the body responsible for the final conclusions.

<sup>1</sup> THE LABOUR MONTHLY, February, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 121-126.

<sup>2</sup> Much of the material in this note is reproduced *verbatim* from the Special Supplement on International Trade Union Unity published with the current *Monthly Circular* (March, 1925) of the Labour Research Department, to which publication acknowledgments are made.

The Council further directed their representatives to raise this question at the Executive Council meeting next week, and trust you will, therefore, make provision for it on the agenda.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) A. B. SWALES, *Chairman*.  
FRED BRAMLEY, *Secretary*.

Mr. J. Oudegeest,  
International Federation of Trade Unions,  
Tesselschadestraat, Amsterdam.

The General Council of the I.F.T.U. met at Amsterdam from February 5-7.<sup>1</sup>

The discussion on Unity in the International Trade Union movement was opened by a speech from Oudegeest, who put forward the following resolution on behalf of the Bureau :—

The General Council regrets that the Russian Trade Unions are not prepared to accept the invitation of the Vienna Congress to affiliate with the I.F.T.U.

The General Council regrets that the Russian organisations keep up their hostile attitude towards the I.F.T.U. and its affiliated bodies.

The General Council is of the opinion that everything possible has been done on the part of the I.F.T.U. to induce the Russians to come in ; and that the Bureau should be instructed to notify the Russian trade union centre that we regard the whole question as finished ; and that we should refrain from any further correspondence.

This proposal, which would have bolted and barred the door against any further attempts at international unity, was not, it appears probable from subsequent events, put forward except as a stalking-horse resolution. It enabled other resolutions or amendments of the Right Wing of the meeting to take on the appearance of a midway course by contrast with it ; and when its purpose was served it was withdrawn without having been put to the vote.

After Oudegeest had spoken, Fred Bramley, in a long and masterly speech, put forward the British proposal for an unconditional immediate conference.

After a long discussion a new resolution was put forward by Stenhuis and Smit, which ran as follows :—

#### STENHUIS-SMIT RESOLUTION

The General Council of the I.F.T.U. after having examined the correspondence between the I.F.T.U. and the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions, instructs the Executive Committee of the I.F.T.U. to inform the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions that the I.F.T.U. is prepared to admit the All-Russian Federation of Trade Unions when they express their desire to this effect.

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<sup>1</sup>*Bureau* : A. A. PURCELL (Great Britain), *President* I.F.T.U. (in the chair). L. JOUHAUX (France), TH. LEIPART (Germany), C. MERTENS (Belgium), *Vice-Presidents*. J. OUDEGEEST, JOHANN SASSENBACH, JOHN W. BROWN, *Secretaries*. *Management Committee* : F. BRAMLEY (Great Britain), M. BUISSON (France), R. STENHUIS (Holland), L. D'ARAGONA (Italy), F. L. CABALLERO (Spain), K. DURR (Switzerland), P. GRASSMANN (Germany), R. TAYERLE (Czecho-Slovakia), C. MADSEN (Denmark), S. JASZAI (Hungary), Z. ZULAWSKY (Poland).

*International Trade Secretariats* : A. J. COOK (International Miners' Federation). E. FIMMEN (International Transport Workers' Federation). G. J. A. SMIT (International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, and Technical Employees).

The I.F.T.U. also declares itself prepared to convene a conference *in Amsterdam* with the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions with a view to an exchange of opinions as soon as possible after the All-Russian Council intimates its desire to be admitted to the I.F.T.U.

The British delegation strongly opposed this resolution, and pressed forward their T.U.C. policy, which was supported in speeches by Fimmen, Cook, and Bramley in his reply. The British proposal was then voted on and defeated by 13 votes to 6. The six were: Purcell, Bramley, Cook, Brown, Fimmen, and Madsen. A similar resolution moved by Durr met with a similar fate. The Stenhuis-Smit resolution was then carried by 14 votes to 5, Madsen voting with the majority.

The British delegation, making the best of a bad job, then moved that negotiatory delegates be appointed under the terms of the resolution that had been passed. After some demur this was agreed to, and the Bureau, together with Bramley, Fimmen, Grassmann, and Zulawsky, were thus appointed.

It should be noted that the Press correspondents' letters dealing with the meeting (notably the *Manchester Guardian*) were tendencious, and in some cases the correspondents had clearly been supplied with misleading accounts of what happened. Thus much publicity was given to the story that Purcell had repudiated the idea of a world congress. Mertens at the close of the discussion proposed that this alleged "repudiation" be recorded on the minutes, whereupon Bramley made it clear that the British had not repudiated the idea of a World Labour Congress; but simply were against it being called immediately.

In certain quarters in this country (*e.g.*, in the *Daily Herald* report of the Amsterdam meeting) this resolution has been represented as a "compromise"—a possible half-way house to international trade union unity. That this is not the case is sufficiently shown by the comments of the Right Wing leaders, who supported the resolution, in the Social-Democratic Press.

For instance, Oudegeest stated in an interview granted to *Het Volk*, the Dutch Social-Democratic organ:—

I am heartily in favour of the Stenhuis proposal because the only alteration its acceptance would make to the position would be to *strengthen the resolution of the Vienna Congress*. The Congress of Vienna ordered us to enter into negotiations with the Russians on the basis of our statutes and principles. This, however, has been refused by the Russians who in its stead proposed—with the backing of the English delegation—to have an unconditional conference. The answer given to that by the General Council is, in short, the same as what has been proclaimed by us for years in speech and in writing, and what has also already been communicated to the American Trade Unions, namely: if you declare yourselves ready to affiliate with the I.F.T.U., then *there is a possibility of discussing with us the regulating of possible points of detail*.

So the General Council has not only approved of the attitude of the Bureau. It has taken a further move: either to reach unity *through the affiliation of the Russian Trade Union to the I F T U.*, or to make an end of these fruitless negotiations—fruitless till now through no fault of ours—as I proposed in my opening speech.—(*Het Volk*, February 9, 1925.)



In the Berlin *Vorwärts* (February 11, 1925), central organ of the German Social-Democrats, we find an article, headed "Moscow's Turn To Speak," which declares that:—

The decision of the General Council of the I.F.T.U. to invite the Russians to a general conference, if they *previously* are ready to join the I.F.T.U., is a shrewd blow at the Bolshevik split-brothers. The entry of the Russian Trade Unions into the Amsterdam International must be preceded by their exit from the R.I.L.U.—which means the end of that body.

M. Jouhaux, writing in *Le Peuple* (Paris), the organ of the French C.G.T., takes up a similar line. In the course of a long article (in which he repeats the false report of the Bramley-Purcell attitude towards a World Congress) he says:—

The Russian trade unions have the opportunity to say in a concrete way whether or not they wish to enter the I.F.T.U.; they know that they must go out of the door of the R.I.L.U., and the question of a United Front (which is behind the camouflage of the proposed World Congress on Unity) cannot be raised.

M. Mertens, writing in the official organ of the Belgian Trade Union Congress (*Le Mouvement Syndical Belge*, February 28, 1925), adopts the same position. He says:—

The affiliation of the Russian unions to the I.F.T.U. means, in reality, the end of the R.I.L.U., and, at the same time, the crumbling away of the splitting movements in other countries in Europe. . . .

If, however, the Russian unions do not affiliate with the I.F.T.U., let us have done with any further correspondence or discussion on the subject of unity.

Finally, M. Zulawsky, the Polish member of the delegation appointed by the I.F.T.U. General Council to meet the Russian Unions (see above), is reported to have declared in a speech at Warsaw that the Stenhuis-Smit resolution:—

Rejects all negotiations with the Russian unions if these latter do not unconditionally accept the principles and the Statutes of the Amsterdam International. —(*L'Humanité*, Paris, March 3, 1925.)

This situation was fully discussed by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress at the meeting on February 25 and 27. It was resolved to remit the whole question to the standing International Committee of the General Council, whose duty it would be to meet the representatives of the Russian Trades Union Congress, and discuss with them the difficulties arising out of the Stenhuis-Smit resolution.

### The Campaign Against Unity

The campaign of the Social-Democratic Trade Union leaders on the Continent against international trade union unity is closely associated with their attacks on the British delegation to Russia.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For these attacks, see THE LABOUR MONTHLY, January, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 1. p. 57, and February, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 121-126.

In the *International Press Correspondence* of February 11, it is stated that:—

The January number of the Hungarian Social-Democratic organ, *Socialismus*, has published a letter addressed by the German General Federation of Trade Unions to the Hungarian Federation proposing joint action against the British delegation. The Central Committee of the Polish Trade Unions has decided to support the protest of the German Federation against the British delegation.

On December 2, 1924, the Executive Committee of the Swiss Trade Union Federation addressed a letter marked "Confidential" to the Executive of the I.F.T.U. This letter was subsequently published in the *Labour Press of Switzerland*. We reproduce the following extracts from the *International Press Correspondence* (February 6, 1925):—

We have followed with a certain amount of uneasiness the Press reports regarding the attitude in Moscow of the present President of the I.F.T.U. It seems to be a second edition of the attitude of Fimmen. The immediate result has been that, on the one hand Purcell is referred to as a witness for the Crown regarding the ideal conditions in Moscow, and on the other hand the I.F.T.U. is to be induced, with the help of Purcell, to convene a "world congress" for the purpose of singing the praises of the saints of Moscow.

Judged by the experiences we have had up to now with Moscow, nothing is further from the thoughts of Zinoviev and Lozovsky, than unity with Amsterdam.

Only after a preliminary conference of the I.F.T.U. shall have determined the conditions

Will it be time to inform the Red International that nothing stands in the way to an amalgamation upon the agreed basis.

We further expect that only such comrades will be appointed to participate in the mutual negotiations who do not wish merely to make themselves agreeable, but who are conscious of the fact that the Moscow gentlemen broke away from the Trade Union International with the intention of destroying it. The statutes of the Red International of Labour Unions are sufficient proof of this.

If the "unfortunate conflict of tendencies" in International trade unionism continue,

There remains nothing else for us to do but to confine ourselves to our internal affairs until the international hubbub dies down

The letter concludes by averring that investigation is necessary in order to determine whether the sections of the R.I.L.U. are *bona fide* trade unions at all.

It is certain that to some extent they are organs for the consolidation of Communist State power, but outside of Russia they consist of so-called nuclei which have poisoned our Trade Union Movement. We will never permit our trade unions to give up their political independence and to permit themselves to be misused by political parties. We would rather renounce the whole idea of international unity.

FRANCE

Socialist Congress

THE 22nd National Congress of the French Socialist Party was held at Grenoble from February 8-13. The most important discussions centred, as previously,<sup>1</sup> on the question of the Party's policy of support for the Government of M. Herriot, and as previously the same criticism of that policy was forthcoming from the so-called "Left" in the Party: MM. Bracke, Zyromski, Longuet, &c.

At the departmental Congress of the Seine, on February 1, a motion criticising the policy of support, as carried out by the Parliamentary Party, was passed by 2,002 votes to 1,653, with 136 abstentions. This motion stated:—

It seems that a transformation has gradually taken place. Instead of the idea that the Parliamentary Socialist Party should frustrate the attempts of reaction to place the Government in a minority, it appears that the idea is growing that the Party should always form a practically organic part of the Government majority.

To criticism of the Parliamentary Party for voting the official "placarding" of the sensationally "Poincarist" speech of M. Herriot to the Chamber on January 28, M. Leon Blum replied:—

The Socialist doctrine was not in question in the criticised vote. It will be borne to the tribune of the Chamber in its whole expression before long.

At Grenoble nothing new was said on either side, though the debate was protracted; but M. Zyromski summed up the whole question very neatly when he said:—

At bottom, there is always, behind our discussions, the struggle between the policy of those who believe that Socialism will be achieved by collaboration with a section of the bourgeoisie, as a peaceful and normal expansion of Democracy, and the policy of those others who think more than ever that Socialism can only be a proletarian creation—the result of the efforts of a working class that, by its creative genius, causes new institutions to arise which shall replace those political institutions of bourgeois society (*la légalité bourgeoise*) smashed by the struggle of the proletariat.

However, a compromise resolution was finally passed, unanimously reaffirming the policy of support for the Herriot Government:—

The Parliamentary Party will have as its object to maintain the existence of the Government . . . that is to say, it must strive to ward off the difficulties of all kinds which arise from the present situation itself, or are raised either by Reaction or Bolshevism (*sic*) . . .

The Party should suspend the support it accords to the Government when the vote which is demanded of it is in contradiction with the doctrine of the Party or with one of its fundamental rules of action. . . .

In carrying out the policy of support the Party has not adopted definitely new tactics, nor renounced its traditional and necessary position as a Class Party. . . . Its supreme rule of action to-day as always is the interest of the workers which it represents.

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<sup>1</sup> See THE LABOUR MONTHLY, March 1924, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 186-7, August, 1924, Vol. 6, No. 8, pp. 507-9, December, 1924, Vol. 6, No. 12, pp. 754-5.

An interesting observation was made by M. Henri Sizaire, deputy for the Tarn Department. He said:—

Cannot we ask the Government, for which we have voted Secret Service funds, for a subsidy for a Socialist daily paper. . . . If the Socialist Party cannot itself find the funds that it needs it has only to go to those whom it is supporting.—(*L'Humanité*, February 9, 1925.)

This astonishing suggestion appears to have taken the Congress somewhat aback; and it does not appear in the official report of the Congress, published in *Le Populaire*, February 25, 1925.

## ESTHONIA

### White Terror

ON November 10, 1924, the trial *en masse* of 149 Communists and revolutionary trade unionists opened at Reval. This was a sequel to a severe campaign of governmental repression, including many arrests (especially in January and September of last year) and the forcible closing down of some hundreds of workers' organisations of all kinds—trade unions, &c.

They were charged with treason—their alleged overt act being “conspiracy” to set up a Soviet Republic in Esthonia which should unite with the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

When Jaan Tomp, one of the accused, a leader of the Esthonian Trade Union Congress (which accepts the point of view of the Red International of Labour Unions) and a Communist ex-M.P., was asked by the President of the Court whether he pleaded guilty or not, he replied:—

I refuse to plead guilty before a court of bourgeois scoundrels. . . . Long live the workers' and peasants' Government.

For this “contempt of court” he was immediately handed over to a court-martial, by whose orders he was shot the same night (November 14-15).

This outrage called forth a unanimous resolution of protest from the Sixth Soviet Trade Union Congress, then in session. Further, the British Trade Union Delegation in Russia, headed by Mr. A. A. Purcell, visited the Esthonian Legation in Moscow to lodge a protest in the strongest terms against such actions on the part of a Government that is notoriously a vassal of British imperialism. Similar protests were made by a representative deputation of trade union leaders to the Esthonian Minister in London.

The trial lasted eighteen days, resulting in the acquittal of only seven of the accused. Of the remainder, thirty-nine were sentenced to penal servitude for life; twenty-eight to fifteen years' imprisonment; six to twelve years, nineteen to ten years; five to eight years; fifteen to six years; sixteen to four years.

These terrible sentences had their natural consequence in the Communist rising in Reval on December 1. The rising lasted a few hours, and was put down with the utmost severity. Martial law was declared, and supreme command placed in the hands of General Laidonner, who was decorated by His Britannic Majesty with the K.C.M.G. for his services with Yudenitch against Soviet Russia in 1919. Many summary executions by court martial took place

—100 being the figure semi-officially mentioned—other sources state 300 in Reval alone, and Press reports at the end of December stated that 900 persons had been arrested.

Miss Susan Lawrence described, in a letter to the *Daily Herald* (January 5, 1925), the atrocious prison conditions and the terrorisation of the workers.

## Social-Democrats Enter Coalition Government

On December 16, 1924, the Esthonian Cabinet was re-formed as a Coalition Cabinet, including the Social-Democrats; the Social-Democrats had previously sided with the bourgeois Parties in voting for the declaration of martial law in December 1.

A vital document for the comprehension of the state of mind of the Esthonian Social-Democrats is afforded by the letter addressed to the Secretary of the Labour and Socialist International by M. Martna (a Social-Democratic Member of the Esthonian Parliament) in agreement with the Central Committee of the Esthonian Party.

This letter recites a number of allegations concerning "criminals" in "the pay of Communists," "Communist murder conspiracies," &c., which are *prima facie* secret police stories. On the trial of the 149 Communists the letter states:—

Nearly all the accused behaved before the court in such a boorish provoking way, that the Court was placed in a very awkward predicament, which was the more serious as the proceedings were carried out publicly. . . .

We cannot deplore sufficiently the death sentence passed on Jaan Tomp, and at the time gave expression to these feelings in our paper. But after he had grossly insulted the Court in a most provoking manner at a public sitting in the presence of the public and numerous guards, and also called for the overthrow of the democratic constitution by means of violence, there remained no other course for the Court but to hand him over to other judges.

The letter continues:—

After the events of December 1, however, we have to declare frankly that the raising of martial law would have certainly helped the Communist plotters. This conviction caused us on December 1 to unite with the bourgeois parties so far as to vote in Parliament for the declaration of martial law all over the country, and for the placing of the armed forces under the command of one Commander-in-Chief.

These measures seemed to be necessary to prevent the repetition of any revolutionary attempt, as well as to guard against a menacing military interference from without.

The attempted rising, on December 1, has shown the whole world without question that we were to undergo the sad fate of Georgia. We must concede that the Government and the police were really better informed than we of the bloody intentions of the Communists.

The country no longer doubts that the arrests in January, 1924, must now be understood and valued as justifiable preventive measures, and that the events of December 1 could have assumed a much wider significance, with probably also a disastrous issue, if these energetic revolutionaries had been allowed to work freely. Had the "plot" been successful, we could not now write these lines, and no Power and no Court could have been found to

try the "culprits," after the "crime had been committed," as it is now with the comrades in Georgia.

We are, of course, convinced that Reaction will now get incentive, and it is of no avail to us to throw blame on the Communist plot-batchers, and hold them responsible before the world. And while we are compelled, in defence of the independence of our country, and in the endeavour to defend ourselves against Communist plotters, to compromise with the bourgeois parties, we are suspected of supporting Reaction on our own initiative, renouncing our duties as Socialists towards equity and justice.<sup>1</sup>

## HUNGARY

### Social-Democrats' Treaty With Government

FOR some time rumours have been current that a secret agreement existed between the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party and the government of Count Bethlen. In an interview published in the Christmas number of the *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna) Count Bethlen threatened to disclose this agreement. This threat resulted in its publication by *Nepszava*, the Hungarian Social-Democratic Organ.

The government in this agreement made vague promises to restore the freedom of the Press and the right of combination (with the expressly stated exception of the railwaymen, postal workers, and civil servants), to grant an amnesty for political prisoners, and to guarantee the Social-Democrats a certain number of seats in Parliament.

In return, the Social-Democrats undertook the obligations referred to in the following textual extract from the agreement :<sup>2</sup>—

The Social-Democratic Party is ready to declare that it will consider the general interests of the nation and of the country under present-day conditions, and, after the experiences it has gained, as of equal importance to the interests of the working class ; it must, therefore, fight and make sacrifices for the interests of the nation and of the country as well as for the working class. The Party will in its conduct aim at the above, and not only abstain from all propaganda injurious to the interests of Hungary, but on the contrary will carry on an active propaganda on behalf of Hungary ; on the one hand, among the leaders of the foreign Social-Democratic Parties, with foreign governments, &c., and for this purpose will co-operate with the Hungarian Foreign Minister, and on the other hand, will break off all connections with the emigrants ; this it does openly and takes up the fight against them abroad.

#### (a) *With Regard to Foreign Policy*

The Social-Democratic Party undertakes in all disputed foreign political questions concerning the nation as a whole expressly to adopt the Magyar standpoint to the same extent as the German Majority Socialists and other moderate Social-Democrats always do, who, in questions of this kind, never adopt the standpoint of governments of hostile States.

It shall make use of its connections with foreign moderate Social-Democratic circles to counteract the unfounded reports spread regarding terror in Hungary,

<sup>1</sup> These quotations are taken from the text officially circulated to THE LABOUR MONTHLY, in common with other journals, by the Estonian Legation in London.

<sup>2</sup> This extract is quoted from the *International Press Correspondence*, Vol. V, No. 2, January 8, 1925.

and to exert its influence in order that foreign countries shall obtain a picture of Hungary which is in accordance with the facts.

In order that this end may be achieved, the Social-Democratic Party will, before all, in its organ *Nepszava* adopt an impartial attitude and loyally express in this paper its collaboration with bourgeois society, which will result in these actions finding an echo in the foreign Press.

It will do its utmost to inform the foreign Social-Democratic Press regarding this agreement, and especially undertakes that prominent Party members shall publish articles regarding this Treaty in the Right Wing Labour Press abroad, for example, in Germany, France, England, Switzerland, Sweden, Holland and the United States.

With regard to the obviously lying and malicious reports appearing in the foreign Press, the *Nepszava* undertakes—when it is convinced of the untruth of the reports in question—upon the request of the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry—to contradict these reports.

## (b) *With Regard to Home Policy*

(1) It considers the reconstruction of the country, which is also in the interests of the workers, to be of such importance that for this purpose it is disposed to co-operate with the bourgeois classes in the economic sphere, to abstain unconditionally from political strikes, and to leave the solution of wages questions to that organisation which is mentioned in the second clause of the eleventh section of the present Protocol. (Government intervention and arbitration court.)

(2) In the sphere of home politics it breaks with the Liberal bloc. In its opposition to the Government it will only employ decent weapons, and will not behave in a factious and demagogic manner. It will conduct no Republican propaganda.

(3) It takes note of the declaration of the Prime Minister, according to which the Government interprets the item regarding the right of combination and assembly in such a manner that the Social-Democratic Party shall not extend this agitation among the agricultural workers, as it did in the Autumn of 1918 in the provinces.

The delegates of the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party declare that they agree to the wishes expressed by the Prime Minister, both with regard to foreign and home policy, and give assurance of fulfilment on their part. They will do this all the more as all these interests, which are bound up with the restoration of the good repute of Hungary, with its inner consolidation and economic revival, are also the interests of the Hungarian Social Democratic Workers.

They nominate on their part a delegate who constantly maintains connection with the Foreign Ministry.

Finally they undertake to get these interests and opinions adopted by the mass of the membership of the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party and throughout its organisations.<sup>1</sup>

Budapest, December 22, 1921.

Both the rumours of the existence of the Agreement and its eventual publication led to very serious differences of opinion in the Hungarian Party. So high did feelings run, and so sharp were the attacks of the Opposition in

<sup>1</sup> There follow the formal certification and signatures on behalf of "His Hungarian Majesty's Government," COUNT BETHLEN (Prime Minister), M.M. KLEBELSBERG (Interior), TOMCSANYI (Justice), HEGYESHALMY (Commerce), BERNOLAK (Health), on behalf of the "Social-Democratic Working Class," M.M. PEYER, FARKAS, MIÁKITS, POPPER, and BENCÁ (Secretary).

the Party on the present leadership that a split seemed inevitable. Members of the Opposition were expelled by the Executive for their criticisms.

To meet this grave situation the Labour and Socialist International appointed a special Commission at its meetings in Brussels last January. This Commission met in Vienna on January 26. Mr. Tom Shaw and M. de Brouckere represented the Executive of the L.S.I., Karl Kautsky represented the Hungarian Party Executive, and Otto Bauer (Austria) the Hungarian Opposition and *émigré* groups.

Reliable Press reports stated that the Commission had censured the Hungarian Party leaders for concluding the agreement while noting that it was made under pressure.<sup>1</sup>

However, the official report published by the Labour and Socialist International contained the following entirely contrary statements:—

“It was not the duty of the Commission to judge whether the Party acted rightly or wrongly in deciding to place the workers’ interests in the recovery of freedom of action before political and moral considerations . . . One thing is certain, however, and that is that the Party Executive acted *bona fide* . . .

“Nevertheless, one can understand that the conclusion of a Pact so thoroughly in contradiction in its contents and form to all the traditions of the international Labour movement would cause opposition in the Party . . .”

“The Commission however, emphatically called upon the Hungarian comrades to avoid anything that could injure the unity of the Party.”

These declarations were accepted by all the parties concerned, the Opposition and the *émigré* groups reserving the right to criticise the Party Executive “impersonally, without bitterness, and in such a way as to avoid endangering unity.”

The publication of the agreement in *Nepszava* was taken as showing that the Party Executive considered the agreement at an end.

It is interesting to note that the chief palliating circumstances, in the eyes of the Commission, was that the conclusion of the agreement secured the release of thousands of working-class victims of the Horthy White Terror, so bringing about a considerable “strengthening” of the Hungarian Labour Movement.

Yet Clause 6 of the agreement specifically limited the amnesty to political prisoners convicted between October 31, 1918, and March 21, 1919 (*i.e.*, the period of the liberal Karolyi government. The Soviet government was set up on March 21, 1919). The agreement therefore could not benefit the many victims of the Horthy Terror *after* the overthrow of the Soviet government in the summer of 1919.

Moreover, the “general” amnesty of Christmas, 1921, was chiefly remarkable for the numbers of counter-revolutionary assassins pardoned.

<sup>1</sup> See *Manchester Guardian* Balkans correspondent (Vienna), January 30, 1925, and *Daily Herald* Budapest correspondent, February 3, 1925.



## THE CLASS WAR IN POLAND

## The Lantzutzky Case

**T**HE White Terror continues unabated, in view of the steadily rising discontent of the workers and peasants. The prisons are filled with workers who have taken part in strikes or even demonstrations ; while even more ruthless "justice" is meted out to the national minorities, whose strivings towards freedom are met by mass arrests, pogroms organised by the military, and forcible ejection from their peasant holdings. The cost of living has risen nearly 50 per cent. since last summer, and the returns—which are very incomplete—show 170,000 unemployed. The economic position of the workers and peasants is desperate, and strikes and demonstrations grow in number in spite of merciless police measures.

The case on which the attention of the workers is now concentrated is that of Lantzutzky, which has already attained international importance.

Lantzutzky is a railwayman, of Przemysl, Eastern Galicia. For many years he was a member of the Polish Socialist Party ; but the part played by this Party after the setting up of the Polish State, and especially its activities during the war with Russia, opened his eyes. Early in 1921 Lantzutzky, who had entered the Polish Seim as a member of the Polish Socialist Party, broke his connection with that Party and declared himself a Communist.

Lantzutzky was at that time the only Communist member in the Seim. He fully realised the responsibility of his position, and his speeches inside and outside the Seim were definite and courageous, and he rapidly became more and more influential among the workers.

At the following election a Ukrainian member, Krulekovsky, joined Lantzutzky in the Seim. Both were persecuted ; they were always followed by gangs of spies and agents-provocateurs, their speeches were distorted in the Press. Nevertheless, their influence became steadily greater, and they drew more and more active support from the masses. Even in the Seim their influence was felt, and four more of the Ukrainian members joined the Communist fraction.

Therefore, at the end of 1924, the reactionary Government decided to break up the Communist fraction. On December 20 Lantzutzky was arrested, and an outcry was raised against Krulikovsky and the four Ukrainian deputies.

This attack, however, met with an immediate reply from the working masses, there was a gigantic demonstration in Warsaw ; in Dombrow, Lodz, Drochobysch and Belostok thousands took part in meetings addressed by the Communist deputies ; protest meetings took place in every part of the country. In the face of this agitation, the Government did not dare to extend its attack to the other Communist deputies ; but Lantzutzky is still in prison, and is shortly to be put on trial for his life.

## THE CHARGE AGAINST LANTZUTZKY

In Poland there are now three Criminal Codes enforced :—

- (1) In the area formerly part of the Tsarist empire—the Russian Criminal Code of 1903.
- (2) In the area formerly included in the German empire—the Hohenzollern Criminal Code of 1871.

- (3) In the area formerly included in the Austrian empire—the Franz Joseph Criminal Code of January 1, 1852.

The charge against Lantutzky is based on this third Code, as the offence with which he is charged took place at Przemysl, formerly in Austrian territory.

The offence was as follows :—

At a meeting of the Przemysl local section of the Railwaymen's Union on November 11, Lantutzky was criticising the tactics of the Social Democratic Party. In the course of this criticism he cited extracts from an article written by Geluwka (a member of the Polish Socialist Party), which had been published in the semi-official paper *Droga* under the title "The Fear of Taking Power." The quotation ran—

We forget that among the groups of the Left in Poland there is one group which is not afraid of taking power. There is one group which is prepared to take power at any moment, and that they even have a plan and method of government prepared. Everyone will understand that I am here referring to the Communists. And moreover, when we look at Russia, we cannot deny that the Communists are in a position to administer a country. Every one must admit that they have proved themselves to be not bad administrators and psychologists, and every one must see that the economic and political situation in Russia is steadily improving.

On the ground of reading this article to the meeting, Lantutzky was charged with State treason. It is clear that the charge is absurd, inasmuch as Lantutzky merely quoted an already published article by a member of one of the Parties closely connected with the Government. The intention of the Government is evident from the fact that the charge is made under Section (B) of paragraphs 58 and 59 of the Austrian Criminal Code, which runs :—

Any person who takes any action directed to the violent overthrow of the existing form of government in the State is guilty of State treason. . . . In respect of this crime the penalty is death, for persons who carry out such action, persons who incite thereto, persons who lead, and all those directly concerned in such action.

Had the charge been brought under Section (c) of paragraph 59, which is directed against any "appeal for the forcible overthrow of the existing form of government," the penalty would be a long term of imprisonment.

It is also noteworthy that the Polish Seim unanimously (including the Socialist Party) accepted the Government's motion to withdraw Lantutzky's parliamentary immunity, although on the previous day the Seim had rejected the motion of a Commission to deprive of parliamentary immunity a former Finance Minister, who was held guilty of robbing the State Treasury of enormous sums.

#### THE RESPONSE OF THE WORKERS

From the time of his arrest protest meetings of workers have been held continuously in every town, and the case has attracted widespread support of the Communist Party of Poland, which has recently issued the following manifesto :—

*Appeal to the Workers of all Countries issued by the Communist Party of Poland.*

In the course of March the judicial comedy of Lantutzky's trial will take place. The bourgeoisie is determined to wreak vengeance on a proletarian fighter, because he would not work in the treacherous ranks of the Polish Socialist Party, because he remained firm in spite of the devastating terror carried on by the reaction, because he was loyal to the working class, and courageously showed the path of revolution to millions of workers and peasants. In the same way the foul Tsarist Government of Russia used to rid itself of proletarian fighters by sending the Bolshevik members of the Duma to exile in Siberia.

The trial of Comrade Lantutzky is a new act in the White Terror carried out by the bourgeoisie and the social traitors, it is a new repression on the Polish working masses. The Grabski Government, which is supported by the traitors of the Polish Socialist Party, is determined to close the mouths of the defenders of the working class, so that their words may no longer reach the ears of the workers and peasants who are being kept in slavery, of the Ukrainian and White Russian working masses who are suffering ceaseless persecution by the police. The bourgeoisie is determined to prove to its masters—the foreign bankers—that it can with impunity pour out proletarian blood, with which the Polish government is to pay for the foreign loans and the arms given it by the international robbers.

The towns of Poland are crawling with spies and *agents provocateurs*, the prisons are filled to overflowing with workers and peasants. The official clique in the Seim is striving to destroy the Communist fraction and to discredit Comrade Krulekowski (another Communist member of the Seim) by scandalous accusations.

The bourgeoisie knows that the masses are beginning to lose patience, that the union of workers and peasants is growing stronger day by day, and that the revolutionary forces are steadily growing. Because of this the whips of the police are more mercilessly wielded on the masses, and the bourgeoisie and socialist traitors become daily more brutal and unashamed.

The Lantutzky trial is the signal for renewed and more bitter attacks on the working class. Protest with all your revolutionary passion, with all your revolutionary determination, against the devastating terror of the bourgeoisie, against the betrayal by the Social Democrats. Demand and secure Comrade Lantutzky's release! Demand and secure the release of all fighters for the revolution! Get together, and let your protests resound from your mines, from your factories and workshops!

Let the Polish bourgeoisie and social traitors know that the working class will not allow itself to be put into fetters, that it is striving for its liberation, and that it has now definitely set its hand to the task that lies before it as a class.

Down with the bloody farce of bourgeois courts! We demand the liberation of Comrade Lantutzky! Off with the fetters of reaction! Long live Soviet Poland!

*The Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Poland.*

Mass meetings are taking place throughout Poland on an unprecedented scale, and the attitude of the workers is shown in the following resolutions:—

Resolution adopted by a meeting of 2,000 miners at the Fininus Colliery, Upper Silesia: "This meeting expresses its complete solidarity with the fight made by the Communist Member of the Seim, and calls upon the whole working class to protest against the new acts of oppression perpetrated by the

bourgeoisie on the workers, as well as against the devastating White Terror in Poland. Shame on the betrayers of the working class who can only get elected to the Seim by being double-faced at the elections and by supporting the interests of the capitalists."

Resolution adopted at a mass meeting of workers at Samostje: "This meeting of workers of Samostje raises its voice in protest against the shameful reprisals carried out by the reaction, which aims at depriving the workers of their representatives in the Seim. We unanimously express our solidarity with the activities of the Communist Fraction in the Seim, which in spite of all police persecution has throughout stood firm for the interests of the working class."

# BOOK REVIEWS

## A STUDY OF DRAMATIC ART IN THE WORKERS' REPUBLIC

*The New Theatre and Cinema of Soviet Russia.* By Huntly Carter.  
(Chapman & Dodd.)

IN no single branch of artistic development is England so isolated as that of the theatre. From time to time we import some innovation, look at it curiously, and then go back to our old ways. We create absolutely nothing new. Our most popular playwright to-day, Sir James Barrie, was writing in exactly the same way five-and-twenty years ago; our most successful producer, Mr. Basil Dean, studied under Sir Herbert Tree, and carries on the old Tree tradition.

The revelation, therefore, of what is taking place in the Russian theatre to-day, is far more difficult for us to understand in London, than it would be for theatregoers in Berlin or Vienna. The change and development, though tremendously affected by the Revolution, did not synchronise with it. Meierhold, the most outstanding figure in the world of the theatre to-day, had been experimenting with his ideas long before the events of 1917 gave him a more plastic world to work in. It was a world too in which there was a new enthusiasm for the theatre. The workers welcomed it as a means of self-expression, and the government fostered it as a powerful means of propaganda. In 1914 there were 210 theatres in Russia. In 1920, counting active village and factory organisations, there were 6,000 stages in Russia.

From Meierhold there are gradations to the left and right, there are those who think he goes too far and those who think he does not go far enough. Mr. Huntly Carter's monumental book is a mine of information about the activities of these groups. He gives us a bewildering array of names and numbers, tells us where they function, what they produce, and how they do it. All the externals of the Russian theatre he has docketed and pigeon-holed, named and catalogued. Yet he has never quite given any satisfactory explanation that links the idea with the method.

Take the case of Meierhold. His aim, we are told, is to find "the best means of converting the spectator into the creative author in such a way that he experiences all that the creative author has experienced." But the link that connects this idea with Meierhold's method is missing. He seeks, we are told, to put the *spirit* of life on the stage, and production therefore should be "simple, highly concentrated and abstract." The spirit of to-day, he believes to be the Machine Spirit. "Society is a moral machine, the actor is an essential part of the machine, with movements to correspond." But how this is expressed by ladders and levels, bare walls and spirals, actors that are disciplined and uniformed like an army, is not here explained.

The new theatre of Russia aims at emphasising a collective personality, rather than an individualistic one, at expressing masses not men. Tchekov's studies of introspective individuals are out of fashion. The worker, the trader and the peasant of the new theatre do not represent any particular person

whose character interested the author, but represent their class or their profession.

With this simplification goes an attempt to break down the barrier between the audience and the actor. Reinhardt had tried this, but in England the influence of the Gordon Craig school had been in the other direction. They sought to make the actor more remote, masking him, robbing him of personality, so that he should seem isolated, a creature of a different birth.

The literary theatrical tradition has for the moment partly broken down in Russia. The new school of producers will take any liberty they choose with the text, and are more concerned with the action and emotional sweep of the drama than with the dialogue. This, however, is possibly only a phase of development, at an era when plays suitable to the temper of the new audience are hard to come by, and at a time when quick methods are imperative if they are to find enough material to keep the theatres open. The lack of sympathetic plays also accounts for the growth of theatres where improvisation replaces the written word, an amusing reversion to the *Comedia delle Arte*.

After reading Mr. Huntly Carter's painstaking book, with its reflection of the multitudinous artistic activities of Bolshevick Russia, it is amusing to turn to the current Press description of the country as a land of bloodthirsty savages. But the book is only for the brave, for Mr. Carter's style is highly involved and extremely uninviting.

M. E.

#### THE TWILIGHT OF TROTSKY

*Lenin.* By Leon Trotsky. (Harrap. 7s. 6d.)

WHAT tragic gap separates the Trotsky of 1917 from the Trotsky of 1924 this book makes pitifully clear. True, in his foreword, Trotsky tells us—what is only too obvious—that it is not a complete work, but rather, "sketches, fragments, outlines" which may be used later by himself and others. But that would not matter. What does matter is the quality of the sketches. And their quality is such that one becomes embarrassed and uncomfortable.

For Trotsky, the great revolutionary, the brilliant organiser, the superb controversialist, shows himself here as a vain, garrulous tattler. It is the book of a sick and neurotic man, with only the rarest flash to remind us of the old Trotsky; a book of vague and rambling reminiscences of self-remembered trivial episodes, without form, without strength, without fire and shot through and through with an egotism which is pitiful to see in a great man. It is not a book on Lenin, but a book on Trotsky; the book of a sick man consoling himself by telling himself stories of his own great past; as pathetic a book as was ever unwisely given to the world.

Yet there is in its rambling gossip much of interest, especially in the earlier chapters telling of the old "Iskra" days when, for a short period, Lenin and Trotsky both worked in London.

The picture of their first meeting—certainly a historic event—in 1902 may serve as an example. Trotsky arrived in London in the early morning and took a cab to Lenin's home.

As far as I remember Nadezda Constantinovna opened the door for me. I had fetched her out of bed with my knocking, as one can imagine . . . Vladimir Ilyitch was still in bed and he greeted me with justifiable surprise. They gave me tea in the kitchen, I believe . . . then I took a long walk with Vladimir Ilyitch through London. He showed me Westminster Abbey (from the outside) and some other famous buildings . . .

And so on.

Just gossip. And, as you will note, pathetically feeble gossip of a man unsure of his memory. And yet—a little worth having.

And here is a later, a firmer and more dramatic picture. It is the morning after the capture of the Winter Palace, the first day of the Soviet power :—

Vladimir Ilyitch looked tired. He smiled and said, "The transition from the state of illegality—being driven in every direction—to power is too rough." "It makes one dizzy" he added in German, and made the sign of the Cross before his face. After this one more or less personal remark he went about the tasks of the day.

Such things as this you will find. And much, far too much, egotistic reminiscence as the tale rambles inconsequently, and at times almost incoherently, forward. But of serious contribution to our knowledge of Lenin or our knowledge of the history of the Revolution, nothing—or less than nothing—since all is written from memory, and from an admittedly inaccurate and hazy memory.

Let it rest there. It is a book perhaps to read, but a book certainly to forget. It is not good to look upon a strong man in the day of his sickness and mental weakness.

W. N. E.

### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Les Enchainements.* By Henri Barbusse. (Ernest Flammarion, Paris. Two volumes. 7fr. 50c. each.)
- A Pocket Handbook for County Councillors and Those Who Elect Them.* With a list of the administrative Counties and Summary of their powers and duties. By the Revd. Herbert Dunnico, J.P., M.P., C.C. (I.L.P. Publication Department. 6d.)
- Profiteering in Bread and How to Stop it.* Evidence given by E. F. Wise on behalf of the Independent Labour Party before the Royal Commission on Food Prices. (I.L.P. Publication Department. 1d.)
- Unemployment : Its Cause and Cure.* Mrs. Mary Citizen, John Citizen and Mr. Commonsense Discuss the Problem. By Thomas Dickson. (I.L.P. Publication Department. 2d.)
- Homes for Workers.* A Record of Labour's efforts for the Houseless of Mitcham by Councillors Jack Gayner and George Marrin. With a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. John Wheatley, M.P. (Mitcham Urban District Council Labour Group. 2d.)
- The League of Nations' Political Activities.* Information Section, League of Nations Secretariat. (Constable & Company. 5 cents.)
- India, America and World Brotherhood.* By Dr. J. T. Sunderland, M.A., D.D. (Ganesh & Company, Madras. Rs. 3.)
- A Works Council in Being.* An account of the Scheme in Operation at Bournville Works. Third (Revised) Edition. (Publication Department, Bournville Works. 6d.)
- The Labour Revolution.* By Karl Kautsky. Translated by H. J. Stenning. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

- The Marxian Economic Handbook and Glossary.* With Numerous Corrections, Explanations and Emendations of the English Version of Volume I of *Capital*. For the Use of Advanced Students and Beginners. By W. H. Emmett. (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.)
- Commercial Year-Book of the Soviet Union, 1925.* Compiled and Edited by Louis Segal, Ph.D., M.A., and A. A. Santalov, Graduate in Economic and Law of Moscow University. (Allen & Unwin. 6s.)
- The World's Industrial Parliament.* Being a short, popular account of the International Labour Organisation set up by the Covenant of the League of Nations. By E. M. Oliver, Oxford University Extension Lecturer. With a Foreword by Viscount Burnham. (Allen & Unwin.)
- Anglo-Russian Trade.* How it could be immediately increased by the Overseas Trade Acts and Trade Facilities Acts. By A. A. Purcell, Vice-President, Trades Union Congress, President, International Federation of Trade Unions. With a Preface by Fred Bramley, Secretary, Trades Union Congress. (Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee. 2d.)
- The Soap and Water Missionary.* A Tale of Inland China. By George Walter Shipway (Stockwell.)
- The King's Prerogative and Other Undelivered Addresses on the New Socialism.* By Theodore J. Faithful, late Major, Royal Army Veterinary Corps (S.R.); Principal of the Priory Gate School. With a Foreword by Prof. Frederick Soddy, F.R.S. (C. W. Daniel Company. 1s.)
- Real Wealth and Financial Poverty.* A Study of the present financial system as a monopoly of money and its relation to productive industry, social poverty, and economic war, from the point of view of the Douglas Credit Analysis. By Captain W. Adams, B.Sc. (Econ.), B.Com., A.L.A.A., F.I.S.A. (Cecil Palmer. 7s. 6d.)
- What's Wrong in the Carpenters' Union?* The Story of Administration, Corruption and Expulsion of Militants. (*Progressive Building Trade Worker*, Chicago. 10 cents.)
- The Class Struggle.* By R. Neft. (James Davies & Company, South Wales Press, Llanelly. 2d.)







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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - -	Page 257
<i>FACTS, PROTOCOLS, AND —?</i>	
Lord Curzon - - - - -	„ 270
<i>By KARL RADEK</i>	
The Failure of the <i>Daily Herald</i> - -	„ 275
<i>By "OUTPOST"</i>	
Sun Yat Sen's Life and Work - - -	„ 283
<i>By TANG CHIN CHE</i>	
The Labour Situation in Western Canada -	„ 288
<i>By SCOTT NEARING</i>	
The Roy Case : a Protest - - - -	„ 294
<i>By HENRI BARBUSSE</i>	
On the Road to Insurrection—VIII and IX	„ 296
<i>By V. I. LENIN</i>	
The World of Labour - - - - -	„ 304
Trade Union Unity—Germany—Italy	
Book Review - - - - -	„ 314
Trees and No Wood !	M.H.D.

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*A New Period—A "Strong" Government—Offensive Preparations—  
After Versailles—Countering Revolution—Weakness Otherwise—  
Genoa Failure—United States the Crux—Anglo-American  
Alliance—France and the Protocol—Labour in the Diplomatic  
Jungle—What is the Protocol?—The Fate of Pacifism—  
What is the Pact?—Lloyd George's Rôle—The Awaken-  
ing East—The Bloc of Revolt—Working-class Politics  
—Imperialism and War—War for What?—  
Anti-Imperialist United Front.*

**T**HE decisive turns in British Government policy, both abroad and at home, in the beginning of 1925 need careful examination. We are now at a turning-point of historical development comparable to the early years of the twentieth century. The old system of forces which found its expression in the Anglo-German war and the Versailles Treaty has exhausted itself and left only the wreckage. For a long period of vacillation and uncertainty everything has been thrown into the melting-pot. Now the forms of the new period are beginning to emerge. It is necessary to judge the dominant forces of the new period very carefully, if working-class policy is to be prepared. It is no use coming out with musty programmes of Hague Arbitration Pacts and Industrial Peace for Constructive Reform, when the bourgeoisie is preparing aggressive class action at home and abroad.

**T**HE present British Government is a "strong" government in the traditional sense of unconcealed attention to class interests without immediate fear of opposition, and of an active policy which can directly pursue definite objectives. It is the strongest government since Lloyd George, not so much by the character of its composition (though it represents a wider and more powerful coalition than any of the intervening coalitions), as in the stage of development of the situation at home and abroad which gives it its opportunity. The episode of the Labour Government has temporarily freed the situation at home

and headed off the Labour advance. The Dawes Report has freed the situation in Europe and offered hope of the reversal of the French hegemony. Two supreme objectives of British bourgeois policy since the war are now approaching fruition : the restoration of Germany in Europe, and the consequent rebuilding of British power in Europe on the basis of the traditional balance of power, and the restoration of the Gold Standard and consequent re-establishment of British financial power to meet American in the world sphere. The long and tortuous manœuvring of the intervening period to reach these goals is now within view of completion, and a direct course can be assumed. The expression of this increasing confidence is revealed in the preparations for war abroad, and the preparations at home for a direct attack on working-class standards in the name of the needs of the economic situation.

**T**HE Government is pursuing an aggressive class policy in every sphere. In foreign affairs Downing Street is at last confident enough to challenge directly the French hegemony in Europe and move openly in the direction of revising the Versailles Treaty (at the same time as, by an irony of fate, the Labour Party has let itself be manœuvred into the position of defending the sanctity of Versailles in union with French Nationalism against the British bourgeois attack). In Empire policy direct coercion against even the nominal "representative" institutions is being employed in Egypt and India, while aggressive action has been undertaken against the Turks through the Kurds. The economic objective of the Gold Standard is being powerfully forced forward in the face of isolated protests from home industrial interests. Finally in relation to the working class at home the elaborate psychological preparations for the offensive, expressed in Baldwin's speech, the motor-ships campaign, &c., have now reached a stage when the aim of bringing down standards to the German level is openly proclaimed in responsible quarters.

**W**HAT was the position after Versailles? It is necessary to go back to this in order to get the underlying straight line of British policy, which is obscured from view by current controversies about the "moral issue" of the Protocol, the "Reaction" of the present Government, &c. Versailles had registered apparent colossal gains for the British Empire. First the knock-out blow had apparently been successfully delivered to its German industrial and naval rival; second, the German shipping and principal colonies had been secured; third, the basis of a new Middle Eastern Empire had been laid. To secure these, considerable concessions had to be made to French military and industrial policy in Europe; but these concessions were made by the British representatives with the open intention of subsequent revision (General Smuts' statement on signing). On the other hand big dangers threatened. The first was the danger of the Revolution, first and foremost in the actual power of Soviet Russia, second in the blaze of revolt throughout the Empire, and third in the threatening revolutionary movement at home. This danger in its urgency overshadowed the others, which only became clearer with the development of events. These other dangers were constituted in: first, the rise of the United States as the strongest commercial and financial power, and of other industrial powers outside Europe; second, the menace of French hegemony in Europe, and the industrialisation of France, endeavouring to establish a Continental Trust; third, the economic situation of British industry in view of the shrinkage of markets and expansion of industrial powers.

**T**HIS was the situation which the Lloyd George Government had to face during its four years from 1919 to 1922. During the first three years the attention was principally concentrated on the revolutionary situation—Britain, Ireland, India, Egypt, Russia, the Middle East. In Britain a series of brilliant and unscrupulous manœuvres, which easily made game of the petty bourgeois liberal illusions of the working-class leadership and the helplessly scattered character of the revolutionary elements, first postponed, then parried the working-class attack, and finally took advantage of the economic depression to deal smashing blow after

blow against the whole working class. In the colonies the struggle was more severe ; but a combination of terrorism and diplomacy finally re-established an insecure British supremacy. Against Russia, whose leadership was better prepared for the nature of the attack and more realistic, all the repeated onslaughts were unsuccessful, and a truce had to be made in 1921.

**D**URING this time only secondary attention could be given to other questions. France was left practically a free hand in Europe, and the attempts of the British Government at modification, notably at Brussels, San Remo, and London, were not strongly sustained. The United States had its own way unchallenged in the Washington Conference ; the Japanese Alliance was forced to be abrogated, and the supremacy of the British Navy was written off without a battle. In the economic field the foundation of British policy was laid by the Cunliffe Committee ; but all the Reconstruction schemes vanished in smoke. This was probably the most fatal error of British Capitalism after the war, and revealed that it was already too old, and honeycombed with vested interests, to be able to reorganise parallel to its younger rivals.

**B**Y the end of 1921 the revolutionary situation could be regarded as liquidated, and the British Government could turn its main attention to the European problem. In 1922 came the supreme attempt of Cannes and Genoa, the most ambitious attempt of British policy since the war to remodel the international situation according to its desires. The essence of Genoa was that Britain endeavoured to bring Germany and Russia into play to counterbalance France ; from this point Anglo-French antagonism was open and extreme. France's answer to Genoa was Poincaré. In the Conference of Genoa a host of negotiations went forward, all pointing in the direction of the liquidation of the Versailles system. The Rapallo Treaty of Germany and Russia opened up a vast range of new possibilities. For a time it looked as if a turning-point in European history might be at hand. But Genoa failed. Britain was powerless to coerce France, and had not the courage to break with France. The last act of the Balfour Note on debts was a



gesture of anger without power. France held the dominant military position, and had only to refuse to budge to be immovable. For this same reason the British attempt to win Germany came to nothing ; and the attempt to lure Soviet Russia into the orbit of World Capital broke against the readiness of the Soviet representatives to face the consequences of economic isolation rather than submit. With the failure of Genoa British policy passed from the active to the passive. It only needed the culminating collapse of the Middle Eastern policy against Turkish Nationalism, and Lloyd George fell.

**W**HY did Genoa fail ? The most important reason why Genoa failed was that the United States refused to take part ; and the United States' refusal of the invitation was largely actuated by the inclusion of Soviet Russia in the negotiations. From this point British policy changed its course. Everything was set on the task of winning the United States. The ruinous burden of the debt was shouldered : a " nasty corner," as Baldwin declared on his return, speaking with some heat of America's unyielding insistence on its own terms, but necessary in a larger interest. A quarrel was picked with Soviet Russia, although in the face of Russian readiness and overwhelming opposition at home it was not carried through. For nearly two years from Genoa France was ascendant in Europe. British influence reached a low ebb. Even the occupation of the Ruhr could only produce barren legalist objections from the British Government. But meanwhile British statesman after statesman was busy in America. At length the time came when America for its own reasons was ready to act. American capital demanded further outlet. At the same time French success in the Ruhr and the German surrender opened the prospect of a dangerous Franco-German industrial combination. And in addition the prospect of the Revolution had arisen anew as a result of the Ruhr policy. Swift measures were taken. By the joint action of Anglo-American capital the Dawes Committee was forced on France in the hour of French victory, and a short " offensive on the franc " rapidly overcame French preliminary objections.

**T**HE new Anglo-American Alliance, which broke down the French ascendancy in 1924, was in its nature unstable. For America the Dawes Report meant the means of profitable investment in Europe with adequate guarantees. For Britain the Dawes Report meant the means of securing French evacuation and European stabilisation for the recovery of British trade. The expansion of German production, which was for America a primary objective, was in British eyes a menace to prevent. Thus the temporary combination on an immediate common goal was only a phase of the deeper underlying antagonism. On the other hand, for France the Dawes Report was a necessary evil, to be accepted under pressure, whose only value lay in the measure of external guarantee secured for French exactions from Germany ; and it became the supreme aim of French policy, while nominally accepting the Dawes Report, to maintain as far as possible unrelaxed the material hold on Germany and Europe through the military occupations and alliances. Thus the London Conference, which "settled" Europe, was immediately followed by renewed instability and the first form of expression of that instability was the issue of the Protocol versus the Pact.

**T**HE London Conference partly disappointed both Britain and France, and only fully satisfied America. Britain was disappointed that French evacuation was so incompletely and doubtfully secured. France was embittered at the compulsory retreat under the pressure of Anglo-American finance. French policy immediately endeavoured to recover its position, and found the means in the League of Nations. The expression of that attempt was the Protocol. With a sudden and disciplined unanimity the French Press, notoriously humanitarian and internationally minded, became enthusiastic over the League of Nations ; a most eloquent and distinguished delegation was sent ; and amid French plaudits the Protocol emerged. If the document itself had not made it clear, the circumstances of its origin should have abundantly revealed it, that the Protocol was for France simply a military guarantee of Versailles, a repetition of French attempts to make permanent its domination in Europe. In ordinary circum-

stances it would have received as short shrift from British Imperialism as the previous French attempts. But at this point arose the unfortunate episode of the Labour excursion into the diplomatic jungle.

“**L**ABOUR” diplomacy in Europe divides into two main stages (omitting the Soviet episodes which at each point were only forced by direct working-class pressure and were never confidently taken up). The first was the stage of the London Conference, the stage which had been prepared and intended for the Labour Government. The whole machinery of the Dawes Report had been set ready for the previous Government, and it only remained to touch the button, a task which was considered sufficiently fool-proof to leave the position “safe.” On the whole this went well ; although the bankers had to intervene rather clumsily from behind the scenes at one point to put right a slip by which MacDonald had unwittingly given away the main position to France. So far MacDonald received the praise of the bourgeoisie for his pains. But the second stage came with Geneva. Here MacDonald wished to put into operation his own liberal pacifist ideal of universal arbitration. This fitted in admirably with the designs of the French bourgeoisie. In an affecting scene MacDonald and Herriot found themselves at one. MacDonald wanted Arbitration. The French wanted Security. The result, under the agile manipulations of the French, was the Protocol. It does not require a long examination of that document to determine which side secured its objective.

**F**OR what is the Protocol ? The Protocol is in form a Treaty of Arbitration between certain States. But the arbitration that it permits is expressly only on the basis of the Treaties. Thus it is in fact a military guarantee of the whole Versailles system. It is no use to argue, as Henderson attempted to argue in the House of Commons debate, that revision might yet be possible by arbitration. For Article 3 of the Protocol specifically excludes from any possible arbitration “disputes which aim at revising treaties and international acts in force, or which seek to jeopardise the existing territorial integrity of the signatory States.” Thus the Labour Party, by support of the Protocol, is committed to the military maintenance of every detail of the Versailles system. The capitalist

Press is able mercilessly to admonish the Labour Party for its unwisdom in opposing any and every form of revision of Versailles

**S**O is revealed once again the ironic fate of every attempt of bourgeois pacifism : that, in so far as it keeps within the existing social system, it can only in practice serve one or another imperialism. MacDonald fell out of bondage for the moment to the British bourgeoisie only to fall into bondage to the French. The shirking of the revolutionary issue, which is admittedly a military issue in the final stage, does not mean peace ; it means only subjection to the military purposes of the bourgeoisie instead of to those of the working class. Of what interest is it to the British workers that they should be sent out to fight and die, as their leaders now tell them they should, in order to keep German workers in subjection to the Polish lords ? Or even more menacing (as the Executive meeting of the Second International showed) to take part in a counter-revolutionary bloc against the Soviet Union ? Yet this is what the Protocol means in fact. The sooner it is killed and buried by the whole working-class movement, the better : or otherwise they may find it revived against them at a moment and in a form that will not be welcome.

**B**UT what is the Pact that is proposed by the British Government in its place ? The Pact is simply the British version of the Protocol, just as the Protocol is the French version of the Pact. The issue of Pact and Protocol is simply the old Franco-British antagonism in its new form after the London Conference. In the Five-Power Pact Britain hopes to secure its predominance by the inclusion of Germany and Italy to balance France and Belgium, just as in the Protocol France saw the means to its predominance. Both Pact and Protocol are at bottom precisely the same system from the working-class point of view, the system of Military Guarantee to maintain the existing order. In both the workers are to be made the instruments and cannon fodder of the imperialists, and the only dispute is as to the form in which they are to be used. The interest of the workers is against both Pact and Protocol, and along a very different line of fight. What that is will be clear at once from a little closer examination of the circumstances of the Pact.

**T**HE Pact is in one sense a striking revival of the idea of Genoa—with an exception. It is once again the attempt to build a European bloc under British leadership, which will in effect replace and even revise the system of Versailles ; this time undertaken the more freely, because the French power of resistance has been so largely broken. The fundamental unity of the British line is even remarkably illustrated by the recurrent rôle at each decisive stage of the most active and dangerous leader of the British bourgeoisie (whose position is certainly not to be judged from the size of his party), Lloyd George. It was Lloyd George who initiated Genoa. In the second stage, the decisive negotiations for bringing in America and leading up to the Dawes Committee were not the act of Curzon, who only came in at a later point, but again of Lloyd George. And in the third stage to-day Chamberlain began with the old Conservative shibboleth of an Entente basis of guarantee, and had to be corrected from that position to the new possibilities ; and even then the clearest statement of the British line came so manifestly from Lloyd George that Chamberlain found it necessary (why should it be necessary ?) to disassociate himself from him. Thus there are certainly suggestive further incidents to confirm the general impression of a revival of the ideas of Genoa. But there is one exception to the similarity to Genoa, and that an important one. That exception is the exclusion of the Soviet Union.

**B**ETWEEN Genoa and the Pact there has taken place a further important development in addition to the relative weakening of France, and that is the strengthening of the Soviet Union. The economic consolidation of the Soviet Union, and the repulse of all attempted attacks, has been accompanied by the tremendous growth of the liberation movement throughout Asia and all the subject peoples who are the basis of modern imperialism. This is the additional new world factor. Abdel Krim in Morocco, without supplies and with a handful of men, has defeated the numerically overwhelming forces, money and munitions of Spanish imperialism, supported by French. In Egypt all the terrorism of the British has not been able to break, or even conceal, the popular will. In Palestine, the absolute united resistance of the Arabs has been demonstrated by the Balfour visit. In Turkey Kemal has main-

tained the hard-fought national independence against the repeated attempts of foreign capital both by external attack and internal intrigue. So the struggle goes on, under varying conditions, between the opposing forces, in Persia, in Afghanistan, in India, in country after country of the world outside the imperialist centres. But above all in China the greatest movement forward has been revealed; the British-American nominee, Wu Pei Fu, has been overthrown and defeated; the government has fallen for the time being into pro-Japanese hands; the national revolutionary forces that were represented by Sun Yat Sen have made vast strides, both in influence and in clearness of alignment; and a universal popular sentiment of sympathy with the Soviet Union and for the abrogation of the enslaving foreign treaties has shown itself in many incidents. Finally Japan—which occupies a halfway position: itself an imperialist power as vile as any, but in relation to the other imperialist powers occupying a half-outcast and excluded position—has become increasingly detached from the other imperialist powers since the Washington Treaty, and inclined for its own reasons more and more openly to throw in its lot with the Asiatic national movements.

**W**HEN against the background of this world situation there came the news of the Soviet-Japanese Treaty signed at Peking on January 21, 1925, an immediate alarm went through the imperialist Powers. They saw the possibility of the hundreds of millions of their victims in Asia, and the whole basis of their wealth and exploitation, escaping from their grasp. They conjured up a vision of a great bloc of Revolt, which would throw its force into the scales of world history, and those scales would no longer weigh in their favour as so long before. They even became filled with a panic that Germany might throw in its lot with this new bloc, and the small oligarchy of the ruling Powers would become revealed in their isolation. So with haste was pressed forward the conception of the Pact, that would take in Germany as an equal; the conception that Germany must be won, because Germany had an alternative. The Pact, like the Protocol is not only a bloc for the maintenance of the existing order. The Pact, like the Protocol, is an anti-Soviet bloc.

**B**UT this very fact should make clear beyond question the line of the working class. Neither Pact nor Protocol is the line of the working class; for both are simply alternative forms of imperialism and Counter-Revolution. The line of the working class is of necessity one with the cause of the peoples subject to Imperialism, the cause of revolt, the fight against the existing order. Just as clearly as the bourgeois line is with the Counter-Revolutionary Bloc, the Anti-Soviet Bloc, whether in the form of Protocol or Pact, so clearly is the working-class line with the Revolutionary Bloc, with the Soviet Union, with the peoples of the East and the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The Class Struggle is not simply a home phenomenon; it is an international phenomenon. This must be for us the decisive fact in all questions of "foreign policy." We do not wish to be entangled in imperialist pacts, alliances, protocols or Leagues, which make us line up with our own imperialists. Just as the bourgeoisie are able to set aside, or interrupt, their own deeplying antagonisms, Anglo-American, Franco-British and the rest, in a common front against the Revolution, so we must be able to set aside our differences. The cause of the working class and the subject peoples is one. In the last analysis there are only two camps, bourgeois and proletarian: and on the world scale the dispossessed peoples (whatever their internal social situation) are in the proletarian camp. Our aim must be the Anti-imperialist United Front.

**A**BOURGEOIS foreign policy can only have one of two results. Either it leads to a Counter-Revolutionary Bloc, in which the workers whose leaders have committed them to such a policy become the instruments of their imperialists against the Revolution. This is the only possible direct outcome of the League of Nations and similar experiments, if these do not simply dissolve under the pressure of inner bourgeois differences and become mere "pieces of justification" and arguments for drawing in neutrals in the next war. Or, if the revolutionary issue seems for the moment relaxed, then at once the internal imperialist differences come to the front, and any pact or alliance, however pacific in form, becomes simply a power-grouping for the next war. So the issue of Pact and Protocol reflects the Franco-British antagonism and behind this, even more fundamental, already discernible through

the temporary alliance, appear the forms of the Anglo-European Bloc on one side and the American Bloc on the other emerging as the supreme antagonism like the Triple Entente and Alliance in the early years of the twentieth century. Whether this antagonism may ripen so rapidly as to lead to war in the present generation ; or whether, as at present seems more likely, there may arise first a combined assault upon the Eastern nations, upon Japan, China and the Soviet Union : all this is still a matter of speculation. What is certain is that a bourgeois foreign policy can only lead to war ; and to be blind to this is to be blind to the actual preparations that are feverishly proceeding on every side.

**W**AR in the future is in any case certain and inevitable. To speak of peace while imperialism continues (and even while supporting imperialism) is a self-indulgent folly, which is likely to cost dear. It is no doubt easier, especially in a liberal movement which is not fond of realities, to express only the universal aspiration of peace and leave it at that. But to do so is to sacrifice to pleasant phrases the future of the working class, and to repeat the crime of the Second International before 1914. It is our duty to say that war in the future is certain (for the overthrow of imperialism also involves war). But what the working class can decide is on which side they shall fight. Will they fight for the imperialists or against ? Will they again be made the tools and victims of the imperialists, or will they fight to end imperialism and for the cause of the working class ? This is the decisive question in the issue of war. To answer it is not merely to register a decision for the future, but to determine policy and preparation for the present. And this leads straight to international working-class unity and the colonial alliance.

**T**HE whole foundations of Labour Policy need to be revised in the light of the existing world situation. For the colonial question, which is at the bottom of the issues of foreign policy, is also at the bottom of the economic situation. The implications of the sweated labour of the East for the conditions of the British workers are at last beginning to penetrate the slowly



moving perceptions of Labour politicians. The imperialism which seemed to offer such munificent rewards to a sane and patriotic Labour movement is a two-edged sword ; it can give, but it can also destroy. The most ardent visions of a national " British " form of Socialism, happily transfusing the Red Flag and the Union Jack, vanish into thin air when it is realised that " British " capital is busily developing the exploitation of low-paid Continental and Asiatic labour in order from that (nationally) impregnable basis to undermine the economic foundations of the British working class. The Tariff Controversy is only a first crude guessing at the revolutionary change ; still hopelessly confused, for it still imagines that the problem is to " keep out " from happy Britain the cheap goods, and does not realise that the conditions of the British workers are inseparably bound up with the world market, and that the economic conditions of their isolated superiority are vanished for ever. But as these facts inevitably become more and more fully realised, the whole bias and outlook of the British movement will have to turn correspondingly. The first evidence of that new orientation is the campaign for International Trade Union Unity. And the second stage of that sane process will inevitably have to be the Anti-imperialist United Front.

R. P. D.

# LORD CURZON AND THE SOVIET UNION

By KARL RADEK

**W**HEN the late Lord Curzon in 1898, at the age of thirty-nine, achieved the ambition of his life and was appointed Viceroy of India, the highest dignity which the British Empire can confer, the fear of Russian Tsarist imperialism constituted for this representative of British imperialism the central point of his entire policy. To prevent Russia from penetrating into Asia was the dominating idea of Curzon. When he perceived that Tsarism had its hands full with its enemy in the Far East, he decided to undertake some risk. The expedition to Tibet (1903-1904) over the snowy passes of the Himalaya mountains was intended to show that Russia must not venture to oppose the will of English imperialism.

On November 18, 1905, Curzon left India after he had been defeated in the dispute with the military commander, Lord Kitchener. Overloaded with honours, he was buried, while still living, in a golden sarcophagus. His further stay in India was rendered impossible as Tsarist Russia was at that time so crushed in the Far East that she ceased to be a danger to English imperialism, and Lord Grey, then Foreign Minister, arrived at an agreement with Russia in all Asiatic affairs. Russia turned her front against Germany, who had become the most threatening rival of English imperialism. Russia was necessary as cannon fodder against Germany, and the anti-Russian policy of Lord Curzon had to be hidden away in the archives.

The political resurrection of Curzon did not take place until the year 1919, after the end of the world war, when once again England's relations with Russia occupied the central point

of English policy. Curzon, who had now become Foreign Minister, seems not to have opposed the change of policy which Lloyd George made after the defeat of Denikin and Koltchak. England did not carry on intervention with all her forces. This was prevented not only by the profound social crisis through which England was then passing, but also by the commencement of the struggle with France for hegemony. Besides this another thing had to be taken into consideration: if the White Guards had succeeded with the help of the Entente in defeating the Soviet Power, then they would have been compelled to submit to the Allies the old treaties concerning Turkey and Persia. In 1919 Curzon took advantage of the weakness of Russia at that time in order to grab Persia. The English were also masters in Constantinople. This state of affairs would have become impossible in the event of a victory by the Whites.

But even if the Whites in order to maintain power had capitulated to England, there existed not the least doubt that in the future a White Russia would have had to direct its efforts in the direction of the weakest States, that is, towards the East. "In Russia the Whites and the Reds are fighting. This is not enough. It would still be necessary to arm the Greens," said one of the English agents after his return from the Baltic area. England required before all that the civil war in Russia should drag on as long as possible. The longer it lasted the more weak and shattered must Russia have emerged from it.

When Soviet Russia was victorious one had to be reconciled with her. Lord Curzon made no objections when Lloyd George sought to obtain raw materials from Russia in order to free England from her dependence on America, for he believed that Russia had been sufficiently weakened and that she would not be able to exercise an influence upon the development of Asia. He also hoped that the famine which had broken out in 1921 would compel Soviet Russia to capitulate to England.

But when, at the Genoa Conference, Russia did not capitulate, when she began to recover and to become the centre of the liberation movement in the East, the old hatred which Curzon had cherished against Tsarist Russia broke out against the new workers and peasants' Russia with redoubled force. But

Lloyd George, who kept a tight control over foreign policy, did not give him full liberty of action. The hate against this "plebeian," the rage of Lord Curzon that during the conferences in Cannes and Genoa he was compelled to be "ill" assumed hysterical forms. Lloyd George was abandoned by the Conservatives.

Curzon finally obtained complete control of foreign policy. He concluded the peace with Turkey in order to divide the revolution of the East from the Russian revolution. He allowed the French to enter the Ruhr Area in order that he might have a free hand; then he sent an ultimatum to Soviet Russia. The man whose agents had surrounded the Soviet Union on all sides and organised all the hostile forces against it, decided to demand from Russia that she abandon propaganda in the East. He decided to humiliate her at all costs in order to show the peoples in the East that it was enough merely to raise the whip and the unruly "rabble"—the Russian workers and peasants—would sink on their knees; if they did not sink on their knees, then he, Curzon, would show the Soviet Union that he was not to be trifled with, that he would unleash his dogs against it. Here was to be seen his entire shallowness, his complete incapacity to understand any forces other than hard cash and bayonets.

The Government of the Soviet Union made every concession which was possible, but did not surrender. And then Curzon had to undergo the experience of seeing the leading circles of English industry raising a protest against his insane policy. The chairman of the industrial group in the English House of Commons called the leader of the Labour Party, Henderson, to him and declared to him that he would not permit a breach with the Soviet Union, and that Curzon would have to be content with the sum which the Soviet government had paid to the "insulted" English spy, as well as with the repetition of the promise not to carry on propaganda. Thus Curzon failed to bring about a breach with the Soviet Union.

His Turkish policy ended likewise in a defeat. Turkey, who was compelled, owing to the relation of forces, to agree to the negotiations of Lausanne, did not reconcile herself with English imperialism which is threatening her existence. In Afghanistan,

Curzon failed to drive the Soviet Union from the positions she had taken up. In the Far East the position of the Soviet Union is becoming stronger every day.

When, after nine months of the Government of the Labour Party, the Conservatives again came to power, Curzon was not given the position of Foreign Minister. He was again buried in the Upper House. He no longer had any influence upon the course of foreign policy. His star was finally eclipsed. The representative of the English aristocracy, the representative of the brute force and of the romance of imperialism, the boundlessly self-satisfied and conceited Curzon, was not capable of grasping the whole complication of the situation of the British world empire, which had lost its strength not as a result of the agitation of this or that power, but owing to the fact that the United States of America has become the leading industrial power, that the peoples of the East, who were at one time the dumb slaves of the British world empire, have awoken, and wish to live and to develop, that the Russian people, in the shape of the Soviet Union, is developing its forces, that finally, the conditions of modern warfare have destroyed the advantages due to the insular position of England. The puffed-up lord who thought that it sufficed to raise the English whip and the people would tremble, was an old fogey who did not understand the world and whom the world had ceased to understand.

Even at his grave side one cannot say that he embodied the greatness of British imperialism. The greatness of British imperialism lies in that period when it was the driving force of capitalist development. Curzon entered the arena of history at a time when British imperialism had become a hindrance even for the bourgeois development in the East. Curzon only embodied the soulless force whereby British imperialism wishes to save its rule. This force was directed against the people of the East and against the Russian people. He hated Russia, even quite independent of the class which was ruling in it. He hated the Russian people in general because of that rôle which it was called upon to play in the awakening of Asia, this selected object of English exploitation. In addition to the hate he had for the Russian workers, he also had the profoundest contempt for them:

he could not understand how the workers could even think of venturing to compete with him, Lord Curzon of Kedleston. The Russian workers had the same attitude towards him. They could not understand how the representative of a world which has outlived its time could venture to hold up the stream of history. History will show that there was every reason for the contempt of the Russian workers, at a time when the attitude of Curzon towards them was only an expression of the haughtiness of the representative of the old world which has not understood that it is time for it to die.

# THE FAILURE OF THE "DAILY HERALD"

By "OUTPOST"

**G**EORGE LANSBURY has chosen, although somewhat gapologetically, for the title of his history of the *Daily Herald* the phrase, "The Miracle of Fleet Street," applied to that newspaper by the most brilliant of bourgeois journalists, Northcliffe. Beside that phrase let us set the remark of James Larkin, made on his return from imprisonment in America in 1923, to a member of the *Daily Herald* staff—"Your paper has lost its soul." We can allow the bourgeois journalist his admiration of the "miracle" by which, from a printers' strike sheet, with no funds, a Labour Press organ has been developed, in open competition with the capitalist subsidised Press, and has reached a circulation which makes its advertising space a desirable commodity for the capitalist to purchase. But we are more concerned to find the reasons for the complaint of the old Labour fighter, and to test the truth of his statement that the *Daily Herald* has "lost its soul."

To a great body of the Labour movement, the *Daily Herald* has become a tradition. That tradition is present also to the minds of a large number of members of the capitalist class—it is the association of the *Daily Herald* with the preaching and leadership of revolt. The mention of its name still causes a purple flush to mantle the cheeks and brow of many a well-fed bourgeois, the while a goodly number of his class are cheerfully buying space for advertisements in the hated sheet. The organisations led by Messrs. MacDonald, Henderson, Clynes and Thomas are the owners of the paper—and every enlightened bourgeois now knows that these are the pacifiers, not the leaders, of revolt. But the tradition lives. From the militant sections of the Labour movement, disrespectful murmurings against what is regarded as an increasing weakness in the paper's editorial policy have been heard. A writer in a revolutionary contemporary has exercised his wit upon the official organ

by christening it the "Hearthrug Herald." Nevertheless, the tradition remains even in these quarters, in the form of the belief that the *Daily Herald* ought to be leading revolt. That is the rôle which the paper is expected to perform. And the complaint that it has "lost its soul" is in effect a statement that it has ceased to play this part.

The justice of this complaint can be tested by reference to the current columns of "Labour's Only Daily." We can content ourselves here with the reminder that, in the summer of 1922, when George Lansbury resigned the editorship, when the paper became the official organ of the Labour and Trade Union movements, and when "a real journalist" was appointed editor, "The New Daily Herald" was proclaimed to be "just as good as any other newspaper." "Just as good," in what sense? In the sense that "The New Daily Herald" was not to be "a propaganda sheet," but a newspaper giving "all the news." In experience, we readers of the *Daily Herald for its politics* have found this to mean that the working-class point of view has been hidden with a veil of respectability, "fairness," appeals to the "better nature" of the capitalist class, all the paraphernalia which serves to evade the cold fact of the class war—or the working-class point of view is thrust entirely into the background. One vomits at the newly coined catch-phrases, such as "Thoroughly Comfortable," as a substitute for capitalist class, "Things as They Are," as a substitute for capitalist system, not because of any affection for these old phrases, but because they indicate the desire to eliminate from the reader's mind all associations with the old phraseology which meant simply Class War, and, as its outcome, Revolution.

"The New Daily Herald" does not stand for Class War, nor even, primarily, for working-class propaganda. If it is not "just as good" as any capitalist daily, it is nothing. One imagines the voice of the Northcliffe-trained journalist, posturing to himself as a second Press Napoleon, complaining petulantly to his staff that the working-class point of view is "not news." Through the columns of the paper one sees his mind muddling about in the old-fashioned journalistic categories of "news," "politics," "propaganda"—



and his staff obediently dressing up "Labour's Only Daily" in headlines and gear designed to look as much like the *Daily Express* as possible.

What remains? In place of the benevolent, virile egoist, Lansbury, the flaccid, nerveless, spineless puppet synthesised in the Northcliffe laboratory. In place of Lansbury's Quixotic belligerence, trumpeting Love and Brotherhood and breathing slaughter in a magnificent riot of inconsistency, the cooing of a sucking-dove who offers "to organ-grinder and philosopher" the panacea of "faith." Faith in what? In one's fellow-men. And why? Because, as that writer once explained in a never-to-be-forgotten leading article, when Labour men and women assemble for an Albert Hall meeting they look just like any other (*i.e.*, middle-class) set of beings. "Just as good," in fact. That phrase gives the key to the situation. The claim to be "just as good" as any capitalist paper is the equivalent of Larkin's saying that the *Daily Herald* had "lost its soul."

That the old *Daily Herald* was "different" is clear from Lansbury's story. But, for all recruits to the working-class movement, there can be no richer source of guidance—and warning—than the files of the paper itself, for 1912-1913 in particular. There will always be an element of the comic in the history of that "miraculous" effort which produced the *Daily Herald*. And that element is embalmed in Lansbury's book, which itself reflects what one must, at the risk of being thought irreverent, call the intensely comic aspect of its writer. One cannot plough through the queer, rambling book—with its interrupted, inconsequent form, its intermixtures of Brotherhood and its revelations of good, sound political hate; its broadcasting of pats on the back to all, "official" and "unofficial," who ever had dealings with the *Daily Herald*, and its glimpses of jealousy and backstairs work among the Labour leaders—one cannot read all this without occasional gusts of laughter at the sublime absurdity of Lansbury the pacifist trying to subdue Lansbury the working-class fighter to a belief that he must be "loyal" to all these warring elements. But it was this absurdity which brought the element of tragedy into that great struggle to build up a militant working-class Press—for its present end *is* tragedy. Lansbury describes his own position as favouring

“unofficial” criticism, and, when the paper became “official,” his active part in shaping its policy ceased. We, in order to understand the failure of the *Daily Herald*, must examine closely the meaning of these distinctions between “unofficial” and “official.”

Lansbury says :—

“Those who helped in starting the *Daily Herald* desired above all things to have a paper free and independent of all control. We believed, and I believe still, that all such movements as ours need the stimulus which independent thought and expression alone can give. Officialism always dries up initiative and expression. By the grace and goodwill of tens of thousands of friends who for nearly eleven years have stood by us, we have been able to say exactly what we pleased . . .”

Here we have the conception of “unofficial” criticism as nothing more than “stimulus” to “official” activity. This is a wrong representation of the nature of the “unofficial” tendencies which were embodied in the critical attitude of the old *Daily Herald*, and, by implication, it misrepresents the movements which found expression in the pre-war pages of the paper. These categories of “official” and “unofficial” have served to mask the real nature of the antagonisms in the British Labour Movement. Our “unofficial” movements have partially represented the struggle of Bolshevism against Menshevism, of Maximalist policies against Minimalist, in the Socialist Movements abroad. Our Movements have usually been of an apparently spontaneous and disconnected kind, incoherent because inspired with no social theory such as Bolshevism, but they have nevertheless contained within them the germs of revolutionary movements *against* “official” or reformist policy. They should have grown into parties inspired by a revolutionary political philosophy which would overthrow the reign of Reformist Labour. To insist on treating them, therefore, as Lansbury does, as merely a kind of critical “stimulus,” is misleading in the highest degree. The history of the *Daily Herald* under Lansbury’s leadership shows the effect of this wrong attitude. Having failed to conceive the “unofficial” movements as expressing fundamental disagreement with “official” policy, as destined to oust the “official” or Reformist tendencies from the leadership of the Labour Movement, he came more and more to regard the

*Daily Herald* as simply the "open platform" for the expression of all kinds of views. Of February, 1914, he writes :—

. . . the Board of Directors . . . were only too anxious on occasion to boast that the *Daily Herald* was the only newspaper in the land which allowed writers to say what they pleased. This mixture of views was, of course, very entertaining. On the one hand, our editors were often engaged telling our readers what a futile business Parliament was, describing the House of Commons as a 'House of Pretence.' At the same time, others of us were advocating the return of Labour men to Parliament . . . I am certain that impartial people will agree that in spite of the bitterness and cynicism, and at times cruel satire of Dyson's cartoons, the paper made even in those far-away and hard-fought days a substantial contribution of value and worth to the Labour and Socialist Movement of our time.

Lansbury goes on to describe the "ghastly unreality about Parliament" which arose from the policy, supported by "Labour men like John Burns, W. Steadman, Ben Cooper, Sidney Webb, Harry Gosling, Will Crooks, and other," of co-operation in Parliament and local Government between the Labour and Liberal Parties. "Our small party," he says, "were the patient oxen yoked in double harness with Lloyd George and Asquith." And "all who did not follow the majority were, so far as those in authority could manage it, kept out of any participation in forming policy for the Movement." Lansbury's attitude, then, towards those who were "officially" leading the Labour movement in this manner, was that of "unofficial" criticism only as a sort of "stimulus." But this represented only one view as expressed in the pages of the paper. The Dyson cartoons with which his book is decorated, and many more which we find in the files of the paper, indicate another point of view, fundamentally opposed to Lansbury's. Dyson's cartoons are not merely a fierce and inspiring attack on capitalism, they are the clearest expression given at that time to the attack on Reformism, and on the "Labour" leaders who were busily yoking the workers to the wagon of the Liberal bourgeoisie—or rather, making sure that the workers, chafing at the yoke, should not break loose. The Syndicalist editor, Lapworth, with his splendid catch-phrase against Parliament, "The House of Pretence," was also giving expression to a positive tendency fundamentally opposed to Lansbury's. Ben Tillett, about that time, wrote in the paper that it was to express an "entirely revolutionary phase of British Labour." As a matter of

fact, the paper was groping, in a confused manner, towards revolutionary expression, but Lansbury, with his false view of the purpose of "unofficial" criticism, was thrusting it aside from its proper course. Thus the history of the paper up to the outbreak of war in August, 1914, is the history of a struggle between an effort to develop a revolutionary working-class policy—somewhat dimly understood, but positively opposed to the Reformism of the Parliamentary Labour Party—and a sort of political pacifism, as we may describe Lansbury's policy.

And the political pacifists won. For lack of a clear social philosophy, the revolutionary tendencies went to pieces entirely before the onrush of bourgeois war-ideology. Slowly the *Herald* rallied from the shock, emerged from the wild confusion of the first blast of the tempest—and was observed far out to sea on the waves of Reformist pacifism, setting its sails for the invisible shore of "Never Again," manned by a crew very different from that before the catastrophe. The giant figure of Lansbury still dominated the crew, but for conspicuous mates he had one Brailsford and one Gerald Gould. He was in fact, in pacifist company without a doubt, but of a somewhat equivocating disposition. However, it was a time when, for pacifists, the utmost ingenuity in argument was desirable. And, in this respect, Gerald Gould stood Lansbury in good stead. The *Herald*, accepting the fact of the war, must of necessity adopt some attitude towards it. It inclined, therefore, to the opinion that Britain's entry was inevitable and indeed justifiable—not that it voiced this view with the decisiveness which would have commended it to, say, the British Empire Union. It was more concerned with saying that war was, after all, wrong, and that the present one must be ended as soon as possible. There was no consideration of the question whether the best way of ending the war was not by the action of an armed working-class. Consequently, this problem not having been considered, when the Russian working-class suddenly propounded it in action, the attitude of the *Herald* was—pacifist. Lansbury's own description cannot be bettered. Of the March and November revolutions of 1917 he writes :—

## *The Failure of the "Daily Herald"* 281

At the *Herald* we welcomed both revolutions, hoping and praying it might lead to an ending of the war and the establishment of democratic government in Russia . . . We were not at the moment very much concerned as to whether Mensheviks or Bolsheviks would secure the upper hand ; we knew then, as we know now, the Russian masses are neither Communists nor Trade Unionists, but all responded to the call of the Bolsheviks, because Lenin and his colleagues pledged them peace, bread and the ownership of land. Consequently, the paper went out whole-heartedly in support of whichever revolutionary party secured power.

What else could the pacifist *Herald* do? But, while taking it for granted, let us note that Lansbury, in lumping together the Mensheviks, the party of class collaboration, and the Bolsheviks, the party of class war and working-class dictatorship, in the phrase "whichever *revolutionary* party," completely clinches the criticism that his attitude, in the conflict on the old *Daily Herald*, and in his more harmonious collaboration with pacifists on the war-time *Herald*, was an obstruction in the way of British revolutionary working-class tendencies.

From the war the *Daily Herald* passed to its third stage—still "unofficial," but now firmly in the hands of the pacifists. It is true that the militant tendency of the workers, the engineers' 40-hours strike in 1918, the miners' movement which was lost by Smillie in the Coal Commission in 1919, the railway strike of 1919, and the discontent in army camps, gave to the *Daily Herald* a militant tinge. It might still have become an organ of a revolutionary movement, uniting the fighting forces of the workers while the Reformist leaders were still struggling to keep their feet. It was still the "open platform." MacDonald was still under a cloud, sulking in corners and laying down the law to a small group of intelligentsia, but receiving small space or respect in the columns of the *Daily Herald*. Thomas, with long memories of its pre-war traditions, was still the paper's scarcely concealed enemy. But—the paper remained merely the "open platform," and the workers were thereby deprived of one of the most effective instruments for a positive lead for revolution against Reformism. Lansbury's fatal belief in the necessity for "loyalty" to the "whole Movement" (including, that is, Macdonald and Webb) reinforced now by the pacifism of Gerald Gould, had sealed the paper's doom. Gerald Gould could possibly not see the difference between a "plat-

form" and a weapon, but Lansbury had refused to avail himself of the latter. And although, when it was too late, when the workers were beaten down and dispirited by Black Friday and unemployment, Lansbury fought with all the vigour and tenacity which are his great glory to save the paper from passing into the hands of the "official" leaders, the failure is Lansbury's own. The paper was a potential revolutionary weapon; through his failure to analyse clearly the movement in which he works it became a "platform"; and from that it has degenerated to an "official organ."

This discussion is of the greater importance because Lansbury has again adventured into the Press. Once again, he raises the banner of "unofficial" criticism. Will he profit by the experience of the past? His new weekly is widely regarded as a movement towards the development of a coherent Left Wing in the Labour Movement. But this is impossible so long as Lansbury holds to this false conception of the antagonism within our Labour Movement, expressed in the terms "official" and "unofficial." His view implies that the "unofficial" critics, the Left Wing, must always remain subservient to the "official" element. His conception of the "whole Movement" prevents his taking the lead in the battle of Revolution against Reformism. This is already reflected in his new paper, with its harking back to the traditions and even the features of the old *Herald*, with no hint of a fresh contact with the active workers of factory, railway and mine.

The revolutionary working-class Press of the future must, then, be built on new foundations. It must be the proclaimed and the proclaimer of class war and Revolution. Its break must be, not only with the traditions of the capitalist Press, but with those of the Reformist Labour Press. The need for such a departure is urgent, and the possibility of effort for its accomplishment perhaps not so remote as we are liable to think.

# SUN YAT SEN'S LIFE AND WORK

By TANG CHIN CHE

**S**UN YAT SEN, the son of a peasant, was born in 1862 in the province of Canton, where imperialism had its headquarters. At that time the revolutionary movement, begun in 1850 and led by Hung Shu Tzuen, was still active although somewhat abating. Hongkong had been under English rule for exactly twenty years. Growing up in such a period, revolutionary ideas were implanted in his mind even in childhood.

His revolutionary activity began in 1885, when China was forced to hand over Annam to the French. During that time he studied medicine first at Canton and then at Hongkong, later on practising as a doctor in Macao. During the whole of this time, however, he carried on revolutionary propaganda against Imperialism, mainly amongst students and soldiers, whom he formed into secret organisations. His plan was, first to overthrow the Monarchy and then to attack imperialism. In spite of severe measures against the revolutionaries on the part of the Manchu Emperor, he still continued his activity.

In 1895, at the end of the Chino-Japanese war, Sun Yat Sen organised the first insurrection in the town of Canton. The insurrection being suppressed, he was obliged to fly to Japan. He thought that the Chinese who were living in foreign countries would have a greater freedom of outlook ; he therefore travelled through various countries in order to spread propaganda among his fellow countrymen. He went from Japan to America, and from there arrived in London in 1896. Here he was imprisoned in the Chinese Embassy and the intention was to execute him. It was only owing to the protest of his former teacher from Hongkong, who happened to be in London at that time, that he was released. He travelled to various other European countries and then returned secretly, via the Malay Archipelago, to Hongkong, where he stayed in defiance of the law. As regards this journey, he stated later on

that amongst his fellow-countrymen abroad, he was generally regarded as a traitor and that he found but few followers.

In 1900 he, for the second time, led an insurrection in Canton. As this insurrection was also suppressed, he again undertook a propaganda journey through various countries. This time he was greeted with enthusiasm by his fellow-countrymen, wherever he went. He organised revolutionary associations. The first association was founded in Brussels in 1905, where he had found thirty partisans. The second group was formed in Berlin and consisted of twenty persons, the third in Paris (ten persons), the fourth in Tokio where he found hundreds of adherents. Since the formation of these associations he had found fellow-combatants not only in Canton but in all other provinces.

He then organised insurrections not only in South China but also in Central China. Finally he was forbidden to enter the whole of China and all foreign colonies in Eastern Asia ; neither was he allowed to return to Japan. Thus he had to spend years in America and Europe.

He was only able to return when, in 1911, the great revolution broke out in China and the republic was proclaimed ; he then obtained permission in London to re-enter the colonies. In January, 1912, he was elected first President of the republic. As however, Yuan Shi Kai, who had strong forces at his disposal, was anxious to become President, and Sun Yat Sen could not carry out his aims, he retired and left the Presidency to the former.

Sun Yat Sen's revolutionary association was now changed into the Kuomintang (People's Party). In a short time this party assumed enormous proportions. Counter-Revolutionary ex-officials of the monarchy of high rank all called themselves members of the Kuomintang. The President Yuan Shi Kai in 1913 accepted a big loan from the association of foreign bankers for the development of the country. In reality, however, he used the whole of the money for the suppression of the Kuomintang.

In the same year—1913—Sun Yat Sen was the leader of a revolution against Yuan Shi Kai, but this was suppressed and he was again obliged to flee to Japan. The Kuomintang was forbidden.

Sun Yat Sen now came to an understanding with a number



of reformist leaders of the Kuomintang, who did not, as he did, wish to discipline the party, and thereupon he formed another party under the name of the Chinese Party of Revolution. He stated that this was only to serve the purposes of revolution, that it was not an institution for persons who wanted to become high officials.

In 1915 he organised for the second time a revolution against Yuan Shi Kai with the result that the latter was overthrown. In 1920 he formed a government in South China against the regime of Tuan Che Jui in the North. At that time he hoped that Germany, Russia and China would form an alliance. In order to realise this plan, he had sent a representative to Germany. The attempt failed however.

Sun Yat Sen then for the first time made the organisation of the workers and peasants his chief task. He supported the great strike of workers in Hongkong and Macao. In 1922 his Government was overthrown by his former adherent, Chen Shu Ming, with the help of the English Government at Hongkong. Then, however, a great enthusiasm for Sun Yat Sen made headway among the people. They regarded him as the real leader of the Chinese people.

In 1923 he met the Russian representative Joffe in Shanghai. His relations with Soviet Russia date from that time.

In the winter of 1923 he formed another government in South China (Canton Government). He reorganised his party and, by general desire, it was again given the name of Kuomintang. He now concentrated his attention on the workers and peasants as the chief forces of revolution. He took the Communist party as his model.

Sun declared publicly :—

The only aim of the old members is to get rich and to obtain posts as high officials. They are not true revolutionaries. The workers and peasants alone are the real forces of revolution.

He then organised the "anti-Chihli block," in co-operation with Tuan Che Jui and Chang Tso Lin. From that time onwards his Government was exposed to constant attacks. The Canton merchants and Chen Shu Ming opposed him directly, the English and Wu Pei Fu indirectly. The anti-Chihli block

existed until Wu Pei Fu was defeated. Sun Yat Sen's struggle, however, continued. The tables were now turned ; Tuan Che Jui and the Japanese had become his chief opponents. Sun Yat Sen wanted to call a general Constituent assembly, Tuan Che Jui a " reconstruction conference." The Japanese called Sun Yat Sen a " dreamer " and supported Tuan Che Jui with loans. For they maintained that China could only be held together as an undivided state by a military dictatorship, and not by the people.

Tuan Che Jui seized the opportunity of Sun Yat Sen being seriously ill, to egg General Chen Shu Ming on to attack the Canton Government. For this reason a Japanese telegraph office announced his death long ago. The attack on Canton, however, failed ; Chen Shu Ming was completely defeated. Sun Yat Sen's disease was unfortunately incurable. On March 11 at 10.30 a.m. he had to give up his place in the fight. In his political will, he pledged the party to continue the fight against imperialism and militarism. In his farewell letter to the Russian Executive Committee he begged the Soviet Union to support the Chinese people in their fight for the revolution.

There had never before been a leader in Asia like Sun Yat Sen, who, from his youth upwards unto advanced age, had been an active pioneer of revolution. His will to revolution and his courage increased with every defeat. He was an unflinching pioneer. Most of his young adherents failed to follow him on his revolutionary path and dropped out somewhere on the way. When in 1912, Sun Yat Sen resigned the post of President, his only reason was that he alone of all the members of the Kuomintang wanted to fight against Yuan Shi Kai. Many of his partisans who had succeeded in obtaining secure posts, hindered him in his struggle. Sun Yat Sen always wanted to discipline his party, but his partisans only wanted to enlarge it ; it was a matter of indifference to them whether Counter-Revolutionaries or monarchists joined it.

The worst of it was that even many of his own disciples called him a dreamer. Quite at the end, many opposed his friendship to Russia. The circumstance that Sun Yat Sen at first concerned himself chiefly with intellectuals was responsible for this. But we know that, being a man of superior qualities, he recognised his

mistakes, and in his last years used all his power in organising the workers and peasants.

*SUN YAT SEN'S LAST MESSAGES*

*On the eve of his death Sun Yat Sen wrote his last message to the Kuomintang Party, in which he stated among other things :—*

“Forty years' work for the national revolution and for winning freedom and equal rights for China have brought me the firm conviction that China can only achieve its aim by mobilising the masses and by the closest collaboration with those peoples who consider us as equals.

“The fight for the completion of the revolution must be continued.

“The National Assembly must be convened and the demand put forward for the annulment of all treaties in which China is not treated as a party with equal rights.

“I call upon the Party to concentrate all efforts upon the speediest realisation of its aims.”

*He also addressed the following letter to the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics :—*

“DEAR COMRADES,—While I lie here in a malady against which men are powerless, my thoughts are turned towards you and towards the fates of my Party and my country.

“You are at the head of the union of free republics—that heritage left to the oppressed peoples of the world by the immortal Lenin. With the aid of that heritage the victims of imperialism will inevitably achieve emancipation from that international regime whose foundations have been rooted for ages in slavery, wars, and injustice.

“I leave behind me a Party which, as I always hoped, will be bound up with you in the historic work of the final liberation of China and other exploited countries from the yoke of imperialism. By the will of fate I must leave my work unfinished, and hand it over to those who, remaining faithful to the principles and teaching of the Party, will thereby be my true followers.

“Therefore I charge the Kuomintang to continue the work of the revolutionary nationalist movement, so that China, reduced by the imperialists to the position of a semi-colonial country, shall become free.

“With this object I have instructed the Party to be in constant contact with you. I firmly believe in the continuance of the support which you have hitherto accorded to my country.

“Taking my leave of you, dear comrades, I want to express the hope that the day will soon come when the U.S.S.R. will welcome a friend and ally in a mighty, free China, and that in the great struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world both those allies will go forward to victory hand in hand.

“With fraternal greetings,

“SUN YAT SEN.”

# THE LABOUR SITUATION IN WESTERN CANADA

By SCOTT NEARING

**D**URING the latter part of February I went from Winnipeg, across Saskatchewan and Alberta to Vancouver in British Columbia, stopping at some of the principal towns on the way. During this comparatively brief journey (it took less than two weeks) I talked with many of the leading Labour men and radicals in the Western Canadian provinces, and had a chance to see something of the way in which the people work and live.

Western Canada produces grain, timber and minerals. There is little manufacturing as yet. The people live a very primitive life—on the prairies the farmers have shacks, some of which are one-storey, two-room affairs, little better than dug-outs. There are, of course, many good farmhouses, but the bulk of them are meagre and the outbuildings are little better. The absence of trees on the prairie adds a sense of openness and desolation. Large numbers of the farmers leave their farm machinery in the fields because it is cheaper to let it rust than to build buildings for it. Many of the horses and cattle roam the prairies all winter. The farmers, during the last four or five years, have passed through a period of great economic difficulty, which has been accentuated by drought, lasting for five years in some districts, three or four years in others.

The city workers live very much better than the farmers. Their houses are bigger; their wages give them a standard of living far above that of their agricultural fellow-workers.

The collapse of wheat prices after 1920 and the in-coming of hard times led to a collapse in real estate values and to the suspension of new building operations.

Estimates of the percentage of farms mortgaged in the grain-growing provinces varies from 75 per cent. to 90 per cent. As the spring opens and buyers offer real money for land, many farmers are losing their properties. Mortgage interest is over-due and the mortgage companies foreclose when they find a new customer.

## *The Labour Situation in Western Canada 289*

How are such new customers to be secured? Through stimulated immigration! From Winnipeg to Vancouver farmers by the thousand are unable to meet their notes and interest payments. In every town that I visited there were numbers of men out of work, yet the Canadian Pacific Railroad and the Canadian Government are uniting in an effort to bring in more people.

Here is a sample of a poster prominently featured in a Canadian Pacific station :—

### *CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY*

#### *Order Your Farm Help Now for 1925*

To be of help to Western Canadian farmers and assist in meeting their needs in securing competent farm help, the Canadian Pacific Railway will continue its farm help service during 1925, and will include in this service, as last year, the securing of women domestics and boys.

Through experience in securing this farm help during the past two years, the Company is now in touch, through its widespread European organisation, with good farm labourers in Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, France, Holland, Switzerland and other countries, and can promptly fill applications from Canadian farmers for farm help. . . . The service is entirely free of charge.

Side by side with this is a bulletin signed by W. J. Egan, Deputy Minister, Department of Immigration and Colonisation, Ottawa :—

### *GOVERNMENT ASSISTED PASSAGES*

#### *Loans Without Interest*

Any British subject in Canada may nominate any British subject in Great Britain or Northern Ireland who will take up farming . . . or work as a farm labourer, in Canada. Full fares loaned without interest, repayable from one to three years. Free fares for children and juveniles under seventeen years of age, accompanying or coming to join parents or guardians.

In spite of the lowered standards of living, in spite of the farmers being driven from the farms by hard times, the owning class in Canada is very active in trying to bring in additional farmers and farm labourers who will work at lower rates.

As a contrast with this depression in agriculture and in building, there is great prosperity among the investors. Extensive bond issues have been made by Canadian municipalities and provinces. For example, Manitoba has just built a new State capital as pretentious as that of Pennsylvania. The province is sparsely settled

and poor. The reason for making so imposing a building lay largely in the desire for the flotation of a big bond issue. These provincial and municipal bonds are a first-class form of investment. They are being bought largely, both in Canada and in the United States. A number of schools have been closed because the districts cannot pay the interest on the loans that were issued to build new buildings. The bondholder, with his first claim on the productivity of the community, is well cared for. But the farmers and workers must produce enough to meet the interest charges despite the break in industrial standards and increased unemployment.

The economic pressure on workers and farmers has existed in Western Canada for four or five years, and it is now severe in both agricultural and industrial sections. Already this pressure has produced a type of militancy quite different from anything in the United States. It is the farmers to-day who are the aggressive group in Canada—the militants, the radicals.

There are two groups of farmers' organisations in Western Canada. One is a group of five parallel organisations which have been in existence for a number of years. They have made some attempts at co-operation in the purchasing of their fertilizers, &c., but they have never been truly co-operative. During the last few years there has been a heavy decline in their membership. The second group, typified by the movement of the Farmers' Union, is one of the most significant aspects of Canadian life. The Union has been operating only about two years and it already has secured a membership in the neighbourhood of 20,000. The Union Constitution contains a preamble in which it is asserted that "Modern industrial society is divided into two classes—those who possess and do not produce and those who produce. . . . Between these two classes a continuous struggle takes place. . . . In the struggle over the purchase and sale of farm produce, the buyers are always masters—the producers always workers. From this fact arises the inevitable class struggle." The farmers must organise to "fix their own price above the cost of production." This is made doubly necessary because all other groups in society are now organised and "the benefits derived by these organised labour unions and organised capitalists have been paid by the unorganised tillers of the soil." The constitution provides for affiliation with other farmers'

organisations in Canada and "throughout the world." The Farmers' Union movement has made considerable headway in Saskatchewan. A movement is now under way to consolidate the Union with the other groups of farmers' organisations. Such an amalgamation, however, involves an abandonment of the principles stated in the preamble. The officials at Union headquarters declare their intention of sticking to the class issue, but two things may alter their decision—first, the wheat pool, and second, the necessity for producers' organisations that go beyond the selling stage.

The wheat pool is a scheme by which the farmers sell their grain co-operatively. Each farmer who enters the pool agrees to sell his wheat through the pool for five years. This year about one-half of Canadian wheat is controlled through three pools and is sold by one selling agency.

Each year the farmer has been selling his wheat in the fall—consequently the market drops at harvest time. The pool adopted a selling policy to last over seven months. When wheat went up the pool did not speculate. The farmer is assured of a cash price, and also receives two additional dividends—one in March and one in June. By this method each farmer receives exactly the same price for the same grade of wheat. By selling in bulk the average of the whole market is secured by every farmer. It is a form of economic insurance. If the pool is low, all feel it, but it prevents one individual from getting squeezed.

I talked with a number of farmers. They have no illusions. They realise that if wheat stays up, acreage will increase, and that will ultimately decrease the price. So far, however, the farmers of Western Canada in three grain-provinces have one-half of the wheat in their own hands and are marketing it to their own advantage. This means a triumph. As the Union points out in its Constitution, ultimately the farmers will have to limit production, but the pool is an interesting demonstration of their capacity to organise and stick together.

Everywhere the farmers were saying : " We produce it all and get nothing." " We are the basis of Canadian prosperity, and look at us ! " " We are workers just like the other chaps, except that we get less." Canadian farmers are feeling sharp economic pressure, and on the whole they talk more radically than the industrial

and transport workers. It has been assumed in the United States that the farmers are incapable of co-operation and organisation. Canadian experience shows that farmers can work out a scheme of organisation on a large scale.

The organisations of the Canadian workers are in a state of typical chaos. There are five different groups of organised workers in Canada : (1) the American Federation of Labour, Trades and Labour Councils ; (2) the Railroad Brotherhoods ; (3) Canadian Brotherhoods of Railroad Employees (local to Canada) ; (4) the Industrial Workers of the World Movement in Vancouver (very strong), and the One Big Union, chiefly in Winnipeg ; (5) Union of Civil Employees. Both the I.W.W. and the O.B.U. are Syndicalist in character. Among these groups of the economic field there is comparatively little co-operation. The Railroad Brotherhood stand aloof from the A.F. of L. and independent of the Canadian Brotherhood ; the I.W.W. and O.B.U. are looked upon as " disrupters," and the Civil Employees are not permitted to affiliate with organised labour.

The Labour movement, however, shows certain signs of getting together. The Communist Party of Canada is very active in the Trade Union Movement. The sentiment among the workers is that Labour must unite. The Secretary of the Canadian Labour Party is an American Federation of Labour man, but the Canadian Labour Party presents a united front movement containing all elements and has a strong following among those who believe that the Canadian Labour development will follow the British precedent. During the last election in Vancouver a Communist was run on the Canadian Labour Party ticket. In one city the President of the Trades and Labour Council was also Secretary of the Canadian Labour Party. He was a Communist. Apparently no question was raised concerning his official activities. Economic pressure in Western Canada is reflecting itself in a political movement among the workers, and in active political and economic movements among the farmers. It is probably the most interesting social laboratory in North America.

The temper of the Western Canadian people differs entirely from that in the United States. In Western Canada the people are much more English ; they have a decided sense of self-respect, a sense of upstanding individualism.



The outstanding figures in the struggle are not liberals ; they are working people—farmers and mechanics, who are close to the soil and the bench. Western Canada does not have any large element of professional radicals. The leisured class is confined to a few cities—Montreal, Toronto, Quebec. The West is made up of working people, or of those who were working people within a generation. They make their fight as working people. Their meetings are different from those in the United States. People come to them in working clothes and are not ashamed of their overalls. It is not a dressed up radical movement, and that is one of its most encouraging aspects.

The attitude of these people is well illustrated by a man in Medicine Hat, who came to me after one of the meetings and said : “ The workers in the factories here are not organised. They do not think it worth while. They are always asking : ‘ When will the revolution come ? ’ They feel uncertain ; ill at ease ; they are expecting something to happen at almost any time.”

There is a prodigious interest in Russia. Whatever economic issue was up for discussion, four-fifths of the questions would be about Russia. When all is said and done, there is just one subject which is to them of vital concern, almost as important as their bread and butter. They wanted to know how the factories are being run in Russia, what is the standard of living, whether it is true that it has been raised recently, whether it is true that the people are hungry and cold. They want to know what is happening as the result of the Russian Revolution. They did not ask these questions facetiously, not once or twice, but a thousand times.

I have never been in a country where the old social order is in such disrepute. People actually feel that something is missing, and they want to know what to do next.

# THE ROY CASE : A PROTEST

By HENRI BARBUSSE

[*Last month THE LABOUR MONTHLY published an article—" Indian Political Exiles in France"—dealing with the expulsion from France of the well-known Indian revolutionary, Manabendra Nath Roy, who is familiar to our readers as a frequent contributor to these pages.*

*We print below a protest received from the " Pro-India Committee"—" Comité Pro-Hindou"—of Paris, signed by Henri Barbusse, the General Secretary of the Committee. This " Comité Pro-Hindou," which is of recent foundation, includes many of the most distinguished of French intellectuals, such as Professors A. Aulard, Victor Basch, P. Langevin, Charles Richet, Marcel Cohen, A. Debierne, MM. Leon Bazalgette, Jean Richard Bloch, Georges Duhamel, Pierre Hamp, Charles Vildrac, and Mme. Magdeleine Marx. It takes as its motto, " To make India and its people better known to the world." ]*

**T**HE *Comité Pro-Hindou* protests energetically against the expulsion, ordered by the French Government, of Manabendra Nath Roy, Indian Nationalist and revolutionary. It holds it to be inadmissible that a Government calling itself democratic, should consent to carry out such a measure of persecution on the demand of the British Government, against a man whose only reproach consists in his ardent endeavours to make his country free.

Manabendra Nath Roy, who is one of the most powerful militants in the Indian Nationalist Movement, and who has written several important books on this subject, was on the point of being expelled from Germany owing to the same injunctions of the British Government, which forbids him the right to live in British territory. Were he to return to India, he would be imprisoned,

perhaps executed. It is hard to believe that a man against whom, we repeat, no charge can be brought, save that of having made propaganda against the exploitation of his fellow-countrymen—that is to say, a crime of opinion—can be thus pursued across the world, from country to country, without being able to live in one place.

In any case, if these are the brutal and inexorable arguments that England employs to rid herself of those who denounce her imperialism, should a Government such as that of France become a partner in such iniquities ?

The *Comité Pro-Hindou* draws the attention of public opinion to these facts, and lays before it the grave question of the rights of peoples. Let all men among us, who still believe in the ideas of justice, liberty and freedom of the spirit, protest with us against this odious and savage strangling of a conscience !

It may perhaps be alleged that the reason for this expulsion lies in the political ideas of M. N. Roy, who is a Communist. But do not be deceived on this point ; this is not the reason which underlies the expulsion which M. Herriot has conceded to Mr. Chamberlain. Manifestly, it is the activity of the writer and propagandist in the cause of Indian freedom, who has consecrated himself since the age of fourteen years solely to the cause of the freedom of his country.

Yes or no, has our Government bound its hands to the imperial exigencies of Great Britain ? Yes or no, is France to remain open or closed to champions of popular liberties from abroad ? It is the right of asylum which is at stake. Is this great principle nothing more than an historic memory in France, in the face of international combinations ? This is the question that is asked with anxiety by all those who, directly or indirectly, sympathise with the sacred cause of oppressed peoples.

# On the Road to Insurrection—VIII

## MARXISM AND INSURRECTION

By V. I. LENIN

[TRANSLATION COPYRIGHT]

LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC  
LABOUR PARTY OF RUSSIA (BOLSHEVIK)

*(Written during the Democratic Conference)*

ONE of the worst ways of distorting Marxism, and one of those most frequently used to that effect by the leading "Socialist" parties is to represent by methods of opportunist logic preparation for insurrection, and the consideration of insurrection as an art<sup>1</sup> as "Blanquism" pure and simple.

The high priest of opportunism, Bernstein, has already acquired a shameful notoriety by accusing Marx of Blanquism, and no extant opportunist who shrieks "Blanquism!" refreshes or enriches his meagre ideas in any way.

Accuse the Marxists of Blanquism because they consider insurrection an art! Can truth be more disgustingly distorted since in calling insurrection an "art" Marx explains himself in the most precise and categorical manner on this question, he declares that one must *win* an initial victory and then go from success to success without interrupting for an instant the offensive against the enemy, by profiting from his disorder.

In order to be entirely victorious, insurrection must not depend on a conspiracy, or on a party but on a revolutionary class. That is the first point. Insurrection must depend on the revolutionary pressure of all the people. That is the second point. Insurrection must break out at the apogee of the rising revolution, that is at the

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<sup>1</sup> Lenin alludes throughout this letter to a passage in "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany" which is dealt with in detail in the preface to his pamphlet "Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power?"

moment when the activity of the vanguard of the people is greatest, when fluctuations among the enemy and *among the weak and indecisive friends of the revolution are strongest*. That is the third point. It is in bringing these three conditions to the consideration of the question of insurrection that Marxism differs from Blanquism.

But from the moment that these conditions arise, it would be a betrayal of Marxism and the revolution to refuse to consider insurrection as an art. In order to show that the present moment is exactly the one when, by the whole course of events, the party is obliged to recognise that insurrection is the order of the day, it will be best to employ the comparative method, to set side by side the days of July 3 and 4, and the days of September.

Of July 3 and 4 we may justifiably reason thus : it would be preferable to seize power, for if we refuse to do so that will not prevent our enemies from accusing us of sedition and treating us as rebels. But from this consideration one could not logically argue an obligation to seize power, for the objective conditions of the triumph of insurrection were lacking.

(1) We had not then on our side the class that is the advance guard of the revolution.

We had not then a majority among the workers and soldiers of the capitals. Now we have one in the Soviets of Petrograd and Moscow. This majority has been created by the events of July and August, by the repression of the Bolsheviks and by the experience of the Kornilov revolt.

(2) Revolutionary enthusiasm had not yet taken possession of the great mass of the people, now after Kornilov that is an accomplished fact. Events in the provinces, the seizing of power by the Soviets in a number of places prove it incontestably.

(3) There were not then those wide-spread political *fluctuations* among our enemies and among the irresolute petty bourgeoisie; now we are confronted by colossal fluctuations : our chief enemy, allied and world imperialism—for the "Allies" are at the head of world imperialism—fluctuates at this moment between war for final victory and a separate peace against Russia. Our petty bourgeois democrats, who have obviously lost the majority among the people, have fluctuated tremendously in holding aloof from the bloc—in other words the coalition with the Cadets.

(4) That is why on July 3 and 4, insurrection would have been a mistake ; neither physically nor politically should we have been able to retain power.

We should not have had the physical force for although Petrograd was from time to time in our hands, our workers and soldiers would not have been willing to fight and die for the possession of the town ; they were not then in their present state of exasperation, they were not boiling over with such a furious hatred against the Kerenskys, the Tseretellis and the Tchernovs ; they were not then tempered by persecutions directed against the Bolsheviks with the help of the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks.

Politically we should not have been able to retain power on July 3 and 4, for *before the Kornilov adventure*, the army and the provinces could and would have marched against Petrograd.

Now the situation is completely changed. We have on our side the majority of the working *class*, of the advance guard of the revolution, of the advance guard of the people, who alone can carry the masses with them.

We have on our side the *majority* of the people, for the resignation of Tchernov is only the clearest and plainest indication among a host of others that the Social Revolutionary bloc (or even the Social Revolutionaries left to themselves) will not give the land to the peasants. But it is here that the root cause of the essentially popular character of the revolution lies.

We have on our side the advantage of the position of our party which among the disordered fluctuations of imperialism and of the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary bloc, alone holds firmly to the path that it has traced out for itself.

We have *certain victory* on our side for the people are almost reduced to despair, and we alone have pointed out to them the real issue by demonstrating the importance of our attitude in the "Kornilov days" ; further we proposed a compromise with the members of the bloc, who refused our offer, but who none the less unceasingly continue to be torn asunder by their perpetual hesitations.

It would be a grave error to believe that our proposal of a compromise is not *yet* rejected, that the "Democratic Conference" may

*still* accept it. This compromise has been put forward by one party *qua* party to other parties ; it could not be put forward in any other way. These parties have rejected it. The Democratic Conference is only a conference and nothing more. It must not be forgotten that it does not represent the *majority* of the revolutionary people, the poorest section of the peasantry, exasperated by the policy of the present government. It is a conference of the minority of the people. This is an obvious truth that must not be lost sight of. We should be making a tremendous mistake, we should be sinking into most hopeless parliamentary imbecility if we behaved towards the Democratic Conference as we should towards parliament, for even if it proclaimed itself a parliament, and the sovereign parliament of the revolution, it could determine nothing for the supreme decision *does not depend on it*, but on the working class districts of Petrograd and Moscow.

All the objective conditions of success are present. We have on our side the exceptional advantages of a situation where our victory in the insurrection is the only thing which can put an end to the faltering inaction which maddens the people and which is a real torture to them ; again our victory in the insurrection is the only thing which will make the contrivance of a separate peace against the revolution break down, by means of an open proposal for peace which shall be more complete, more just, and *in favour* of the revolution.

Finally our party alone after gaining victory in the insurrection, will be able to save Petrograd. For if our offer of peace is rejected, and if we fail even to procure an armistice we shall become desperate "defensists", we shall put ourselves at the head of the military parties, we shall become the *most military party* of all, we shall conduct the war in a really revolutionary manner. We shall carry off all the bread and the boots of the capitalists. We shall leave them nothing but crumbs, we shall give them nothing but clogs. All the bread and boots will be needed for the front.

And then we shall be within reach of defending Petrograd victoriously. Russia has still immense material and moral resources for a truly revolutionary war. Further there are ninety-nine chances out of a hundred that the Germans will grant us at least an armistice. And, to obtain an armistice now is to vanquish the *whole world*.

Firmly convinced that the insurrection of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow is absolutely necessary to save the revolution and to defend Russia from the greed of the imperialists of the two Ententes who are ready to conclude a separate peace in order to divide her land, we must first of all, at the Conference adapt our tactics to the conditions of the rising insurrection and then prove that we accept not in words alone the dictum of Marx on the necessity of considering insurrection as an art.

We must, at the Conference, immediately proceed to the strengthening of the Bolshevik fraction, and for this, we must not seek quantity nor fear to leave the falterers in the camp of the falterers ; they will be more useful to the cause of the revolution there, than in the camp of the resolute and devoted fighters.

We must compose a short declaration, in which we strongly and sharply emphasize the inopportuneness of long discussions and all discussions in the abstract, the necessity for immediate action for the salvation of the revolution, the absolute necessity of a complete rupture with the bourgeoisie, the dismissal of all the members of the present government, a complete break with the Anglo-French imperialists who are preparing to partition Russia by means of a separate peace, and finally the necessity for the immediate handing over of all the power to the *revolutionary democracy led by the revolutionary proletariat*.<sup>2</sup>

In our declaration we must formulate, in a manner as brief as it is vigorous, this conclusion which will remain on our prospective programme ; peace to the peoples ; land to the peasants, confiscation of the scandalous profits of the capitalists, strong measures to curb these latter and to prevent them from continuing to disorganise production.

The briefer and more trenchant the declaration the better. It remains to emphasize again two important points, namely : The people are tortured, reduced to despair by the faltering and indecision of the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks ; we must break definitively with these parties, because they have betrayed the revolution. Secondly, by proposing immediate peace without annexation, by breaking with the allied imperialists and with all the

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<sup>2</sup> On September 22 Riazanov, in the name of the Bolshevik fraction, made a declaration in this sense at the Conference.



imperialists in general, we shall obtain at once either an armistice or the adoption of the defensive point of view by the revolutionary proletariat, under whose direction the revolutionary democracy will carry on a truly just and revolutionary war.

After having read this declaration, after having demanded a *decision* instead of idle words, *action* instead of written resolutions, we must delegate our fraction to the factories and barracks : its place is there, there lies the nerve centre, the salvation of the revolution, the power behind the Democratic Conference.

There, in ardent and impassioned speeches we must develop and expound our programme and thus formulate the question : either complete acceptance of this programme, or insurrection. There is no middle course. To wait is impossible. The revolution is in danger.

The question put thus, the whole of our fraction concentrated in the factories and barracks, *we shall be able to judge the moment when insurrection should be begun.*

And to treat the insurrection in the Marxist manner, in other words as an art, we must at the same time, without loss of a minute, organise a general staff for the insurrectionary *cadres*, distribute our forces, concentrate the trustworthy regiments on the most important points, invest the Alexandra Theatre, occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress, arrest the Grand General Staff and the Government, march against the officer-cadets and the "barbarian division."<sup>3</sup> Our *cadres* must be ready to sacrifice themselves to the last man rather than allow the enemy to penetrate into the centres of the town ; we must mobilise the armed workers, summon them to the greatest fight of all, occupy simultaneously the central telegraph office and telephone exchange, instal *our* insurrectionary staff at the central telephone exchange, get telephone connections with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points at which the attacking army displays itself, &c.

All this indeed is only approximate, but I have limited myself to proving that at the present moment, one cannot be faithful to Marxism, to the revolution, *without treating insurrection as an art.*

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<sup>3</sup> A division of Kornilov's Cossacks.

IX.—THE APPROACHING CATASTROPHE AND HOW TO AVERT IT<sup>1</sup>

(PUBLISHED AT THE END OF OCTOBER, 1917)

1.—*The Approaching Famine*

RUSSIA is menaced by an inevitable catastrophe. The disorganisation of railway transport is unbelievable and grows worse and worse. The train service is ceasing to function. Raw materials and coal for the factories are no longer being transported. Corn will soon cease to arrive. The capitalists sabotage production without abatement, in the hope that the catastrophe that they provoke will involve the burial of the republic, the failure of the democracy of the Soviets and of all the proletarian and peasant organisations in general, and will facilitate the return of the monarchy and the restoration of the omnipotence of the bourgeoisie and the large landed proprietors.

The menace of an unprecedented catastrophe, the threat of famine weighs upon Russia.<sup>2</sup> For a long time already this alarming situation has been a matter of comment throughout the Press. In an incredible number of resolutions adopted both by the different Parties and by the Soviets of workers', soldiers' and peasants deputies it is recognised that the catastrophe is inevitable, that it is imminent, that it is necessary to fight desperately against it, that the people must make "heroic efforts" to avert disaster, &c.

Everyone is speaking of it. Everyone recognises the danger. Everyone is passing resolutions.

And yet nothing is done, absolutely nothing.

Half a year of revolution has gone by. We are now within an ace of catastrophe. The stoppage is beginning to tell. How does it come about that in a country well supplied with cereals and raw materials and lacking manufactured goods, finished products and skilled workers, there arises especially at such a critical moment, a gigantic stoppage? Do we need further facts to demonstrate that, during six months of revolution, our democratic republic with its

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<sup>1</sup> The pamphlet was written in the first part of September, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> One knows that even the revolution of February had as its immediate cause, food supply difficulties.

plethora of Trade Unions, organisations and institutions of all sorts proudly styling themselves "revolutionary democratic" has taken no serious steps to meet disaster and famine? We are rushing to destruction; the war goes on and the disorganisation to which it gives rise in every branch of the national life spreads with ever-increasing rapidity.

And yet, only a little care and reflection are needed to convince us that means exist of combating disaster and famine; that these means are clear, simple, completely attainable and quite within the power of the people, and that if these means are not adopted it is only because their adoption would affect the huge profits of a handful of large landed proprietors and capitalists.

One would be hard put to it to find a single speech, a single newspaper article of no matter what complexion or a resolution of a single gathering or institution of any kind which does not clearly realise the fundamental and essential measure needed to avert disaster and famine. This measure is central inspection, registration, State regulation, reasonable redistribution of labour and the products of labour, the suppression of all waste, economy of the strength and labour of the people. To control, to inspect, to register—these are the ways to fight disaster and famine. No one denies this and everybody recognises it. And it is precisely what *is not being done* for fear of encroaching upon the unlimited power of the large landed proprietors and the capitalists, and upon their unlimited, unheard of and scandalous profits, profits resulting from the high cost of living and military supplies (who does not work directly or indirectly for the war?) profits of which everyone is aware, which everyone can calculate, and which everyone deplures.

And the State is doing absolutely nothing, however half-hearted, to institute control, inspection and registration.

*(To be continued)*

# The World of Labour

	PAGE
TRADE UNION UNITY: Anglo-Russian Negotiations .. .. .	304
Press Comments .. .. .	308
French C.G.T. Meeting .. .. .	309
GERMANY: Presidential Elections .. .. .	311
ITALY: Metalworkers' Strike .. .. .	312

## TRADE UNION UNITY

### Anglo-Russian Negotiations

A FURTHER stage in the movement towards international Trade Union unity has been marked by the conference in London on April 6, 7, and 8, 1925, between representatives of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and of the Russian Trade Unions. This step had been decided by the General Council at its meeting on February 25.

The Conference represented over 6,000,000 Russian Trade Unionists and over 5,000,000 British Trade Unionists.<sup>1</sup> The official text of the joint conclusions and the agreement arrived at by the Conference we reproduce in full herewith:—

#### THE JOINT DECLARATIONS

The delegates attending accepted, in their respective capacities, full representative responsibility and endeavoured by an informal conference to arrive at conclusions most likely to promote the principles of international unity.

After long and serious discussion and negotiation and an exchange of documents an agreement was reached to be recommended to the respective councils of the Russian and the British Trade Union Movements.

In arriving at these conclusions they were inspired by a fervent desire to promote national and international unity amongst the workers of all countries, and in the following declaration they place on record their joint opinions regarding the present

<sup>1</sup> The delegates attending the conference were as follows:—

*All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions:* M. TOMSKY, OLGA CHERNISHOVA, I. I. LEPSH, N. P. GLEBOV-AVILOV, V. M. MIKHAILOV, G. N. MELNICHANSKY (secretary), and V. Y. YAROTSKY (interpreter and expert adviser).

*British Trades Union Congress General Council:* A. B. SWALES, A. A. PURCELL, H. BOOTHMAN, J. W. BOWEN, G. HICKS, E. L. POULTON, W. THORNE, M.P., B. TILLET, JULIA VARLEY, R. B. WALKER, FRED BRAMLEY (secretary), and GEORGE YOUNG (interpreter and expert adviser).

Mr. SWALES, president of the British Trades Union Congress, presided.

international situation and the steps which must of necessity be taken in order to protect adequately working-class interests :—

## I

The Joint Conference affirms that national and international unity must be recognised as the first essential condition to enable the Trade Union Movement to defend effectively the present position of the workers against attack and to achieve the social and political aims of organised Labour, as set forth in the declarations made by the workers of many countries.

## II

The political situation in nearly every so-called civilised country is dominated by reaction, and in many countries the increased power of co-ordinated capitalist interests is evident. This is shown by the continued persecution of leading Trade Unionists, who in the exercise of class prejudice on the part of employing interests are suspected, persecuted, thrown into gaol, and even tortured by those in power.

## III

In the industrial and economic field the capitalists of all countries are forming their united front—a united front for the exploitation of workers all over the world. The workers in the meantime remain divided, and in some countries are formed into antagonistic groups. Instead of being employed in the task of defence against capitalist aggression they are plunged into bitter quarrels and dissensions.

## IV

In nearly every country, in consequence of the growing power of the capitalist class and the lack of unity among the workers, advantages gained in the direction of reduced hours of labour and increased wages have been lost. Where the eight-hour day has not been abolished it is imperilled. In many industries the hours of labour have once more reverted to nine, ten, or even more hours per day, and it is only in countries where the Trade Union Movement is strong that the standard in relation to hours is maintained.

## V

Through the economic paralysis of Europe caused by the world war, millions of workers are unemployed and with their families are being driven into the depths of despair, starvation, and degradation. Wages, never sufficient to maintain a decent standard of life for the workers, have been reduced by 20 per cent, 30 per cent., and in some cases over 40 per cent. The standard of living in many countries is now below pre-war level.

## VI

The hope of better times which existed among the workers shortly after the great world war, and which they were led by unscrupulous politicians to believe would be the result of their enormous sacrifices, has now disappeared and given place to despair. The pledges of politicians and the promises of capitalists during the war and directly after it have been cynically repudiated. The blind faith that inspired the workers to fight for respective Governments in the universal catastrophe in which millions of their class were killed and maimed has been shattered. After the greatest sacrifices and the severest sufferings, they are now faced with little prospect of a better life for the workers.

## VII

Already it would appear that a new war, more terrible, more monstrous than anything known hitherto, is being prepared. New weapons of destruction are being devised; the chemists and scientific thinkers of European countries are devoting their

knowledge and skill to the task of inventing new weapons of torture and destruction for use not only against the soldier but also against the civilian. In the meantime so-called disarmament conferences are merely encouraging dangerous illusions. They are being used to deceive the workers and lull them into a false state of security. But the capitalist politicians and the employing interests are no longer able to hide the fact that new armaments are being built up, greater than before and more deadly.

### VIII

There is but one power that can save mankind from being plunged into another universal catastrophe. There is but one power which can defend the workers of all countries against political and economic oppression and tyranny. There is but one power which can bring freedom, welfare, happiness and peace to the working class and to humanity. That power is the working class if well organised, properly disciplined, self-devoted, and determined to fight all who would oppose and prevent its complete emancipation. The working classes, if united nationally and internationally, would constitute an insuperable barrier to capitalist oppression and an unbreakable bond of peace and economic security. The workers are able to defeat all those who by their reactionary tendencies keep the workers divided. So long as the capitalist system continues there is danger of war. The merciless struggle for supremacy between the conflicting vested interests of competing groups of exploiters will, as in the past, eventually provoke a new crisis plunging the workers of the world into another disastrous war.

For the above reasons the British and Russian trade union representatives reaffirm the agreement made in Moscow between representatives of British and Russian organised labour to promote international goodwill amongst the workers as a means of more adequately safeguarding the interests of international peace.

#### *THE AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL*

As a result of the discussions at this London conference and of the agreement reached there, joint efforts, as provided in the procedure laid down in the British declarations, will be made to induce the Amsterdam International, in all goodwill, to agree to a free, unconditional, and immediate conference with representatives of the Russian Trade Union Movement.

We also jointly place on record our determination to maintain and weld closer the friendly relations of the British and Russian Trade Union Movements by taking such joint action as is provided for in the arrangements annexed herewith.

The representatives of the British and Russian Trade Union Movements herewith declare their intention to do what they can by joint means to bring about international unity. The need and importance of international unity is recognised by millions of organised workers throughout the world. Their co-operation in the task of removing racial prejudices, artificial barriers, and economic obstructions to their joint development is assured. Knowing that unity brings power we are convinced that the workers of all countries, joining hands across the frontiers, will work together to secure their emancipation.

The mottoes to be inscribed on our international banner must continue to be the following :—

“WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE !”

“LONG LIVE A WORLD-WIDE FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS !”

#### *PROPOSALS FOR MUTUAL AID*

To give effect to the proposals for joint action for the purpose of promoting international unity by the All-Russian Trade Union Council and the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress, the representatives attending this Conference made the following declarations :—

(1) It will be our aim to promote co-operation between the British Trades Union Congress General Council and the All-Russian Trade Union Council in every way that may be considered from time to time advisable, for the purpose of promoting international unity.

(2) For this purpose we agree that facilities should be provided for a free exchange of documents between the Trade Union Movements of Russia and Great Britain, including the collection of copies of Trade Union business documents showing the rules and regulations of British Unions, the system of State insurance and unemployment insurance, contributions and benefits, the keeping of Trade Union accounts, systems of local and district organisation, methods of appointing Trade Union officials, and other general information or special documents dealing with the structure of Trade Union machinery and the general policy of Trade Union organisation and control.

(3) To arrange for an exchange of memoranda on special subjects of mutual interest with a view to joint discussions regarding important principles such as may be from time to time considered necessary.

(4) As opportunities are provided a further extension of joint contacts may be devised for the purpose of developing the closest possible mutual aid between the two countries.

(5) For the purpose of dealing with any questions which may arise in connection with the objects outlined in previous paragraphs, and of dealing with special emergencies, a joint council representing the Russian and the British Trade Union Movements should be established consisting of the chairman and secretaries of both bodies, together with three members each of the All-Russian Trade Union Council and the British Trades Union Congress General Council.

(6) For the purpose of operating the joint machinery, the representatives of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions agree to create an International Committee of their Council corresponding to the International Committee of the British Trades Union Congress General Council.

The "agreement made in Moscow" which the above joint declaration reaffirms was contained in the following letter from Mr. Bramley to Tomsky.

Novo-Moskovskaia, Gostinitsa,

M. TOMSKY,

November 17, 1924

President, All-Russian Trade Union Congress.

DEAR COMRADE TOMSKY,

In reply to your letter, dated November 16, which you handed to me, I have to inform you that the British Delegation met this morning and directed me to reply to you as follows :—

- (1) The British Delegation desire to place on record their appreciation of the action taken by the Presidium of the Russian Trades Unions Congress for the purpose of promoting international unity in Trade Union organisation and action, and welcome the opportunity for consultation.
- (2) In recognition of our representative capacity and being responsible to the Trades Union Congress General Council as representing the All-British Trade Union Movement, we will convey the proposals submitted to us for the consideration and decision of our Council.
- (3) We declare our intention to move quickly with regard to the project and trust that the joint action of the Russian and British Trade Union organisations will stimulate the progress towards international Trade Union unity.

We are prepared to take the responsibility of agreement with the Russian Trade Union Movement, such agreement to make provision for the promotion of the following :—

- (1) To request the Amsterdam International to agree to a free and unconditional immediate conference with representatives of the Russian Trade Union Movement.
- (2) To secure for the Presidium of the Russian Movement and the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress, full power to act jointly for the purpose of promoting international unity.

With fraternal greetings and good will to yourself and your colleagues, on behalf of the British Delegation,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) FRED BRAMLEY.

### Press Comments

The comments of the capitalist Press on the negotiations and the joint declaration are instructive.

The *Times* (April 11, 1925) wrote :—

The decisions taken are of a character to mark a turning point in English trade union history if they receive the endorsement first of the General Council and later of the Trades Union Congress. The possibility that the General Council will withhold approval is clearly remote. The appeal then must be to the good sense of the Annual Conference. An agreement with the Russian and Communist Unions such as is in the process of arrangement and involving as it must an acute and possibly disruptive controversy in the International Federation of Trade Unions—means, in the final analysis, that the present leaders of English trade unionism are prepared to risk a quarrel with, and even alienation from, the orthodox unions which compose the Amsterdam International, &c.

The *Daily Chronicle* (April 8, 1925) declared that the General Council had been—

coquetting with an organisation whose real object is to destroy British trades unionism . . . it is interesting to observe how some of these trade union leaders are endeavouring to run the British organisation off its feet and to break away from the saner trade unionism of this country and the continent.

The only reason cited by the *Daily News* (April 11, 1925) against the joint agreement is that—

the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions is not what (in conference abroad) it pretends to be. It is notoriously a political appendage of the Russian Communist government . . . All that is aimed at ostensibly in the Anglo-Russian document could be secured and best secured through the Amsterdam organisation.

The *Weekly Dispatch* (April 12, 1925) said that :—

The British representatives . . . were easy victims of the Bolsheviks' wiles. It is ridiculous to suppose that the Trades Union Congress will accept their foolish decisions. The agreement . . . means an alliance with the "Red" Unions of Russia, the acceptance of the class war, &c. These aims are alien to the traditions and contrary to the principles of British trade unionism. The delegates had no authority from their five million members for whom they accepted "fully representative responsibility" to enter into any such pact . . . We are confident that the Trades Union Congress will refuse to be hoodwinked by smooth phrases and subtle manœuvres, and will emphatically repudiate the follies of their delegates who have been out-witted by Soviet diplomacy.



"Hatching Revolution" wrote the *Daily Telegraph* (April 11, 1925) as a title to its leading article, and in a further leader (April 13, 1925) it hoped that the General Council would have the courage to turn down its representatives decisively, and

not temporise with a dangerous situation . . . for the real and cardinal issue is perfectly simple. It is whether British Trade Unionism shall or shall not be Bolshevised. Those who signed this Report signed themselves Bolsheviks by the same act and in favour of concerted revolutionary action on Bolshevik lines. Trade Unionists, like other people, are known and judged by the company they keep.

The *Glasgow Herald* considered that the joint agreement—

is a document which will be read with astonishment and dismay in Socialist circles on the Continent.

The leading continental Social Democratic and Trade Union Press (e.g. the Berlin *Vorwärts* and the Paris *Le Peuple*) have refrained either from report or comment.

The decisions of the Joint Conference have been ratified by the General Council at its meeting on April 21.

### French C.G.T. Meeting

The questions of national and international Trade Union unity formed the chief topic of discussion at the meeting of the National Confederal Committee of the French C.G.T. (the General Confederation of Labour, affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions) in Paris on March 16 and the following days. This Committee is essentially a meeting of Trade Union officials, with no rank-and-file representation, and it is therefore not surprising that the traditional opposition of the C.G.T. to unity should have been fully maintained.

The feature of the meeting was the long speech delivered by M. Jouhaux, Secretary of the C.G.T., on international unity. M. Jouhaux is one of the "workers' delegates" to the International Labour Office. It is interesting to note that he was consulted by M. Briand, Socialist renegade and notorious breaker of the French railway strike of 1910, when the latter was engaged in the task of trying to form a Ministry after the fall of M. Herriot.

M. Jouhaux's speech was highly tendentious and had the effect of belittling the work of the British General Council for Unity, while endeavouring to prove that the British Trade Union movement was not nearly so Left-wing as it might seem to Continental observers. Among other things, M. Jouhaux sought to dismiss the Russian Report by affirming that—

This work has not been prepared by the working-class members of the British delegation, but by economic personalities attached to the delegation, who were acquainted with Russia as a result of having resided there for a certain time.

After a lengthy reference to the meeting of the I.F.T.U. General Council in Amsterdam and its decisions, M. Jouhaux expressed some alarm at the reports of a proposed meeting between the Russian and the British Trade Unions (this is, of course, the meeting which has now taken place and is reported elsewhere in these notes) and made it clear that he only approved of

the British Unions meeting the Russian Unions if it was intended solely "to explain to them the Amsterdam resolution and to insist on the necessity of their adhesion to the I.F.T.U." He concluded his speech in the tone of a threat—

I have stated that, should the British Trade Unions decide to pass over the I.F.T.U. and to take no account of the decisions with which, moreover, they associated themselves, and should they wish to call together an international congress, they would put themselves outside the International. I did not say that because there are divergences of views there must be a rupture. The Trade Unions are entitled to have their own opinions and nobody thinks of questioning this right. They have a duty, however, to respect the rules and the decisions which they have accepted.

It is significant that one delegate, Humbert, from the Meurthe-et-Moselle Departmental Union, took up the cudgels for unity against M. Jouhaux. He regretted Jouhaux's "grave declarations" with regard to the attitude of the British General Council, and said :—

From an international point of view I should have preferred the agreement of the delegate of the French C.G.T. with the British Comrades who proposed an International Congress.

As there is a movement among our Comrades in England for unity, account must be taken of this fact. I should like the National Committee to give a mandate to the representative of the C.G.T. in Amsterdam to adhere to the point of view of the British Comrades. The C.G.T. cannot place itself at the extreme right of the International Trade Union movement.

A further delegate proposed a resolution urging the C.G.T. to enter into negotiations with the Left-wing United General Confederation of Labour (C.G.T.U.). However, against the votes of these two delegates, and the abstention of a third, a resolution of which the following are the chief sentences was passed :—

The Confederal Committee lays it down that working-class unity can only be brought about by the return of the wage-earners to the regularly affiliated organisations (*i.e.*, into the C.G.T. Unions).

Thus it declares that this unity cannot be re-established without the preliminary and unreserved abandonment of the mechanism of nuclei, district and factory committees which violate and falsify the very principles of Trade Union organisation.

Inspired by this great principle of movement and life, the C.G.T. remains steadfastly attached to the International Labour Office, as to the League of Nations, the first international organisms which, stimulated by the International Trade Union Movement, and the consciousness of the people, ever growing clearer, which, invested with more effective powers, and a greater authority, could lay claim to valuable work towards the immense task for the economic solidarity and definite reconciliation of all peoples.

The National Committee confirms once more its fidelity to the International Trade Union Federation of Amsterdam, whose line of action and exalted and tolerant thought conforms so exactly to the conception and methods which the C.G.T. of France accepts and defends.

The National Committee approves of the decision of the I.F.T.U. in connection with the preliminary conference with the representatives of Russian Trade Unions (without delegates of the R.I.L.U.) to arrange for the affiliation of the Russian Trade Unions, on the basis constantly affirmed by the Congresses and General Councils of the International of Amsterdam.

The National Confederational Committee, knowing well the avowed intentions of the promoters of the so-called Unity crusade, calls the attention of all militants to this new strategy, whose prime movers have made a public revelation of their treachery with the sole aim of rallying together all the irreconcilable enemies of true proletarian Unity.

What schisms, insults, calumny and violence have failed to achieve, they hope to gain by exploiting the sentiment of working class "Unity," which has always been the predominant purpose of the C.G.T., and which up to the year 1921 was placed by all the Workers' Congresses above all questions of tendencies.

## GERMANY

### Presidential Elections

ON March 29 the elections for the German Presidency, rendered vacant by the death of Herr Ebert, took place. The Right Wing Monarchist Parties agreed on the formation of an electoral *bloc* round the Nationalist, Dr. Jarres; the extreme Fascist elements, who broke away from this *bloc* with General Ludendorff as their candidate, suffered a crushing defeat.

The voting was as follows, the figures for the Reichstag elections in December, 1924, being given for comparison :—

<i>Monarchist Right :—</i>		May, 1925	December, 1924
Jarres ( <i>Nationalist</i> ) .. .. .		10,787,870	10,613,000
Ludendorff ( <i>Fascist</i> ) .. .. .		210,970	907,000
Held ( <i>Bavarian</i> ) .. .. .		999,036	1,695,000
<i>Republican Parties :—</i>			
Braun ( <i>Social Democrat</i> ) .. .. .		7,838,676	7,881,000
Marx ( <i>Centre</i> ) .. .. .		3,988,559	4,117,481
Hellpach ( <i>Democrat</i> ) .. .. .		1,582,414	1,918,000
<i>Communist Party :—</i>			
Thaelmann .. .. .		1,886,000	2,708,000

It is estimated that approximately 27.3 million votes were cast, or three million less than in the Reichstag elections last December. This represents about 70 per cent. of the electorate.

An analysis of the above figures shows that the Right Parties lost 1,200,000 votes, the Democrats 300,000, the Communists 800,000; while the Centre and the Social Democrats roughly maintained their position.

The election results, as they do not give any one candidate a sufficient majority, necessitate a second ballot. After weeks of singularly tortuous intrigue the "United Right" has decided to withdraw the candidature of Dr. Jarres, and has substituted instead that of Marshal von Hindenburg. The Republican Parties have formed a *bloc* with Dr. Marx as their candidate: and the Social Democratic Party has withdrawn its candidate and is supporting Dr. Marx, for the "defence of the Republic." Dr. Marx is, of course, the leader of the Clerical Centre Party, which has been the chief stay of the more or less openly monarchist Government of Herr Luther. Judging by comments in certain

Social Democratic organs, this decision of the Party executive is not altogether welcomed by the rank and file.

Thus, the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* wrote that the decision to withdraw— confirms the impression that a few groups in the Party utterly fail to comprehend the motives of the bourgeois "Left" Parties.

In exchange for the withdrawal by the Social Democratic Party of the candidature of Herr Braun, the election of the latter gentleman to the Premiership of Prussia has been assured by the support of the Centre Party.

The result of the second ballot on April 26 was as follows :—

	Votes.
Hindenburg .. .. .	14,655,766
Marx ... .. .	13,751,615
Thaelmann. . . . .	1,931,157

The total poll was over 30 million.

## ITALY

### Metalworkers' Strike

SOME three months ago the Fascist metal workers' Trade Union in Brescia signed an agreement with the employers for the payment of a high cost of living bonus of two lire (about 4d.) a day. This agreement, however, did not specify any minimum wage, with the result that the employers simply dismissed many of their workers, to re-engage them at a much lower basic rate. The average wage of a skilled metalworker varies between 18 to 23 lire (3s. to 3s. 10d.) a day, the purchasing power of the lira being estimated at only 14 per cent. of what it was in 1914.

The cost of living continued to increase, and the unrest among the metalworkers grew. Finally, at the beginning of March the Fascist Trade Union leaders found themselves constrained to call a strike of the iron and steel workers in Brescia.

It is stated that the membership of the Fascist Trade Unions in the iron and steel industry amounts to 30,000, a minority of the organised workers in the industry. The Fascist strikers were on March 13 joined by the *bona fide* Trade Unionists of the Socialist Metalworkers' Union, the F.I.O.M., who called out all their 70-80,000 members throughout Lombardy and North Italy. The Socialist Trade Unionists were now the driving force behind the strike, which became general and assumed a very determined character. The Communist Party sent a number of its M.P.'s into the strike area as propagandists. The F.I.O.M. formulated a full programme of demands (wage increases, payment for overtime and holidays, &c.).

The Fascist Trade Union leaders talked about "sending the Black Shirts against the employers" and declared that "the Fascist revolution was not carried out in order to enrich the industrialists." No sooner had the F.I.O.M. entered the field, however, than they opened separate negotiations with the employers, which finally resulted, on March 15, in an agreement for the small wage increase of 1 to 2.25 lire (2d. to 4d.) a day. They thereupon called off the strike.

The demands of the F.I.O.M. had been completely ignored, and their members remained on strike.

Despite the dissatisfaction of the strikers with the Fascist "settlement," the F.I.O.M. decided to instruct its members to return to work on March 18. In a few days the biggest industrial movement, in which 90 per cent. of the workers in the industry are said to have participated, which has so far taken place in Italy since the Fascist seizure of power was at an end.

The comments of the Italian correspondents of two of the leading responsible organs of the capitalist Press in this country are instructive.

What is happening to-day confirms the failure of the Fascist Syndicates. These Syndicates were originally organised by the Fascists with the object of avoiding strikes . . . Now the Syndicates themselves, composed exclusively of workmen, are having recourse to the threat of strikes just as did the Socialist Syndicates (Trade Unions).—*The Times* (March 13, 1925).

The strike is demonstrating the fallacy of the so-called class co-operation which Fascism pretended to inaugurate. This co-operation could only go on with the workers indefinitely over-ridden.—*Manchester Guardian* (March 16, 1925).

# BOOK REVIEW

## TREES AND NO WOOD!

*Karl Marx's Theory of Value.* By H. W. B. Joseph. (Oxford University Press. 4s. 6d. net.)

EVER since the publication of *Das Kapital* economists have been trying to avoid the fact of surplus value. In Cambridge they have done this mainly by ignoring it. Oxford has patronisingly regarded it as of historical interest. Scotsmen have consistently misunderstood it. Wiser than all Boëhm-Bawerk (who at anyrate held Marx's intellect in wholesome respect) and the Austrian School proceeded to revolutionise economic method, hoping that in the process the surplus-value problem would get lost altogether. But although those who inhabit sheltered seats of learning and contemplate absolute truth may have succeeded in forgetting Marx, the hard facts of the class struggle persistently force him on the attention: history itself refuses to allow him to be treated as a mere historical antiquity.

For this reason the persistent rumblings of the class struggle, penetrating every now and then to the ivied cloister and the yew-tree's shade, evoke a protest from some "remote and ineffectual don" that the process of pure thought should be disturbed by so patently illogical a person as Karl Marx. Such protests have been frequent from those situated within a hundred miles of the Clyde, where the rumblings in question have been pretty frequent. But it takes some time for such crude noises to be heard by those who dwell by the Isis and the Cherwell. It is, therefore, a little surprising to find a Fellow of New College, Oxford, with all the insignia of the University Press, come forth to do battle in defence of his own peace of mind. But it is not surprising to see the way in which he deals with the subject. The conditions of class struggle have been much attenuated and refined by the time they have reached Mr. Joseph's study window. Exploitation, struggle, dictatorship—these are not part of the picture. To "dons self-absorbed and solitary" Marx was merely an erudite fool who said that labour was the cause of value. Marxism has become a matter of pure logic!

As a result Mr. Joseph deals not with Marxism, but with an attenuated, rarified, academicised *part* of the Marxian doctrine—a part, moreover, which is mainly incidental and primarily a matter of logical method. Surplus-value and exploitation (which are indeed not matters of pure logic!) are left conveniently on one side. Even so, Mr. Joseph adds little to what Boëhm-Bawerk has already said much better (*Karl Marx and the Close of his System*), unless it be an attempt to show that Marx misunderstood the principle of averaging! He shows no evidence of knowing the writings of Sorel on the subject, or even those of Sombart and Croce. His complete misapprehension of the Marxian approach to the subject cannot be better shown than in his unquestioning assumption that the main purpose of *Das Kapital* was to force a *moral* conclusion. His criticism of Marx for using the concept of "simple labour" seems to betoken an ignorance of the mere essentials of deductive method. Does not

orthodox theory deal with abstract factors of production—land, labour, capital, with the omniscient “marginal consumer” and the “representative business man?”

The book as a whole is a good symptom of the bankruptcy of cloistered bourgeois learning, far divorced from the facts of life. The bourgeois theorist when he is not openly a bourgeois sycophant and apologist, is concerned not with the *facts* of class-struggle, but merely whether the class-struggle is logically sound! Mr. Joseph has shown a precious interest in the grain of one or two trees, and in his obsession with these has had no time to appreciate the wood as a whole. Most of us on the other hand are more interested in the wood.

M. H. D.

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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 321
<i>THE WAGE WAR</i>		
Problems of the Labour Movement	-	„ 332
<i>By P. BRAUN</i>		
The Red "Plots"	- - - -	„ 347
<i>By W. N. EWER</i>		
The New War in Morocco	- - -	„ 354
<i>By JACQUES DORIOT</i>		
The Great Retreat	- - - -	„ 357
<i>By M. PHILIPS PRICE</i>		
The I.L.P.—Past and Present	- - -	„ 364
<i>By MARGARET COLE</i>		
Trotsky and His "Friends"	- - -	„ 373
<i>By W. N. E.</i>		
Book Review	- - - -	„ 376
<i>"Mirrors of the Kremlin, By A Comrade with a Duster."</i> R. P. D.		

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*Conflict Ahead—Revolutionary Wage Issues—Truth from Thomas—  
The Lesson of the Triple Alliance—Towards the Workers' Alliance  
—Baldwin and the Economic Situation—Whose Responsibility?  
—The Future Solution—The Immediate Solution—Parasitism  
of Capitalism—The Fallacy of Compensation—Expropriation  
and Revolution—Reviving British Industry—Patriotism  
of the Bourgeoisie—A Textile Example—An  
Imperialist Bourgeoisie—A Plain Answer—  
Facing the Future.*

**A** BIG battle in industry is in front. This much is certain although the stages and method of its approach are not yet clear. The demands and counter-demands that have now been put forward, alike for the railwaymen, the engineers, the miners and the builders, may prove no more than a preparing of the ground. The workers' forces are not yet organised for a common front, and it is abundantly clear that without that common front victory under modern conditions is no longer possible, save in exceptional and favourable circumstances. The employers' forces are preparing their strategy with the concealment which is their advantage, and may endeavour to strike their blow before the workers are prepared. But although the conditions and grounds of strategy are more complex than they have ever been before, the line of direction of the two forces is clear beyond dispute. The industrial magnates have repeatedly declared with more and more insistence that they must bring wages and hours down to Continental standards if they are to compete with Continental industry. The workers on their side are driven forward by the necessity of actual want and conditions admittedly worse and nearer to starvation than before the war. Between these two forces, unless one or other gives way, there can only be collision; and no talk of industrial peace can alter this. This is the first fact to recognise.

**T**HERE was a time when wage issues could be regarded as secondary issues in the workers' struggle, representing no more than the ups and downs of the economic situation and

relative working-class and capitalist organisation within capitalism, and not representing any direct attack upon capitalism. Those were the days when trade union officials were essentially business officials, whose function was to sell their men's labour for the best bargain they could get, having regard to the commercial conditions of the market. A trade union official could claim to be faithfully representing the interests of his men, and yet be friends with the employers and deny the class war. Those days are over. *To-day, in the period of the decline of British capitalism, wage issues have become in fact revolutionary issues.* This is the second fact which must be frankly recognised. "Commercial practicability" can be no longer the basis of calculation. That way lies complete subjection of the workers. We have reached a point when the workers are compelled to fight as a class, and when the challenge on wages is inevitably a challenge to the capitalist control of industry. The move to a class combination of the workers in the projected multiple Workers' Alliance is a recognition of the new conditions. It means not simply an extension of the old type of struggle. It means a transference of the struggle to a new plane.

**M**R. THOMAS, attacking the proposed Workers' Alliance, declared that it meant in fact a revolutionary challenge to the existing system of society. Mr. Thomas considerably exaggerates the speed of events, in dealing with what is at present no more than a simple defensive measure. Nevertheless the issue which he raises is ultimately the real issue, and the sooner we recognise it and it is recognised by the widest numbers of workers, the better for the future. We can no longer fight upon a limited field. The attempt to wage the simple economic struggle means in fact a struggle with the entire forces of capitalist society. If we shrink from facing this fact, we are defeated before we begin. We do not want to repeat the failure of the Triple Alliance. Let us recognise frankly the character of the struggle in front. It is fortunate that wider and wider numbers of workers are becoming conscious of the issue. When Mr. Thomas declared to the Glasgow mass meeting of railwaymen, as his final argument against the Workers' Alliance, that "if it succeeded, those responsible must be prepared to take over the government of the nation," this threat was

received by the hostile meeting, according to the report of the *Daily Herald*, with "loud cheers."

**W**HAT was the failure of the Triple Alliance? In the last analysis it amounted to this. The Triple Alliance was an attempt to create machinery for a wider combination and a wider struggle of the workers, such as modern conditions clearly necessitated, without facing the revolutionary issue that that wider machinery and wider struggle inevitably raised. What was the consequence? The inevitable consequence was that so soon as the crisis came, and its revolutionary character became apparent, those in control of the machine became terrified at the spirits they had themselves raised, and, after vainly trying to postpone the evil day, when at last the issue could be no longer evaded, at the last moment threw up their cards without playing them and ran away. This historic "treachery," like all great treacheries, lay, not simply in the personal characters of the individual leaders, but in the failure of a whole past epoch to face the conditions of the next. Just as 1914 was the exposure, not primarily of certain insignificant individuals, but of the Second International, so 1921 was the exposure, not primarily of certain individuals in our movement, but of the whole old movement.

**C**AN we escape the failure of the Triple Alliance in the new Workers' Alliance? That is not a question to be lightly answered. The transformation of the movement to the plane of the new struggle has still very far to go. The long delays and obstacles even to the formation of the Workers' Alliance show the heavy weight of weaknesses and old conceptions that still beset the movement and will clog any advance, even when made in form. Nevertheless an advance has been made. The experience of 1921, and still more the experience of the deadly depression and misery under victorious capitalism that followed that defeat, has taught strong lessons. There is a deeper understanding of the revolutionary issue, an end of the old lighthearted expectation of easy victories, and a more responsible appreciation of the struggle in front. It is our task to strengthen that understanding, to make clear the character of the struggle in front, and to show the

inevitable necessity of that struggle. The strength and success of the new experiment will depend in the last resort on the solidarity of the workers, and on the capacity, energy and activity of the revolutionary element in the working class.

“**W**E are passing through the gravest situation” declared Mr. Baldwin in a recent speech “as regards unemployment and the export trade that we have ever experienced”; and he proceeded to attack the criminal activities of those who at such a time should endeavour to overthrow the whole system. But this is precisely the time when it is necessary to overthrow the whole system. There is no hope whatever of permanently improving the conditions of the workers even to a living subsistence under the conditions of British capitalist industry to-day. This fact cannot be too widely proclaimed. The capitalist economists are fond of telling us that Britain lives upon exports, importing some five hundred million pounds’ worth of food and needing to pay for it by coal and manufactured goods; that new industrial powers are springing up on every side; that markets are closing; that there is every prospect of this process increasing; and that Britain can only survive by lowering the costs of production, intensifying labour and maintaining industrial peace. The facts they quote are correct (and those in our ranks who too easily think that a simple raising of home wages will solve unemployment and provide the missing markets, will do well to take note of them); but before we accept their conclusions we have something more to say.

**T**HE decline of British capitalist production is an historic process, which is not and cannot be prevented by any activity or inactivity of the workers, and which would go on none the less, even though the British workers were to work and live like slaves and bow their necks under the industrial peace of death. British capitalism in the nineteenth century recklessly gambled on the policy of converting Britain into the workshop of the world in order to make the largest and most immediate profits out of their temporary world priority in capitalist industry (just as in the generation before they gambled with the lives of the women and children

of the country in order to make the fastest profits, until the process reached such a point that it had to be checked in the interests of future profits). Marx and Engels eighty years ago were alone in foretelling the inevitable outcome of this policy, when the time should come that the other nations would develop their industrial production and bring crashing to the ground the short-sighted dreams of the British bourgeoisie. To-day that process is in full force. Not only are the new industrial powers developing hand over hand, untrammelled by the rotten accumulation of vested interests, obsolete technique, individualist disorganisation, inflated capital, mortgaged industry, and army of idlers, State bondholders, rentiers and their parasitic servants, of Britain's older more historic capitalist apparatus ; but the rate of that development is bound to increase every year, relatively to Britain, and no power on earth can stop it.

**W**ITHIN capitalism there is no way out but war ; and if capitalist production continues, world war is bound to follow, even though all the statesmen of the capitalist countries were to turn into devoted Christians and fanatical worshippers at the shrine of the League of Nations (which they show no sign of doing yet). But war itself only intensifies the crisis, and leads the way to revolution. Beyond capitalism the only final solution is the world Socialist organisation of production ; when alone the increased production and expansion of every part becomes the increased wealth of the whole, when alone it is possible scientifically to allot the proportions of production according to capacity to the different areas of the earth, and when alone it becomes ultimately possible within the unified world republic to organise expansions and contractions of production, and facilities for migrations of population, according to the already easily calculable varying needs.

**B**UT in the interim period, while the battle for the world Socialist republic still continues, there is no way out for the British people from the dilemma that is closing in upon them, save by the elimination of the parasitism of the bourgeoisie. It is not only a question of the organisation of production against unorganised production—a question on which the minds of the

people are still confused by Press propaganda, and the unrivalled possibilities in Britain more than anywhere of rapidly organising unified large-scale production are still in the main only known to the technical experts. This also could be accomplished within capitalism, if the British bourgeoisie had still progressive capacity, by the advance to State capitalism (so-called evolutionary "Socialism" with compensation). The failure to carry through any such reorganisation—unification with State Control, and the utilisation of modern potentialities of technique and power, as indicated by the plans of the bourgeoisie themselves at the end of the war, but never carried through—is a measure of the decay of British capitalism.

**B**UT it is also a question of a direct deadweight of parasitism which cannot be removed within capitalism. This deadweight of parasitism exists in all capitalist countries, but is heavier in Britain than in any other country or at any previous point in capitalist development (or indeed any social development since the Roman Slave Empire). The seven and a half thousand millions of National Debt, held as to 95 per cent. by the wealthy and representing a social burden without return of three hundred millions a year or roughly £20 a year per worker, is only a portion of the total deadweight of inflated capital and parasitic incomes (representing a corresponding proportion of parasitic or wasted labour) which British production has to carry. The recent Occupation Census figures showed that only 489 per 1,000 "gainfully occupied persons" in England and Wales were engaged on "production, repair and maintenance." The largest single group—the principal "industry" in modern Britain is "Commerce and Finance"—with two and a quarter millions, or roughly six millions of the population living by the jugglery of exchange and speculation. Near to it, the third group—the third principal "industry" in modern Britain—is "Personal Service" (servants to whom? not to the workers, who form four-fifths of the population) numbering actually over two millions of the working population in England and Wales alone. And this is leaving out of account the unproductive weight of unemployment of over a million of the best workers, the industrial productive workers. It is doubtful whether



such a picture of cancerous decay has ever been displayed in history. The situation revealed by these figures is of cardinal importance for all our problems, and not least for the urgency of our task : and we shall have occasion to return to other aspects of these figures in the future.

**T**HIS parasitism cannot be got rid of within capitalism. It cannot be got rid of by any system of taxation or nationalisation with compensation. So long as the capital holding remains and is respected, the form is indifferent. The practical effect of a process of nationalisation with compensation is only to hasten a process already taking place—the transference of the active interest of the British bourgeoisie to foreign and imperial enterprise, as home production becomes less profitable, with the consequent intensification of class divisions, imperialist expansion, servitude of the home workers, and parasitism. The evolutionary Socialists who imagine that they can first compensate and then tax out of existence are indulging a small Utopian dream, which is only a cover of their desire to avoid a conflict. This fact is already beginning to be recognised by the more clear-sighted in their ranks. In a significant article the *New Statesman*, after declaring that “the evolutionary conception of Socialism necessarily involves compensation,” goes on to declare that “before the war it was all very well to talk of taxing the capitalists out of existence. But, nowadays, even Socialists have to admit that taxation cannot be pushed much further without reacting seriously on production.” The problem of the direct taking-over of production cannot be escaped. There is no elimination of capitalist monopoly save by eliminating that monopoly. So long as the monopoly, that is, the capital holding, continues, its results will continue. The parasitism of capital can only be got rid of by direct expropriation, *i.e.*, by the proletarian revolution.

**O**NLY the proletarian revolution can free British production from the shackles which bind it. This is the central fact of the British economic situation which must be driven home, not only to all the millions of workers, but to all the millions of petty bourgeoisie who at present look out on their own

desperate situation in blind confusion and small jealousies fed by the Press of the big bourgeoisie. To the millions of unemployed workers, workers on short time and workers who are sacked, who despair of finding re-employment under capitalism ; to the millions of workers on cut wages who see no hope of escape from the grind of want and toil for themselves and their children ; to the millions of small owners and small dealers who continue to carry on a hopeless struggle against intensified competition and the impoverishment of the workers and small consumers who are their market, and only sink in debt ; to the millions of clerks and small professionals who are ground down without even the strength of organisation : to all these this central fact must be made clear, not as an abstract political slogan, but as a concrete necessity demonstrated by the thousand facts of daily life. It is not a question of abstract "Socialism" as a far-away picture of heaven ; it is the direct necessity of the expropriation of the capitalist parasites and the taking over of production by the strong hand of the working class that must become a picture seen and felt by all.

**T**HERE is no inherent incapacity in British natural conditions that prevents the winning of a livelihood by the population. The material resources are still rich ; the machinery is there ; the skill of the workers is unequalled in any other country. The machine goods that can be produced are needed all over the world (not least in Russia), provided they can be produced at a price within reach, that is to say, a price which does not bear the toll of thousands of parasites at every stage of production, so that the parasite toll is actually larger than the cost of production. It is this stranglehold of accumulated capital claims on industry, unequalled in any other country (in the Continental countries inflation has wiped out or reduced to a fraction the old claims, in the new countries there is not the same historic background), which drags down and makes impossible the revival or reorganisation of British industry. The bourgeoisie, who came strutting forward in the guise of patriots to appeal to the workers to be "reasonable" and work hard and long (in order to provide them with their fantastic incomes—in 1923-4, 542 individuals in Britain each took over £50,000 a year for themselves) and so save the

“ common ” interest in industry, are in reality the direct enemies of British industry. This is the fact that the workers must realise.

**M**ORE than that the British bourgeoisie is not only incapable of reviving British industry, but is to an increasing extent becoming no longer primarily interested in British industry. Capital knows no country save as an area of exploitation and for the purpose of providing it with a State machine as a basis of power. The patriotism of capital is only of the “ army and navy ” “ jingo ” variety. Capital flows where profit is highest, and for a long time now that has meant outside Britain. The yearly figures of new capital investments reveal this. Last year, for example, of a total of £223 millions capital invested, £134 millions went overseas ; and this is a normal modern proportion. It should further be noted that of the £89 millions invested at home, £17 millions went to “ Investment and Trust Companies,” £13 millions to municipal loans, and £7½ millions to the Newspaper Trusts, leaving in the end a very small proportion of the total £223 millions for home industrial production. Thus the capital which is raised out of the British workers goes to equip new development abroad, which help to replace British production, to the profit of the British bourgeoisie, but to the ruin of the British workers.

**I**T is sometimes argued that this investment for industrial development abroad, which is the highest form of imperialism, in reality benefits home industry by the placing of contracts, &c. A single example will make the real position clear. In a recent commercial newspaper we read the following :—

Some British textile manufacturers, anticipating future possibilities and meeting present difficulties, have already *established themselves in Australia*, and invested capital in Australian companies. I need only mention the names of W. C. Gaunt, Salts, Patons and Baldwins, and Kelsall and Kemp, to show that some of the leading firms in the British textile trade have seen the wisdom of this step, and incidentally *profited accordingly*.

A substantial number of Australian textile companies are paying regular dividends of 10 per cent. and more (many on substantially watered capital) and placing large sums to reserve each year. *They escape freight and handling and other charges involved in the shipment of raw material to England and the importation of the manufactured article from the same country.* (Italics mine.)

—*Manchester Guardian Commercial*. March 12, 1925.

Let it be remembered that of British exports to Australia in 1923-4, amounting to £63·4 millions, £24·9 millions' worth, or nearly 40 per cent., were textiles, and the imperial patriotism of the British textile lords, who thus make higher profits for themselves and unemployment for their workers, will be clear. British textile workers, who have still the repute of being " sane " and not revolutionary, will take note of this.

**W**HAT does this mean? It means that the " British " bourgeoisie is becoming more and more only nominally " British," and in reality a modern imperialist bourgeoisie, using Britain as its base, and decreasingly interested in the condition of the British workers (save as cannon fodder—the only direction in which the terrible reports of the low health of the population have caused alarm) and in the revival of British industry. The return to the gold standard with the applause of all respectable City opinion and in the face of a few isolated industrialist protests is a symptom of this. Let it be noted that in all the present industrial depression, right through the worst of it, the bourgeoisie has continued to make tremendous profits. The *Economist's* tabulation of industrial company results shows average net profits of 8, 9, and 10 per cent. right through the crisis. The value of estates subject to Estates Duty has increased steadily: 1920-1, £372 millions; 1921-2, £402 millions; 1922-3, £431 millions; 1923-4, £441 millions. It is only the workers who have been brought down and have had to lose from their scanty wages an aggregate of one to two thousand million pounds. The divorce between the interests of the British bourgeoisie and the British working population is absolute.

**F**OR this reason we must meet the advocates of industrial harmony, when they come to us with long stories of the ruin of British industry and the impossibility of facing any advance with a plain answer. We must tell them that the failure of which they speak (so far as it is true, and not a made-up story) is not the failure of British industry, but of British capitalist industry. We must tell them that the workers are not prepared to listen to the tales of " ruin," when the wealth of the British bourgeoisie mounts up

every year and flaunts itself in the face of all. We must tell them that, just as the bourgeoisie have known to look to themselves and their profits right through the "crisis" that brought ruin to the mass of the population, so the workers will learn better to look to themselves in the future. And we must tell them finally that, if they are not prepared to continue on our terms, then, when the time comes, the British proletariat will be ready to take over.

**I**N the immediate situation we must go forward with the wage struggle in front without hesitation and with a clear realisation of the ultimate goal that we must reach. We must not let ourselves be turned aside by the "commercial" arguments of the enemy, or by the largeness of the issues that are raised. The "commercial" arguments are invalid, because they presuppose the continuance intact of the whole framework of capitalism that we are challenging. The largeness of the issues that inevitably arise from modern large scale industrial conflicts must be faced, if we are not to submit to perpetual defeat. We have reached a point at which the old easy advance within the accepted framework of capitalism is no longer possible. Two alternatives confront the movement—either to surrender and go down into perpetually worsening conditions with the British industrial decline, or to advance and face the inevitable revolutionary issue. We think that there can be no hesitation in the choice, once the issue is truly realised, for the mass of the British working class.

R. P. D.

# PROBLEMS OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

By P. BRAUN

OUR friend Purcell very frequently, and very appropriately, speaks of the "mosaic" of our movement. Yes, our movement does represent a very variegated picture. Worst of all, however, is the fact that many take pleasure in this diversity. They see in it the sign of a high development of civilisation. The most enthusiastic supporters of the mosaic speak with delight of our well cherished freedom, which has bestowed such blessings upon our movement.

At the risk of being thought a barbarian, I will permit myself to express the opinion that our mosaic is the result of our backwardness and not our special strength. Eleven hundred different unions—that is the first symptom of our belauded variety. The absence of the habits of fighting is, on the one hand, the result of this variety of organisations, and, on the other hand, it renders possible the existence side by side of the most differing and frequently contradictory tendencies. In a debating society the struggle of opinion is not only lawful but inevitable. But a fighting army would be condemned to endless defeats if it were to prefer the struggle of opinion to co-ordinated action. And our movement suffers defeat so frequently just because it prefers mosaic to unity.

It may be said that the capitalists' camp in Britain, too, has not that iron discipline which strikes you on the Continent. But is that true? I venture to suggest that appearances are deceitful. The ruling classes of Britain are distinguished by their very great elasticity. They can combine the royal mantle with the democratic toga in the most artistic fashion. And they know how to pursue a single policy, pitilessly and logically, under the garb of freedom. They permit, and sometimes even arrange, fiery discussions on questions of second-rate importance. But they march in a single phalanx, when it is a question of the vital interests of the system they represent and defend. They always attack with a united front.

With us it is the opposite. We talk a great deal about solidarity and unity ; but when matters come to action, there we fail. As a result we go from Black Friday to Black Saturday.

Yet never has our mosaic so visibly reflected our helplessness as it does to-day.

What is the peculiar character of the present moment ? We are witnessing a certain stabilisation of the capitalist system and capitalist outlook. The stabilisation is taking shape in an ever increasing arrogance of the ruling classes. In 1919 they manœuvred very cautiously. By commissions, conferences, advisory councils and promises they tried to evade those acute problems which were created in the course of demobilisation. Their manœuvre on the whole succeeded, and in 1921 they began to speak more firmly. With "Black Friday" begins the fall of the revolutionary wave not only in Britain, but throughout Europe, since Britain, notwithstanding the increased strength of America, was and remains the leading capitalist power in Europe and one of the most important factors of world imperialism.

By fire and sword capitalism restored the "equilibrium" disturbed by the war, having recourse to various methods in different parts of the world. Particularly, great inventiveness was shown by the British bourgeoisie. In the Colonies it mostly utilised chemistry and aviation (aeroplane bombing). Together with America, it helped the lesser capitalist brethren by means of gold. In Britain itself it skilfully utilised our splendid mosaic, preferring flanking manœuvres to a frontal attack. Amongst recent manœuvres the most outstanding was, of course, the dissolution of Parliament in 1923, which brought about the temporary existence of the MacDonald Government.

Of course, Baldwin did not dream that in barely twelve months he would succeed in inflicting such a blow on the Labour Party, and in returning to power with such a swollen majority. But in real life his most audacious expectations were surpassed. In return for the shadow of power, the MacDonald Government assumed the difficult task of clearing a way for reaction, at home, in the Empire, and in the sphere of foreign policy.

To-day, triumphant reaction is beginning to execute its economic programme, which may be summed up in a brief formula :

Longer working hours and lower wages.

The programme is dictated partly by the economic consequences of the war, and partly by those appetites which naturally develop in the victor.

Imperialist Britain has succeeded during the years after the war in setting into motion all those forces which it accumulated during the period of its prolonged world hegemony. But the threatening economic consequences of the war are stronger than the political wisdom of our ruling classes. When I say this I by no means wish to under-estimate the vast importance of the political experience of the British bourgeoisie. It is well known that that experience is one of the most important contributions made by Britain to the firm of Pound & Dollar, Limited. The owners of the rising dollar have to take lessons from the owner of the rather faded pound, not only in the sphere of economic geography, but in questions of the tactics and strategy of governing the world. At the same time the economic factors acquire gigantic strength. They will not be overcome by simple manoeuvres. They require extremely careful attention.

The proud writers in the British press insistently—sometimes with importunity—lay stress nowadays on the kinship between Britain and her prodigal son, America. But Uncle Sam does not swallow the bait. In return for his friendship, he asks to be paid in hard cash for the enormous war debt, while at the same time he is suspiciously friendly with other “children” of his old mother (Canada and Australia). On the world market Uncle Sam feels that he is the master, and John Bull cannot but admit that America is a stronger rival on the high road of world robbery than Germany was before the war. America has grown stronger, and is pretty skilfully applying to Europe that policy of Balkanisation, in which it seemed that Britain was the past master. It seems that economic power contains within itself some elements of political wisdom which are accessible even to the American “upstarts.”

It would also be a mistake to ignore France. Her franc is still jumpy but she has received a big inheritance from Germany, and in alliance with the new states she represents an important force. Moreover the last word in deciding the question of the balance of power in Europe belongs not to Britain, but to her



“ friend and partner ” across the ocean, who is not sufficiently well-bred to hold the British gentleman as a man in sufficient honour and respect.

A still more serious factor in the economic life of Britain, which for years has lived with a thought that her destiny was to be the workshop of the world, is the industrialisation of the Dominions and Colonies. Sir Edward Grigg, formerly secretary to Lloyd George, has written a book, “ The Greatest Experiment in History,” in which he tears his hair at the thought that Britain permitted schools to be set up in India and Egypt. But tears will not help. A tendency towards separation is growing up in the Dominions, and towards independence in the Colonies. And still worse is the fact that both the Colonies and the Dominions have firmly entered the path of capitalist development, which undermines the privileged position of Britain as the monopolist purveyor.

And the eyes of the ruling classes of Britain involuntarily turn to the period of primitive capitalist accumulation, when they so easily and so carelessly created wealth out of the sweat and blood of their slaves, white and coloured !

When we note the deterioration in the economic position of Great Britain, we should not by any means accept in good faith the lamentations of our capitalist press. We know that the press exists to carry out propaganda, and terrorises its readers, in order to prevent the workers from fighting, not only for improved conditions but even to maintain the results already achieved. The British capitalist looks ahead. He is already thinking of the time when the workers will have to ballot on the question of a strike. And his aim is to frighten the workers by the spectre of economic competition, just as during the last election he terrified the maiden ladies by the spectre of revolution, emigrating to England from far away Moscow. In actual fact his position is not at all so terrible. He still has the opportunity for making a very respectable breakfast after a night in a very unrespectable club. But he would prefer that the working class, which earlier paid in blood for its “ victory ” during the World War, should now continue to pay for all the defeats imposed on mankind by the war.

Such in brief outline are the economic and psychological conditions attending the capitalist attack on the position of the

working class. The question arises to what extent is our movement prepared for a counter-attack, and what must we immediately do to avoid a black anniversary.

We very often say that our movement is at the cross roads. And this, of course, is true. The organisational forms of our movement and its methods of struggle were built up in quite different economic circumstances. To-day circumstances have changed completely. The bourgeoisie has proved to be sufficiently skilful to adapt itself to the new conditions. It sticks at no means. It frightens the worker with the spectre of unemployment, at the same time organising detachments of strikebreakers. It continues to sing sweetly of liberty, while encouraging and defending the Fascisti. But the Labour Movement has so far proved unable to adapt itself to the new conditions.

*The chief problem before the Labour Movement at the present time is just this: to re-equip itself for battle in accordance with the requirements of the new situation.*

The solution of this problem as a whole would take me beyond the bounds of a single article, and I will limit myself to attempting to indicate those pressing questions which require immediate answer.

#### *International Trade Union Unity*

Everyone must agree with Swales<sup>1</sup> that the most important achievement during the last twelve months has been the establishment of an agreement and contact with the Soviet trade union movement. This coming together, which is valuable in itself, acquires special importance when we realise that it is a step towards establishing the unity of the international trade union movement, the necessity of which is suggested by the international character of capitalist stabilisation.

It is most characteristic that the rapprochement began with the coming together of our trade union movement and that of the Soviet Union. Our movement comes into direct conflict with that capitalist class which leads the attack of reaction. The Soviet trade unions are the bulwark of that country which has not only repelled all the capitalist attacks but continues to grow and be

<sup>1</sup>See his interview in the May Day number of the *Sunday Worker*.

strengthened, in spite of the increasing hatred of stabilising capitalism. The alliance of these two organisations, British and Soviet, alone represents a vast force the importance of which is clearly indicated by the wild howl of the whole capitalist press.

But, as has been said, the Anglo-Russian agreement is the preliminary to the establishment of a united front of the world movement. And that object can be reached only if we soberly estimate all the difficulties which await us.

Our General Council came under heavy crossfire from the very moment it entered the path of rapprochement with the Soviet trade unions. Under the blows of its enemies, the movement for unity grew stronger and stronger in both countries. In the Soviet Union the workers' attitude towards closer friendship with our unions expressed itself in gigantic demonstrations which are partly dealt with in the Trade Union Delegation's Report on Soviet Russia. In Britain the actions of the Delegation received the approval of a vast number of working class organisations. The most vivid demonstrations must be reckoned, the Minority Conference in January, the National Conference of Trades Councils in February, and the Scottish Trades Union Congress, with the conferences of the N.U.D.A.W. and Shop Assistants, in April.

Against unity there naturally were mobilised not only our masters, but also the champions of class-collaboration, who, of course, see in the unity of the workers of different countries a threat to unity between Capital and Labour. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald fired the first shot in the battle against trade union unity. But even he did not dare to come out into the open. He preferred to come out with the "naïve" remark that contact with the German trade unions is probably more important than with the Russians. Mr. MacDonald realised very soon that this idea would not carry him very far. Everyone understood that what he had in mind was an alliance not with the German workers but with that bureaucracy of the German trade unions, who served the Kaiser so loyally during the war, Noske equally loyally during the Revolution, and which bears a vast proportion of responsibility for the fact that our capitalist class, in its attack on working conditions, is able to refer to German competition. With such a partner one cannot, of course, hope for great success. If we do not reckon the

*New Leader*, which supported MacDonald as in duty bound, we can find only one former "leader", namely, Robert Williams, who took up the watchword launched by MacDonald. But by that time MacDonald himself had hastened to begin talking about Amsterdam, not about the Germans.

Amsterdam, the quiet capital of dreamy Holland, has become a term in the Labour movement for two different ideas. By Amsterdam we usually have in mind the International Federation of Trade Unions, which covers a considerable part of the European trade union movement. It is clear that trade union unity must include Amsterdam. But by Amsterdam we also have in mind the leaders of the German trade unions who function under a Dutch label, and keep the machinery in their hands, in spite of the fact that the presidency of the Amsterdam Federation belongs to the British trade unions. The Dutch label was required by the Germans in order to secure the support of Mr. Vandervelde, the Socialist Minister for the Versailles Treaty, and Mr. Jouhaux, the former Syndicalist. The internationalism of this German group is of very doubtful quality. They value international connections to the same extent as they were valued by Kaiser Wilhelm when he allowed the Social-Democratic leader Scheidemann to go to Stockholm during the War. *The international unity of the Labour movement will apparently have to be hammered out in struggle with this Amsterdam.*

From the foregoing it follows that what we require is not so much Anglo-Russian agreement as a Committee of Action, which would free the working class movement from the influence of those who would drag it into the swamp of collaboration with their own capitalist class. The leaders of the German-Dutch International represent now as great a danger for the Labour movement as did the leaders of the Second International at the beginning of the World War.

The capitalist press of the whole world has mobilised all its forces to defend Amsterdam No. 2. It is being assisted by such persons as MacDonald and Vandervelde. From time to time there come to its help political aviators like Postgate, who in January, 1925, did not yet understand to what a degree Amsterdam No. 2 was deliberately splitting the working-class ranks, and driving all the honest and militant elements out of the Labour movement.

Postgate "got wise" only in March, when the wind began blowing very strongly in the direction of unity. But the winds did not move MacDonald. After all, it was only last year that he began to adopt the Amsterdam policy of expelling the revolutionary elements from the ranks of the Labour Party. It is not his fault that our trade unions not only did not follow his footsteps, but abruptly opposed his disruptive policy. Now MacDonald puts forward Amsterdam against the Anglo-Russian agreement.

Purcell gave the fitting reply to MacDonald in the May Day issue of the *Sunday Worker*, when he said that the real meaning of MacDonald's proposal was "that we are to break off friendship with those who stand for world-wide trade union unity, and the world-wide fight for the eight-hour day, and accept the point of view of those whose attitude on these questions has been diametrically opposed to our own at numerous discussions in the past. And this we have no intention of doing."

It is essential, without losing a single moment, to begin an energetic struggle against "Amsterdamism," whether it comes from Berlin or London. Both in Berlin and in London workers will be found to support the efforts made for the creation of a fighting International of trade unions.

Let the Anglo-Russian Council begin the fight !

#### *Unity With the Colonies*

It is most regrettable that our movement in this phase of unity of the trade union movement pays too little attention to the question of the Colonies. Amsterdam No. 1, *i.e.*, the International Federation of Trade Unions, showed little interest in the Colonies, for very easily understood reasons. The liberation of the oppressed peoples is not in any way compatible with social patriotism. But our movement, whether it wishes or no, is obliged to consider this question.

The Colonial question goes far beyond the bounds of the trade union movement. One need not be specially far-sighted to understand that the fate of the Labour Movement in the long run depends on whether the industrial workers will succeed in establishing a fraternal united front with the oppressed peoples of Asia and America. MacDonald and Thomas settle this question in the spirit

of a brief formula—"the continuity of policy" of oppression and enslavement. This policy at best plays into the hands of the imperialists, widening the abyss between two sections of oppressed humanity. I say "at best," because it is obvious that the policy of oppression will inevitably involve a bloody struggle, out of which the oppressed masses of Eastern peoples, who constitute the majority of mankind, will in the long run emerge victorious.

The policy of MacDonald and Thomas scarcely meets with sympathy amongst the working masses, who instinctively feel that Baldwin's road is not theirs. But our Left Wing elements, except the Communists, have hitherto not bothered to work out their definite attitude to this burning question of our daily lives.

Only quite recently we were witnesses of a shameful confusion in relation to India. Our ruling classes have succeeded by combining brutal violence with deceptive promises to weaken the Indian nationalist movement, which reached such wide development during the first years after the war. Its present depression takes the shape of terrorist infatuations, on the extreme flank of one side, and in Mr. Das' swing to the Right, on the other. Das obviously is flirting with the militarists. But the same Press organs which have been chastising Thomas for his toast at the Great Western dinner, have been praising Das for his flirtation with Lord Reading! Saddest of all is that *Lansbury's Weekly* hastened to extol Das, and to enter into bitter controversy with those who, in the *Sunday Worker* and the Communist press, had exposed him. I am not at all inclined to blame Lansbury himself for this. The lines to the greater glory of Das were obviously written by the hand of a renegade: as the French say, *les beaux esprits se rencontrent*—great minds think alike. But it is noteworthy that these lines appeared in the pages of a journal edited by an old and honest fighter in the Labour movement!

The Colonial question must be discussed and considered by us with all the attention it deserves. But the General Council could take the initiative. The Indian Trade Union Congress has selected the Workers' Welfare League of India as its constant representative in Great Britain. Why should not the General Council establish close contact with this organisation? Surely closer contact with the trade unions of the Colonies opens up very great prospects before us.

The strength of our enemies is in our divisions. They must be overcome !

*Unity of the British Trade Unions*

The sway of the old forms of our movement, and of its old ideology, shows itself particularly clearly in the question of national trade union unity. We greet with enthusiasm the steps taken by the General Council towards international unity, and yet at the same time we are powerless to overcome sectional traditions in our own midst. The movement for the revival in a new form of the Triple Alliance, which perished so ingloriously in 1921, is the best proof that our General Council is still hanging in the air. For is not the main purpose of the existence of the General Council just this very task of unifying all the forces of the trade union movement into one powerful army? Yet it turns out that at a moment of dread danger we need a special *temporary* body, to bring together the forces of the most important trade unions.

But we must look facts in the face. Sectional interests still prevail over industrial, and industrial interests over the interest of our class as a whole. Capital is able to laugh at our *powerful* organisations, which are *helpless* even to organise resistance.

From what has been said it follows that we must wholeheartedly welcome and support the efforts of the miners generally, and of Cook in particular, directed towards the co-ordination of the action of the largest and most influential trade unions. At the same time the movement must give a mandate to the General Council not to drag at the tail of events, and to assume the functions of leadership in this complex task.

But it would be a mistake to over-estimate the possible outcome of this movement. For tens of years the whole work of the trade unions has been concentrated in the hands of more or less permanent executive committees. The activity of the working masses themselves has grown weaker. Yet we are now face to face with serious conflicts and a prolonged and difficult struggle. In a struggle between the trade union apparatus and the apparatus of the ruling classes, victory will inevitably be on the side of the latter. Our strength is in the masses. The politicians suggest that the masses should preserve their energies for the election campaign in

1929. But we have to act now. Meetings and demonstrations at the present time will not alone be sufficient. Organisations for mass action must be created.

The steps taken by a number of Trades Councils (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Doncaster) to co-ordinate the activity of the menaced unions by summoning special delegate conferences, at which all trade union branches are represented, and which elect Councils of Action, are steps in the right direction. They aim at bringing the necessity of joint struggle home to the workers in the districts. But even more than this is required, if we are to get at the actual masses themselves, the vast majority of workers who do not attend the trade union branches. *The only organisations of mass action can be factory committees, which should be set up on the initiative of the Trades Councils, with the backing of the General Council.*

#### *Trade Unions and the Labour Party*

Three immediate tasks have been indicated, all of which are fully within the power of our trade union movement. But the trade union movement has one more piece of machinery—the Labour Party, which received  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million votes. It is essential to give some serious consideration to this machinery.

Naïve and sentimental people enthusiastically write about a swing to the Left of the Labour Party. The voices of Kirkwood, Maxton and Lansbury are heard to-day more firmly and sharply than before. The word "Socialism" has begun to appear more frequently in the official speeches of the representatives of the Labour Party. What more do we require? Yet it is sufficient to follow up a single Parliamentary "battle" to become convinced that our Labour Party, in spite of good intentions and sincere outbursts on the part of individual members, represents an organised impotence.

We can begin with the fact that all the attacks of the Labour Party Left Wingers meet with the cynical declaration of the Government: "We are continuing the work of *your* Labour Government." Whether it is a question of India and Egypt, of the Prince of Wales' tour, of the Supplementary Railway Reserve—in all these cases the appropriate Minister refers to his predecessor in the Labour Government. And yet the Labour Party has not uncrowned



its Government. The leader of that Government remains the leader of the Party.

But the stubborn optimist will not give way. He reminds us that the I.L.P. Annual Conference referred back the section of its Executive's report dealing with the Zinoviev letter. That is so. And yet the same Congress *congratulated* the Labour Government for its achievements. The resolution about the Zinoviev letter is swamped by this resolution. In point of fact, even the Zinoviev letter resolution does not contain any declaration of principle. We now have a Parliament elected with the help of the forged letter. An honest political party of the working class should have demanded: (a) the dissolution of that Parliament; (b) the bringing to trial of all those who participated in the plot, and who deliberately gave currency to the letter in order to deceive the mass of the people.

Such demands would have political sense, but even the Left elements at the I.L.P. Conference did not go further than a Parliamentary demonstration. But Parliamentary demonstrations augur nothing good for us in the present circumstances, when life demands a serious and rapid revision of old values generally, and particularly of the record of the Labour Government, which hangs as a dead weight round the neck of the British worker. It is sufficient merely to compare the sensation caused by the Zinoviev letter last October with the resolution of the I.L.P. Conference, or the Dawes Report with the speeches by our Left Wing Parliamentarians, to realise all the inadequateness of the action of the Left Wing.

At the same time it is unquestionable that even in the Labour Party we can feel some new tendencies at work. The whole question is, in what measure is it possible to transform these tendencies into the fighting weapon of the working class. And here we come right up against the question of the relations between the trade unions and the Labour Party.

The trade unions are the material and moral support of the Labour Party. But they do not determine the policy of the Labour Party. And the Labour Party has what seems to be a permanent general staff. It is recruited not from the working class, but from the middle-class elements, who yearn after the "pure" Liberalism of Gladstone, and are hostile to the wave of class struggle. This

general staff has concluded a fairly firm alliance with the old trade union leaders of the Amsterdam school, who have long ago broken off all real connections with the working class, with its struggle and its aspirations. This union, which is best of all symbolised by MacDonald-Thomas, listens very attentively to the Liberal elements within the Labour Party, and to the openly bourgeois elements outside the Labour Party, while it hates and despises Poplarism, strikes, and everything that recalls proletarian life and the working-class struggle. It is most characteristic that the leader of the Labour Party borrowed practically all his arguments against the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Agreement out of *The Times* !

It is obvious that things cannot go on in this way. The trade unions must acquire an influence on the policy of the Labour Party, They should in the first place bring about the withdrawal of the "exceptional laws" adopted against the Communists, and at the same time try to cleanse the Labour Party of lords, bankers, and merchants. The ship of the Labour movement is unable to go forward with the ballast which the Labour Party acquired when it became a pathway towards rank and career.

But this revolution will only be possible if the Left elements in the trade unions conclude a bloc with the Left elements of the Labour Party. The MacDonald-Thomas alliance must be opposed by a Purcell-Maxton alliance. Such a Left bloc must be wide enough to include Swales and Cook, Hicks and Pollitt, Kirkwood and Gallacher, Maxton and Saklatvala, Lansbury and Campbell. I am speaking here of well-known names, but I have in mind principally those splendid, honest and incorruptible fighters of the rank and file who follow them.

We must dwell a little longer on these Left elements.

Our Left front, as I see it, must take some such shape as the following. On the extreme flank stands the Communist Party, which has the advantage of a definite programme and a clear outlook. It is followed by the Minority Movement, which to all appearances is growing, becoming stronger, and attracting new young forces into the orbit of its influence. A little to the right go, side by side, two groups, one representing the Left Wing of the trade union movement, and the other the Left Wing of the Labour Party. All these groups constitute an integral part both of the trade

unions and of the Labour Party. Acting in unison, these groups might play a decisive part in the work of re-equipping and re-arming our movement.

And the time has come for thinking concretely about such co-ordination. Without it, the trade unions will pay their dues into the Labour Party, the Left elements will make speeches, and MacDonald will utilise the *whole* apparatus to continue the policy of Baldwin, paying very little attention to the fact that the simple-minded trade union leaders will look upon the Labour Party as their apparatus.

Speaking of Left elements, one cannot omit to say a word about the professional deserters, like Newbold, Postgate, &c. These figures are most dangerous of all at critical moments. Of course, their danger depends on their talents and their methods. A man who for several months proclaims MacDonald to be "Morgan's Bootblack," and then calls him "my leader" (Newbold), is least dangerous. He is ridiculous. But men like Postgate, who are "devoted to the cause of the Workers' Revolution" (see his declaration in the *May Plebs*), are always harmful. The consolidation of our movement, its political and moral crystallisation, will naturally lead to the result that these figures will remain the length of a gunshot away from our movement. But even for this purpose it is essential that the trade unions should cease to be the formal masters of the Labour Party, and that they should become the deciding factors in the determination of its policy.

#### *The Press*

I have attempted to sketch those tasks which seem to me immediate. My short outline would be incomplete if I did not mention the Labour press.

According to the incomplete figures of the *Labour Year Book* for 1924, the Sunday press has a circulation of 9,162,097 copies. Against these figures we have only the youthful *Sunday Worker*, with a circulation of about 100,000. The daily morning press, —I am referring only to the larger papers—has a circulation of 6,562,388 copies. Against this we have only the *Daily Herald*, with a circulation of under 400,000. These figures alone speak for the seriousness of our problem. I understand that the press is one

of the weapons of the bourgeois dictatorship, and under capitalism we cannot hope to rival the ruling classes in this sphere. But I doubt whether we have done everything possible even partially to weaken the power of the moneybags.

It is a secret to no one that many capitalist papers show enormous profits from advertisements. In the distribution of advertisements a great part is played by the press department of the Federation of British Industries. Our movement numbers over four million organised workers, *i.e.*, a very large number of the consumers on whom advertisements depend to a certain extent (we know that to a very great extent the advertisements serve the political purpose of strengthening the capitalist press). As far as I know, we have not made really serious attempts to materialise the power of our organisations for strengthening and increasing the circulation of our press. Yet this is essential. In the hands of the bourgeoisie, which is forced to have recourse to democratic appearances, the press is a mighty instrument. We are helpless to tear that instrument from their hands. But we must do everything to weaken the monstrous power of that steam-hammer which day by day so savagely hits the worker over the head.

Working on the strengthening of our press, we must have a care that it is adapted to the requirements of the Labour movement. The *Daily Herald*, for example, sees its tasks as an official organ in praising the recognised leaders and saying nothing about the movement of the masses, which alone can create a militant Labour press. And yet it is just now in particular that we require a press which would listen attentively to the voice of the masses, and which would assist them to re-equip themselves as easily as possible for the coming battles.

*We are reprinting, immediately, in pamphlet form, the above article by P. Braun, "Problems of the Labour Movement," Price 3d. for single copies, or 2s. 3d. a dozen, post paid.*

*Please order at once.*

# THE RED "PLOTS"

By W. N. EWER

*(Since this is in some measure a prophetic article, I think I should note that it was written on May 8 and 9. For before it is published events may have outstripped calculation, and turned my prophecies either into fact or into nonsense.)*

**P**OLITICAL meteorology is a fascinating study rather than an exact science. Yet, in politics as in the weather, there are certain indications, storm-signals which presage trouble as plainly as "mare's tail" clouds presage wind. And to those who are watching the political sky carefully there are to-day many signs which seem to forebode stormy weather in Anglo-Russian relations. There is an atmospheric similarity between these days and the days which preceded the launching of the Curzon ultimatum.

For a little while after the coming to power of the Conservative Government there were no signs visible in this country. Only those who knew that—despite official denials—Mr. Chamberlain had tried at Rome to organise an anti-Soviet Balkan bloc were able adequately to discount both assurances that the British Government hoped for the continuance and development of friendly relations, and rumours that treaty negotiations were to be resumed.

It was in February that the indications—at first faint, then more definite—of new developments began to be visible. The first of them was the cancellation of the Arcos advertisements in Government publications. Then came the furious anger of the Capitalist Press at the Trades Union Congress Delegation's Report: and then in March, the Conservative Press began to open its new campaign against "Red Plotting in Britain."

The Russian Trade Union Delegation was denounced vehemently as a gang of conspirators; the Conference was merely a camouflage for their mysterious and felonious plots. They were attacked in the Press and in Parliament; they were spied upon by Scotland Yard; the Home Secretary hinted that he might "take action" against them.

One by one the old stock stories were taken down from their pigeon holes and produced day by day in the columns of *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Mail*. Day after day their readers were told of the activities of mysterious red envoys who had, by means of forged passports, contrived to enter the country. There were reports of secret Communist conferences attended by disguised agents of the Comintern. The myth—which the Government itself was later forced, however reluctantly, to explode—was freely promulgated, that a large number of Bolshevik propagandists had been brought in as members of the Embassy staff enjoying full diplomatic immunity. Accusations were made of the smuggling of literature in the diplomatic despatch bags.

And then that old familiar feature of such campaigns re-appeared. The "Zinoviev letter" had been so dramatically successful that it would, perhaps, have been beyond human nature to refrain from repeating the experiment. So the products of the Berlin forgery-factories began again to find place in the columns of the Tory Press; though the Foreign Office, learning at last from past unhappy experiences that clumsy forgeries are dangerous weapons to handle, refrained this time from making use of them. The "Zinoviev letter" had been a success, but only by luck. There was a nervous realisation that the triumph might easily have been a disaster, and there was a still rankling memory of how Lord Curzon had made himself and the Foreign Office alike ridiculous by that astonishing note of 1921, with its stern protests based upon forged "evidence" of which the nature should have been obvious to any schoolboy with a turn for criticism. Moreover, it was still far too early, whatever the intention for the future, for any Foreign Office action.

But the Press campaign went ahead. And though much of it no doubt sprang from heated editorial imaginations, one noted uneasily that a large proportion of the stories came from quarters which have notoriously good "official contacts."

The Sofia bomb outrage came as a heaven-sent opportunity. During the week-end there was sanity. Both the *Observer* and the *Sunday Times* analysed the possibilities fairly and coolly. But from the Monday onwards the Tory Press—joined a few days later by

the Liberals—broke into full cry of denunciation of the Red Plot. There was no waiting for proof or even for evidence; there was no reference, or scarcely any reference, to the first Bulgarian allegations that the conspirators were the agrarian emigrés in Serbia, who had been supported by and were to be shielded by the Belgrade Government. There was neither inquiry nor hesitation. This was beyond doubt the Red Hand of Zinoviev. This was what he was plotting to do in London. Rakovsky and all his staff were in the plot. "Clear them out," screamed the *Daily Mail*, supported by the heavier voices of the twopenny Press.

The headlines of those days are a study. "Moscow's plans for Revolution," "Bolshevist Army in England," "The Red Peril Here," "Armed Revolution Favoured," are fair examples.

The *Daily Mail*, after its fashion, lost its head, and nearly turned the whole thing to laughter by announcing that St. Margaret's, Westminster, had been searched for bombs on the eve of Lord Rawlinson's funeral. Sir Wyndham Childs himself had to telephone round Fleet Street next day to implore the papers not to make Scotland Yard more ridiculous than ever by repeating the absurdity.

Hard on the St. Margaret's story came that other masterpiece—the plot against Mr. Chamberlain's life. A foreign legation—let it remain anonymous since it could not very well have acted otherwise—got hold of a Vienna rumour of a plan to assassinate the Foreign Secretary. It, naturally enough, passed it on to the Foreign Office, which passed it to the Yard, which (probably yawning) pigeon-holed it with a hundred other such yarns. But an over-zealous official, with an under-developed sense of the ridiculous, handed the story, with suitable embellishments, to a news agency. But it was too much even for editorial credulity. Even the *Star* and the *Evening News* were hesitant in their headlines. And the *Morning Post* next day was reduced to announcing that the whole story was without foundation. Mr. Chamberlain, it seems, was distinctly annoyed.

Another gentleman who was very worried was the Austrian Minister. For the fact that the rumour had come from Vienna helped on a subsidiary, but very significant, part of the campaign. The Western Governments have for a long time been annoyed with

the Austrian Government because it has allowed a certain amount of international Communist activity—notably the publication of the *International Press Correspondence*—to be carried on in Vienna. Pressure had been brought to bear once or twice before, and the Austrian Government had been forced to expel Communists whose presence in Vienna was distasteful to other Governments. But now the pressure was being redoubled. Representations were made by the Foreign Office. Press articles denounced Vienna as “a second Moscow.” The Austrian Government made valiant efforts to “clean its skirts.” Assurances were given in Downing Street. Denials were sent to the Press. The Chief of the Austrian Police contrived to see Malone and Mackinder as they came home through Vienna and to give them an interview explaining how careful an eye he kept on Communists. Only—he was a little indiscreet when he told them that the police departments of all Europe were preparing an anti-Communist drive in concert.

The significant sequel is preparing as I am writing. On the proposal of the Serbian Foreign Minister the Little Entente will probably send a note to Austria demanding the expulsion of all foreigners belonging either to Communist Parties or to Balkan revolutionary organisations. And it is reported that M. Nintchitch is doing this at the suggestion of a Great Power. Which Great Power is a riddle not difficult to solve.

But to return to this country. This evidently organised Press campaign, swelling both in volume and in intensity as the weeks went by, had a slight boomerang effect. Tangled nerves began to ask why, if all this plotting was going on under his nose, the Home Secretary was doing nothing.

Here came the test. Unless, for some ulterior purpose of its own, the Government wanted the campaign to continue, wanted an atmosphere of alarm and of Russophobia created, Sir William Joynson-Hicks' course was clear. One honest statement from him and the whole thing would collapse, leaving the old ladies to sleep soundly without fears that they might wake up one morning and find themselves nationalised.

I have not the least hesitation in saying that the Home Secretary knows perfectly well that the whole thing is bunk, that he knows perfectly well that Scotland Yard, for all its pertinacious activity,



has never found a scrap of evidence of a plot; that its associates, the British Fascisti, have never found any such evidence; that its spies in the Communist Party have never found any such evidence: in short that there isn't any evidence because there isn't any Plot.

Sir William, I say, could have spoken out frankly and truthfully and killed the whole mischievous business in a single sentence. But Sir William did nothing of the kind. Instead he deliberately, by hints and innuendoes, supported the Press campaign.

First to the Primrose League and then in an interview in the *Sunday Times*, he announced that he knew far more than he proposed to tell, that he "received daily reports of Communist activities," that he was "fully cognisant of the state of affairs," that he was taking all necessary steps, and that he would act when the time came. In an answer to a Parliamentary question he went so far as to suggest that there was truth in the fantastic tale—which even the *Morning Post* had been driven to deny—of the plot to assassinate Mr. Chamberlain.

That was the acid test. The Home Secretary made it perfectly clear that he did not want to tell the truth because he did not want the anti-Bolshevik Press campaign damped down. The Home Secretary, one is bound to assume, speaks for the Government. And if the British Government does not want such a venomous campaign against a foreign government stopped, one can only conclude that it is itself a party to the campaign, which is designed to further its own policy.

Now if that be so, and there can be little room for doubt that it is so; if this hectic anti-Russian Press campaign is being carried on under the direct inspiration or, at the least, with the connivance and tacit approval of the Government, what does it signify? It is clearly, as such things always are, a preparation—but for what?

One thinks immediately of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Agreement. For over and over again, with an insistence which is clearly not accidental, leading articles which have opened by deploring the Sofia explosion or by protesting against the diplomatic immunity enjoyed by Rakovsky and his colleagues, have ended by denouncing the Agreement as a danger both to the British Unions and to the I.F.T.U. The solicitude of the Tory and Liberal Press for the welfare of the Amsterdam International is singularly

touching. It arouses in some leader writers enthusiasms so strong that, under the emotional stress, they confuse the I.F.T.U. with the Labour and Socialist International.

Evidently then one of the objects of the plotmongers is to stir up opposition to the Trade Union Treaty. And that is, equally evidently, a sound tactical move. For sharp hostility to the Treaty, expressed by a considerable section, might mean a stiff fight in Congress next September, with resultant divisions and dissensions in the movement. And that would be of very material assistance to the employers in the industrial conflicts which are ahead.

It may well be, therefore, that one of the purposes of this Red Plot Stunt is to divide, at a critical juncture, both the political and the industrial sides of the Labour movement by stirring up a quarrel between pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet groups.

But this, I fancy, is merely a subsidiary calculation. The sources of the majority of the plot propaganda suggest very strongly that its motive must be sought rather in the foreign than in the domestic sphere, and that, if it is a preparation for some move, that move is diplomatic rather than industrial. I see, in short, no reason whatever for rejecting the most obvious conclusion of all—that a new move against the Soviet Union is in preparation.

Whatever assurances may be given to the contrary one is forced to assume that a British Conservative Government must, of its very nature, be intensely hostile to the Soviet Government. There are twin reasons for such hostility. As Conservatives, British Tories detest the Socialist Republic and realise that its successful development is the gravest of all menaces to their own power. As Imperialists they dread the great republican State whose territories so nearly march with those of the Eastern Empire which they are trying forcibly to hold and to exploit. The geographical relations of Britain and the Soviet Union are such that between them there can only be either the most cordial of understandings or the most decisive hostility. But between a Tory Government and a Communist Government there is no possibility of cordial understanding.

Hostility then must be taken for granted. And the primary task of British diplomacy under a Tory regime must necessarily be to weaken the Soviet Government, to form coalitions against it, to stimulate hostility towards it, so to trouble it on its Western

borders that it is reduced to inaction and impotence in the South Asiatic borderlands.

Along those lines Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy has already been quietly working. The attempt to procure the formation of an anti-Soviet Balkan bloc broke down. Mr. Chamberlain, as I warned him, was venturing into a tangle which he did not understand. Mr. Lieper's activities at Riga seem to have been a little more successful, though Poland has shown a disappointing reluctance to tie herself up with the minor Baltic States for the benefit of Great Britain's Asiatic diplomacy. The Five Power Pact, of which one of the chief objects was to "cut the wire" between Berlin and Moscow by making Germany feel herself once more an accepted member of Western European society, is in a bad way. But the election of Hindenburg is regarded as reassuring. And, most satisfactory of all, the strong movement in the United States towards recognition has, for the moment, been checked.

Hostility to Russia is, in fact, even where not visible on the surface, the chief underrunning theme of the Chamberlain diplomacy. And it is, I think, as an integral part of that diplomacy that we must regard the Red Plot Stunt. In a period of apparent quiescence—which has been in fact a period of intense underground activity—this Press campaign is the first plainly visible warning of what is afoot. It is—unless all deduction from previous experience is fallacious—the preparation of "public opinion" for some open diplomatic move.

The parallel of the weeks before the Curzon ultimatum again comes to mind. Is a new ultimatum being even now prepared by the Foreign Office? Are suggestions being made to other Powers for a joint note to Moscow? Are the diplomats preparing such a stroke as an insistent request, under pain of boycott, that the Communist International shall be either dissolved or banished from the Soviet Union? The details may be matter for speculation. But all the signs seem to indicate that something of the sort is in preparation, that a new and vigorous diplomatic offensive against the Soviet Republics will be launched during the summer months.

# THE NEW WAR IN MOROCCO

By JACQUES DORIOT

(Communist Member of the French Chamber of Deputies)

[THE LABOUR MONTHLY is privileged to present to its readers this article on the Moroccan situation, specially written by Jacques Doriot, whose powerful speeches in the French Chamber in defence of the peoples of Morocco against imperialist attacks and exploitation have created a great sensation in France.

*Jacques Doriot, who is an engineer by trade, is the most prominent young figure in the French Communist movement. As General Secretary of the French Young Communist League, his persistent anti-militarist propaganda led to his imprisonment. He was still in jail at the time of the General Election in France, in May, 1924 : but his election by a big majority as Communist Deputy for one of the working-class constituencies of Paris secured, after slight delay, his release.]*

WAR has broken out again in Morocco with considerable fierceness. Riffs and French are now at grips. The war which Marshal Lyautey has just started will not be as easy as the former ones. It is a modern war. He is no longer faced by Arabs armed with flint-lock muskets against whom he can employ aeroplanes, but by Riffs who possess artillery, machine guns, tanks and even aeroplanes. Moreover they are inspired by the proud memory of the victory which freed them from the Spaniards and they have the moral and financial support of the whole world of Islam. Lyautey has a tough job before him. The chief of the Riff Republic is an adversary to be reckoned with.

The development of events does not surprise us. We have foreseen and denounced it. For several months the whole French Press has been creating a warlike atmosphere. To-day it throws the responsibility for the war on the Riffs.

Let us examine the facts. After his victory over Spain, Abd-el-Krim laid down the general lines of the policy of the Riff Republic. The evacuation of Riff territory and of Spanish Morocco by the

armies of Primo de Rivera ; the right of self-determination for the Riff people ; peace with the neighbouring States, particularly with France. From November to February he repeated to journalists of all countries, French, English and American, his desire to negotiate amicably with France. He wrote to Lyautey, to Muley Youssef, Sultan of Morocco, to assure them of his peaceful intentions. They did not deign to reply. Why? *L'Information*<sup>1</sup> tells us : " According to all the documents which make the actual position of Morocco in international law so complicated (that is to say the Treaties of 1912 which divide Morocco into two spheres of influence : one French and the other Spanish, without consulting the people of Morocco) *Abd-el-Krim has no diplomatic existence.*" With whom can we negotiate ? "

French diplomacy ignores a people which has won its freedom and set up its Republic when this people proposes peace and friendly relations. Lyautey and the imperialist Press which he controls understood this perfectly. To each peaceful proposal of Abd-el-Krim this journalistic rabble replied by warmongering pronouncements. *L'Oeuvre*<sup>2</sup> and the *Matin*<sup>4</sup> distinguished themselves in this business. Lyautey himself added unequivocal declarations " on the Riff anarchy, which must be brought to an end."

He did not stop there. The Treaties of 1912 officially separated the valley of the Ouergha from the Riff, that is to say the Riff country, which is rich in minerals, but poor from an agricultural point of view, from its natural granary.

Lyautey recognised the " political and juridical " necessity of starving the Riffs. He commenced the blockade.

For the past year Lyautey has been working to prepare war. The *Petit Parisien* admits it : " Last year the French line had been advanced six miles without a blow being struck, a clever political preparation having prepared the way for the military advance."

Then this year he re-established the blockade by setting against the Riffs, by means of his agent the Derkoui, the tribe of Neni

<sup>1</sup> One of the best-informed political and financial organs of the Paris capitalist Press.

<sup>2</sup> The italics are ours. — J. D.

The *Manchester Guardian* of France; an ardent supporter of the *Bloc des Gauches*.

<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the most notorious of the Paris " gutter " Press.

Zeroual, who live in the Ouergha Valley and consequently held up food supplies.

The Riffs have the right to eat. They occupied the Ouergha. It was the moment that Lyautey had waited for to start the war. Had not the *Bloc des Gauches* promised him financial and military support? Had not the Socialists shown by their scandalous abstention that they were ready to excuse all the actions of the Moroccan adventurer? All these facts show clearly *that it is French imperialism which is responsible for the Riff war*. They wish to overthrow the Riff Republic for the profit of the French banking consortium. Slaughter is to start again in Morocco. The war will be long and deadly.

It will not stop as is apparently suggested at the Riff frontier. From now onwards Lyautey means to penetrate into the Riff territory. The most imperialist papers advise him to do so. Our Anglophobes, and they are many, are even casting their eyes on Gibraltar and desire to secure by military successes the revision of the existing international agreements and to make Tangier a French town.

The Riff war, like the former conquest of Morocco, is going to complicate the international situation. Italy, wishing to annex Tunis, is already showing her teeth. England, nervous about Gibraltar, divides her favours between France and the Riffs. Spain, defeated, but still ambitious, will willingly allow the Riffs to be beaten but will protest against the occupation of the Spanish zone by the troops of the *Bloc des Gauches*. This war is not only dangerous in itself, because of the lives it will cost the workers, but still more because of the imperialist bargaining that it brings in its wake and the conflicts that it may provoke between the great imperialist Powers.

Faced with this terrible danger the French working-class must act swiftly and firmly, more solid than ever in support of the Riffs who have been basely provoked to war.

They must force French imperialism to conclude the immediate peace, asked for and desired by the Riffs. They must demand that the Riff Republic be recognised and respected. They must support this young movement of liberation. They must request and enforce the immediate evacuation of Morocco, the grave of the workers' children and of millions of their money.

# THE GREAT RETREAT

(Germany, 1918-1925)

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

SOME years ago a German Social-Democrat wrote a book which is now out of print on the relations between a political party organisation and the individual members of that party. He was living latterly in Italy and under those conditions was able to see as others saw the process of bureaucratisation that was going on at great speed in the German Social-Democratic Party. As Nietzsche pictured the super-man, so this author foresaw the coming of the super-party. He saw the principles and objects for which the party was founded, and for which it had fought many a hard fight and established many a noble tradition, becoming subjected to the instinct of preserving the apparatus of the party, which had been built up with such care and which might be endangered by boldly facing a critical situation. And so the human machine which worked the party would tend to become an entity in itself—above the party and ultimately to dictate policy, irrespective of old traditions or ideals.

There is no doubt that much of what has happened in Germany since the Armistice is due to a failure of this kind on the part of the great Social-Democratic Party, the pillar of the old International, the party of August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, of Kautsky, Bernstein and Mehring, and of some of the finest thinkers on social and economic theory that last century produced. The tragedy of that failure is all the greater when one remembers that revolutionary situations come and go and once they are let slip by social decay is liable to set in, until some fresh incentive is derived from some other part of the world. How far was the failure to derive any benefit for the masses in Germany out of the situation which arose by the collapse of the Hohenzollern state due to factors outside Germany, and how far was it due to the moral breakdown of the German Social-Democratic Party at the critical moment, it is impossible to weigh up exactly. One is at once up against the

problem of the rôle of personalities in controlling mass movements, and it is justifiable to argue that with a counsel of perfection in the offices of the *Vorwaerts* and of the S.P.D. the events of 1919 and of subsequent years would not have been greatly affected. On the other hand it is equally conceivable that even with a Germany blockaded by the Allies, cut off from Soviet Russia, and on her uppers as far as food and raw material was concerned, it might have been possible to face the Allies with nationalised heavy industries, controlled banks, and a State monopoly of foreign trade. With a readiness to pay some reparations it might then have been possible to dare the Allies to reject this offer and to advance on Berlin in the face of their own working-class movements at home. Germany would not have become at one blow a Socialist republic. She might have still nominally retained the Reichstag with a bourgeois majority, controlled by workers' councils. Her social system would not have been in any case less advanced along the road to full Socialism than that of the Soviet Union to-day. But it would have been an important step in that direction and it would have created interesting repercussions in the rest of Europe. There is no doubt that the ruling classes in this country during the winter of 1918-19 were in a very nervous state over the condition of Central Europe. If there had been a leadership in a Social-Democratic party that was prepared to risk something with a fair chance of success, Germany might by this time have escaped the fate of becoming the Profiteer Republic of Central Europe, and although it might be still burdened with a Dawes plan, which it could not shake off without help from outside, it would at least have distributed the burden of that plan more equitably than at present.

But the requisite personalities were absent at the Lindenstrasse and the mass mind, which was prepared for a vigorous lead, was allowed to feed only on the paper promises of the Weimar constitution, in return for which it was induced to give up the real positions of industrial power which it had won in the opening days of the Revolution. This great retreat from strategical key positions was begun on the very morrow of the abdication of the Kaiser. At this moment Kautsky jumped into the breach and declared that anyone who advocated nationalisation of industry or control of credit in the conditions in which Germany found herself then, with



disorganised factories, insufficient transport, depreciated currency, lack of capital and half-famished population, "would be turning Germany into a mad-house." Another Social-Democratic leader, Adolf Cohen, said: "The workers could not suffer a greater misfortune than that the capitalist class should even for one day hand over to them the key to economic power, before it is ready." And Scheidemann clapped the crown on this shameless desertion from duty by declaring: "We cannot nationalise debts." Working on this assumption, therefore, that when capitalism has hurled its own masses into a war and encompassed its own ruin it is the duty of a Socialist to set up the profit-making machine once more and then turn round and ask it to allow itself to be nationalised, the *Vorwaerts* began on the very first day of the Revolution to assure the German middle classes that "for nationalisation of industry it is necessary to have a properly constituted State, which we have not got at the present time." (December 5, 1918.)

That the psychological groundwork was there for a beginning of nationalisation in Germany at this time is seen in a new work which has just appeared in Germany on the history of the German Revolution, *Vom Kaiserreich Zur Republik*, by Richard Mueller, the Social-Democratic chairman of the Berlin Workers' Council in those days. In Volume II, page 107, he writes: "A large part of the intellectuals, technicians, engineers, chemists, architects, and doctors were in the first months of the Revolution ready to work with us (the manual workers) . . . In the conference which I presided over in December with these brain workers their readiness to co-operate in this new political and industrial order was clearly shown. There were many who up to the Revolution had had no contact with the manual workers, but who now, although they regarded the Revolution as the work of the manual workers, were glad to transfer their activities from assistance of profit-making for private interests to that of the common weal . . . But this could only happen if the political and industrial organs, thrown up by the Revolution, took the initiative." But what happened? Mueller describes how his Workers' Council of Berlin worked out plans for the control of the industries of that city with the aid of the technical and clerical staffs, whereby there would have been no drop in production, no flight of capital through control of the books, fair

rationing of raw material, and control of prices. The committees were there and—"our Social-Democratic Trade Union leaders protested; they had already signed an agreement with the employers, which was neither known to us nor to the public." Mueller describes (Vol. II, page 112) how Dr. Reichert, the Secretary of the German Iron and Steel Union, told at a meeting of the Westfalian Chamber of Commerce in December, 1918, how his organisation had come to an agreement with the German Trade Union leaders not to allow any workers' control over the employers or insight into their financial transactions, in return for which the workers should get the eight-hour day! One may be permitted to ask after six years, where are the fruits of that agreement to-day?

But perhaps we are unjust to the Social-Democratic leaders. Perhaps the Allies were threatening the new German government that if it made any Socialistic experiments, they would refuse to send in any fats and meat for the hungry urban population. Certainly the Allied governments were nervous, but were they prepared to go back on that clause of the Armistice which bound them to allow food to pass into Germany to prevent starvation? On the contrary they were interested and did in fact press President Wilson to pour food into Hamburg and Bremen in order to stifle the threatening Revolution with rancid American fats and bacon! And yet the *Vorwaerts*, on November 21, got someone to telegraph to it from Holland that "the food which has been obtained abroad for Germany is being held back by the American government, because it is not certain if Germany can guarantee that she will have a free constitution and undertake the fair distribution of the food among the population." On December 11, this was denied by Reuter from Washington. Mueller also gives the wording of a telegram (Vol. II, page 118) from Ebert to the American government, asking for food to be sent to Germany, "provided that public order prevails there." The press correspondence of the Social-Democratic Party thereupon announced to the world that Germany would only get food if it ceased to make Bolshevistic experiments! Whereupon the *Temps*, of November 16, wrote: "The conditions which President Wilson put for the supply of food to Germany did not come from him but *were suggested to him by the German Chancellor (Ebert) himself*" (my italics). It was left

to an honest capitalist paper, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, to announce through its Geneva correspondent that: "In actual fact M. Clemenceau is quite indifferent to what form of government there is in Germany, whether it is capitalistic or Socialistic, if Liebknecht is crowned Kaiser in Prussia or Prince Henry is elected President of the Republic in Kiel." It is, therefore, not possible to pretend that Germany could not have taken some steps towards Socialism, because of the threats of starvation by the Allies during these months. The real obstacle lay, as can now be indisputably proved, in Germany itself and not least of all in the Social-Democratic Party.

It is not necessary to relate the long story of this obstruction of Socialistic effort and of the dismal retreat which has gone on from that day to this and has ended in the support of the capitalist Republican, Marx, against a victorious Monarchist general in the Presidential elections last month. I have dealt specially with these particular facts in the earliest days of the November Revolution, because they have only recently come to light in full detail in the disclosures of Richard Mueller, who had access to all the documents of the workers' councils throughout Germany at this time. But the whole history of subsequent years is strewn with similar cases. The entry of the Social-Democrats into the Government with the Liberal Democrats and the Catholic Centre in the Weimar coalition from 1919 to 1920 was made without any guarantee for the introduction of Socialistic measures. The masses were given the Weimar Constitution and other political rights and one important industrial measure, the "Workers' Council Law," which, however, was soon shown to have little value because the final control rested with the employers and strict secrecy was exacted from the workers' delegates.

In 1920 one of the worst stabs in the back ever delivered to the German Labour Movement was made when the Social-Democratic coalition government allowed itself to be saved from the Kapp rebels by the "Red Army" on the Ruhr, and after it had settled its quarrel with Kapp used the rebels to put down and massacre the Ruhr miners, the very people who had saved it. After that the miners had a sop thrown to them in the Socialisation Commission which was going to report in favour of nationalisation and legislation was to follow. But the Commission when it did report burked the issue and, anyhow, there was no parliamentary majority. The time

had gone by ; the industrial power had been allowed to slip from the hands of the workers and the Social-Democratic Party was impotent. In the winter of 1921-22 the heavy industries, led by Stinnes, began their offensive. Their aim was the abolition of the eight-hour day, the price of the Social-Democratic undertaking not to attempt "Socialistic experiments," and the de-nationalisation of the German State railways to be held by the German trusts in pawn for reparations to the Allies. There was a public counter-demand for the State Mortgage on Industry (*Erfassung der Sachwerte*), as a reply to this offensive. The Social-Democratic leaders evaded the crisis by inducing the trusts to abandon their demands on condition that they abandoned theirs. Stagnation remained throughout 1922. The crises over the Rathenau and other murders were only superficial political crises and did not affect the general trend of events in Germany. It was the oncoming struggle between the French and German heavy industry over the control of the coke-production of the Ruhr that shook the German Republic to its foundations and created, during the inflation wave, following on the passive resistance of the Cuno government, a new revolutionary situation, which might have led to a new push in the direction of Socialism. In this crisis of the summer and autumn of 1923 the Social-Democratic leaders followed in the wake of the national capitalistic groups. The *Vorwaerts* editors, led by Stampfer, played second fiddle to Stinnes and used all the slogans of the German Nationalists to rouse the German masses to patriotic resistance. No word of explanation ever appeared in its columns about the real industrial nature of this struggle between two capitalist groups. The *Vorwaerts* report of shootings at Krupps in April, 1923, was a case in point. No working class solution was ever sought for this Gordian Knot. On the other hand another group round Dr. Breitscheid showed a Francophil tendency, but also eschewed the working-class solution. Nor did the Communist Party do any better. In the midst of the crisis, Karl Radek let loose his famous Schlageter speech, extolling this notorious Pan-German wastrel and sending up throughout Germany a Nationalist-Communist stink which reached to heaven. Good work was done by the *Rote Fahne* under Thalheimer's and Brandler's control during the summer and autumn of 1923 in showing up the true

economic causes of the Ruhr fight, but it was insufficient to prepare the mass mind of Germany for a new Socialist push. Abortive risings of the Left and Right, in Saxony and Munich, were defeated by the capitalist parties of the Centre under the military dictatorship of Von Seeckt and the way prepared for the Dawes plan. The Social-Democratic leaders could not have prevented the application of this plan to Germany, but like MacDonalld in England, they might have shown the masses the real nature of this plan to stabilise the European currencies in the interest of the American gold reserves. This they both failed to do. The last stage of the retreat has been spectacular but has little real meaning as it is merely an outward sign of what has been for a long time an economic fact. The election of Hindenburg<sup>1</sup> is merely the hoisting of the colours of the joint dictatorship of junkers, heavy industry and banks in alliance with Anglo-American finance. Once again the Social-Democratic leaders tried to make a political issue of it, and raising the cry: "the Republic in danger," allied themselves with the Catholic and Liberal Centre and—were beaten.

This is the record of the great retreat since the Armistice. But it would be untrue to say that the rank and file of the German Social-Democratic Party are happy at what has happened or that they do not see to what their leaders have led them. There is a healthy recognition of the fact that an aristocracy has risen up during the last ten years in the party and has entrenched itself inside the party apparatus, has acquired vested economic interest in that machine and unconsciously regards the principle of the party as a secondary consideration. The same thing has happened to the German Social-Democratic Party as is happening rather more recently to the Russian Communist Party. In the words of Max Eastman: "a bureaucratic aristocracy is actually solidifying within the Communist Party." But in the case of the German Social-Democratic Party no Trotsky has arisen as yet to fight it. Upon whether a Trotsky arises in the near future depends the fate of the party of Bebel, Liebknecht and Mehring. Failing this, retreat will turn into rout and rout into dissolution.

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<sup>1</sup> For the election figures, see *THE LABOUR MONTHLY*, May, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 5, pp. 311-312.

# THE I.L.P.—PAST AND PRESENT

By MARGARET COLE

**T**HE Independent Labour Party, like the other Socialist organisations of Great Britain, was born in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Its birth, that is, coincided roughly with the beginnings of imperialist capitalism, when the mid-century prosperity of the craftsman was ceasing to fulfil the aspirations of the working classes, and all around a conviction was growing that capitalism, for the majority of the workers, meant much the same as it did in the days of the industrial revolution. Within fifteen years came into existence both the "New Unions" of the underpaid, with fighting demands and a strike policy, and Socialist societies calling for a new world in the phrases of Owen and Marx. The chief of these societies were the Social-Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, and the Independent Labour Party, the last-named, which was destined completely to overshadow the other two, being also the latest born.

The Social-Democrats, the revolutionary party, had a brief importance only. Capitalism was still far too prosperous to make a revolutionary policy practical in Britain. It could afford to yield to the workers a good many concessions in the way of shorter hours, increased wages, and industrial legislation; and a party which called all these things "palliatives" was not likely to collect many adherents among the working-class. The Social-Democrats degenerated from the ideals of William Morris into a squabbling clique. There remained the Fabian Society, and the I.L.P.

The ideals of these two bodies were much the same. They both aimed at a Socialism of the vaguest possible type, the elimination of private profit and the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange—"plain Socialism," in fact, with no frills. They were both constitutional, that is to say, they proposed to achieve their object without violent dislocation of the existing order. Where they differed was in method. The Fabians proposed a

definite strategy. They would make a Fabian State by insinuating Fabians into the key positions in the Government and local Government services and by insensibly "permeating" with Fabian ideals the persons chiefly responsible for the conduct of British affairs. Then the world would one day wake up to find that Great Britain had been secretly made Socialist. The I.L.P. had no definite plan, except to make everybody a Socialist. When that was done, Socialism would supervene as a matter of course, nobody quite knew how. In the meantime, it was of course advisable to get Socialist candidates into Parliament and Municipal Councils.

The Fabians had the advantage of a perfectly definite and practical plan of campaign. This, together with the talents and energy of the principal Fabian leaders, explains the great influence of the Fabian Society in the early Labour Party. The only disadvantage was that the plan, like so many other practical plans, turned out to be quite impossible. The economic history of the world would not stand still while the Fabians were carrying out their plan, and as fast as they slipped Fabians into the key positions of capitalism, capitalism claimed them for its own. "The Webb's young men" became a bye-word for efficient administrators of the capitalist system. Fabianism, furthermore, was essentially the creed of a small middle-class group. "Key positions," in the Fabian sense, could only be occupied by trained members of the bourgeoisie, and the working-class had no function other than to do what it was told by its own Fabian-trained officials—hence the Webbs' great admiration for the examination system enforced upon officials of the cotton trade. The lack of an historic sense, which might have suggested that working-class associations had other purposes, was the great error in the Fabian philosophy. We may put the result concretely by saying that the chief permanent memorial of the Fabian Society is—the Insurance Acts.

The Fabians regarded the working-class as figures on a piece of paper, the I.L.P. at any rate regarded them as voters and potential propagandists. So from the very first the I.L.P. membership among the working classes was many times as great as that of the Fabian Society. But this was not due to any conscious class feeling, but simply to the fact that at the time of its formation few, except the working classes, were interested in a Labour political party.

Anybody might, however, come in; the Socialism of the I.L.P., in fact, looked forward to a Utopia in which everybody, more or less, would be an I.L.P.'er.

These three facts—the absence of a class basis, or of a definite strategy, and the possession of exceedingly broad Socialist principles—drove the I.L.P. from the very first to rely mainly upon its leaders, both to direct its action and to formulate its faith. To understand the history of the I.L.P., it is important to realise its dependence upon its heroes. From Keir Hardie to Clifford Allen, the policy of the I.L.P. has been as its heroes have made it, and they have been venerated with an earnestness ranging from steady loyalty to unqualified sentimentalism. At the same time, the broad basis has allowed of the inclusion, at one time and another, in I.L.P. tenets, of many matters which had no particular connection with Socialism, and only got in under the slightly confused impression that a person who held advanced political views ought also to hold what was accepted as an advanced view upon everything else. An I.L.P.'er had a tendency to be also a vegetarian, a temperance advocate, an anti-vaccinationist, an opponent of capital punishment, &c., &c. Chief of these advanced theories was pacifism, and, as the early leaders of the I.L.P. were mostly ardent pacifists, the I.L.P. as a whole took up an anti-war position. This also is important in view of later developments.

At the end of the century, then, the I.L.P. was a pacifist, broad-Socialist body, with a devoted loyalty to its personal leaders, which ran Parliamentary candidates as a form of propaganda rather than because it had any high hopes of their success. But at this time its leaders conceived the idea of becoming a left-wing political party on a large scale. With the rather unwilling aid of the Fabian Society they persuaded the Trade Unions not merely to take to politics, but also, by a stroke which, whether designed or no, was certainly brilliant, to undertake the principal burden of financing the new Labour Party. Opportunely, the Taff Vale Judgment in 1902 served to convince the Unions that their move into politics had been badly needed.

But, in spite of the Labour Party, the Trade Unions were not by any means I.L.P. The Trade Union leaders of 1900-1910 had grown up in the class-collaborationist period of the preceding



century ; they had no particular ambition to be a large independent political party ; many of them were not Socialists even in the broadest sense ; and they were certainly not pacifists nor converted to all the fads which the advanced politicians had picked up by the wayside. So in the new Labour Party the I.L.P. representatives still appeared to be to the left of the Trade Unionists ; though in the years immediately before the war, when the industrial workers, tricked and deceived by Parliament, began once more to take matters into their own hands, prescient persons began to doubt whether, when the class-struggle awoke in earnest, the "Left-wing" politician would prove to be so much to the left after all.

Pacifism remained the main difference between the I.L.P. leaders and the Trade Unionists ; and when the war broke out their pacifism kept them still on the left. It ranged MacDonal for once in the same camp as Lenin and his group, and on one occasion even (in the Leeds Conference of 1917) nearly embroiled Snowden with the Soviet system. The I.L.P. thus gained a reputation as the party which had never bowed the knee to Baal—a reputation which served it well when the war-fever was over. It was joined, from 1917-18 onwards, not merely by disillusioned soldiers and workers, but by Liberal politicians and middle-class intellectuals who saw that there was no future in the Liberal Party for either their careers or their creeds.

From 1919 it went from strength to strength. The new constitution of the Labour Party gave its members an entry into all the local parties ; it replaced the Trade Union leader of the Labour Party in the House of Commons by its own leader, MacDonal ; having now acquired an intellectual element as strong as the Fabians it elbowed them to one side ; when the Communist Party appeared it easily prevented it from being officially recognised. Finally, in 1923, it decisively beat the Liberals and became a Government, filling the chief posts with its own leaders.

Then came trouble. The I.L.P. leaders had never bothered to provide a strategic programme for their rank and file. The Labour Party schemes for dealing with various problems, such as the unemployed, the Poor Law, &c., had mostly been elaborated by the Fabians ; and in any case were long gradual processes requiring a long lease of power. No one had ever discussed the steps which

ought to be immediately taken in the event of a short lease of power, still less of a minority government. When Sidney Webb hinted mildly that resolutions passed in the fine air of conferences might find themselves modified in the heat of practical politics, he was generally felt to have committed an indecency. In effect, the Labour Government went into office without its supporters, either in the House of Commons or in the country, knowing in the least what it hoped or intended to do.

The result was a terrible confusion in the minds of the rank and file. After the first flush of hope, it rapidly became apparent that the MacDonald Government was much the same as any other Government, and had no intention of taking, or even attempting to take, any steps towards Socialism. Discontent grew; but was difficult to express. The Government could not be accused of departing from its programme, for no programme had ever been laid down for the practical situation, and any complaints could always be met by the phrase "in office, but not in power." The rank and file had to fall back on protest against those actions of the Government which seemed most flagrantly anti-Labour, the tardy recognition of Russia, the dressing-up at Court functions, the Campbell prosecution, the attitude to strikes, &c., &c., right up to the crowning folly of the Zinoviev letter, which defeated the best electioneering efforts of the I.L.P. by bringing out the capitalist reserves.

Then, last Easter, came the stock-taking. It was an anxious moment for the I.L.P. leaders. The Government had drawn very heavily upon the reserves of loyalty and there were signs that the stocks were getting low. At the same time, even the simplest Socialist had come to see that the total absence of a programme might have its disadvantages. "Trust MacDonald and keep your powder dry," is a fine battle-cry, but it is well to be sure in which direction the guns are pointing.

There were two dangers, first, that the Conference might turn down the Labour Government, secondly, that it might lay down hampering conditions for the next Labour Government. Of these the second was the most likely, since it is extraordinarily difficult to carry a direct vote of censure in a big Conference. Actually, in spite of the efforts of the Executive, the Conference rejected the

paragraphs of the report which dealt with the Red Letter, and mustered a strong vote against any congratulation whatever being extended to the Labour Government. These were inconvenient, but not fatal incidents.

The two dangers aforesaid were tackled by the Chairman at the outset. Clifford Allen is at once a pastmaster in the art of "pure" politics, and a man who has bound his own fortunes up closely with those of the I.L.P. His speech is therefore worthy of the closest attention. He gave no quarter to the suggestion that, as the Labour Government had been, on its own confession, hopelessly hampered by being in a minority, no Labour Government should again take office without a majority, pointing out that in that case it would be many many years before a Labour Government would take office again. The implication clearly is that office, and not the introduction of Socialism, is the aim. With regard to the discontents, he associated himself very gently with the complainants. That part of his speech was, in effect, a delicate hint to MacDonald that he had got a little out of touch with his late comrades, and that if he would only take Allen's advice and consult the susceptibilities of the rank and file before dressing himself up in a sword and kneebreeches his great services would not be so much in danger of going unappreciated. (MacDonald, it would appear, did not altogether take the hint in good part; at all events, in his reply he referred to "small-minded critics," and suggested that he was awaiting the judgment of the world on his actions.)

Allen was so far successful in that nothing more was heard of the proposal to wait for a majority. There were, however, other snags in the way.

Principally, there was the industrial movement. Since the events of 1921 finally broke down the theory of class co-operation in industry, the industrial movement has been steadily moving to the left. This is not a case (as before the war) of the rank and file revolting against their leaders; the rank and file, taken as a whole, is still too hard hit to do anything of the kind. It is the whole movement, leaders and all (with of course, some right honourable exceptions), which is being gradually forced by the logic of events to the conclusion that there is no way out except by a change of system, and a change brought about by the economic power of the

workers. This, of course, runs directly counter to the ideas of a political party bent on securing Parliamentary office, with or without power ; and so, as has already been pointed out in other quarters, the industrial movement has, during the past two years, found itself well to the left of the I.L.P. leaders—a position accentuated by the lack of consideration shown to the General Council by the Labour Government, as well as by the same Government's attitude to industrial disputes.

Strikes are a grave inconvenience to a political party bent on proving itself fit to govern in "continuity" (convenient word !) with the older parties. But the I.L.P., many of whose M.P.'s rely on Trade Union money, cannot afford to ignore the Trade Unions altogether, even if they are only "shadows of their former selves," as an indiscreet I.L.P.'er suggested. Allen's speech, therefore, while arguing that strikes, in the ordinary way, were useless and disastrous, and delivering an insulting dig at men who, themselves in safe jobs, urged other people to give up theirs, suggested a policy for the industrial movement. This policy (subsequently embodied in a long resolution) was—to call upon the Government to set up a National Commission to determine a living wage . . . *the standard not being liable to depreciation by any variation of prices ; in the event of Parliament endorsing the recommendations of the Commission, each industry to reorganise itself so as to be able to pay the fixed wage ; failing such reorganisation, Parliament to determine what form of public ownership or control is needed to meet the case. If Parliament did not endorse the recommendations, it was explained, or if the wage suggested was very low, there would be material for a magnificent propaganda campaign.*

Much might be said about the economic implications of this resolution ; but its main purpose is simply defeatist. The miners, the railwaymen, the engineers, are to hold their hands until the present Government has appointed a Commission (like the Food Commission ?), until the Commission has reported, which might easily take several years, until the recommendations have been passed by Parliament and the industries concerned been given an opportunity (under the capitalist system !) of putting them into effect ; or alternatively, until a great propaganda campaign has been worked up—for what purpose? *To put the I.L.P. back into office.*

This resolution, however, is the industrial policy of the I.L.P. leaders, and it was the only resolution passed by Conference on industrial matters.

The promise extorted from the Executive to set in motion again their moribund committee on industrial policy need not be taken seriously.

Lastly, we come to the question of socialisation, where Allen stepped aside and left the running to Hugh Dalton. The report on that subject, drawn up by a Committee of the Executive, decisively rejects confiscation, because of the millions of votes which such a policy might be expected to antagonise. It proposes to pay in terminable annuities for all industries socialised and to raise the money by taxation, increased death duties, &c. Clearly taxation, if increased to such a height as to provide terminable annuities for the shareholders in even the principal industries, becomes in effect a recurrent Capital Levy, in addition to the one already earmarked for scaling down the war debt. It may be remarked that since 1922 all the Labour Party leaders have been engaged in burying the Capital Levy as quickly as possible ; but apart from that, the use of a continual levy to confiscate capitalist profits is certain to react sharply upon industry, and is, in fact, simply incompatible with " sound finance " of the Snowden type. It must be admitted that this report was not put to the vote ; but it is being sent round for the consideration of the branches, and there is no minority report, since the Left on the committee, like the Left in most organisations, had no alternative policy.

We may now sum up the present position of the I.L.P. It has repudiated confiscation, and bases its socialisation plans on the possibility of securing indefinite sums by taxation ; it has definitely condemned strikes and put off industrial action to the Greek Kalends ; whether or no these concessions secure it sufficient votes from the middle-class and the petty bourgeoisie to give it a majority it has decided to take office again without any guarantee that the new Government will act in any way differently from the old one. At least, its leaders have decided that, and the Conference has acquiesced. But it should be remembered that this Conference was very carefully stage-managed. The length of the agenda, and the known willingness of delegates to any conference, if given rope, to

exhaust their fellows with enormous speeches, made it very easy for the Executive to get rid of awkward resolutions. The Left was unorganised and lacked an alternative programme. But the great majority of the I.L.P. in spite of the ex-Liberal influx, are still Socialists, as witness their unwillingness, save in a few areas, to join in pushing out the Communists, however much they disagree with their methods. They are—and this cannot be too firmly grasped by anyone concerned in the future of the I.L.P.—plain Socialists, with a great deal of loyalty to their old leaders. But loyalty has this peculiarity ; it lasts a long time and then gives out suddenly. And even the simplest Socialist is apt sooner or later to find out the difference between plain Socialism and plain reaction. The leaders of the I.L.P. have chosen the latter course and at present hold the field; it is for the Left to see whether the membership continues to follow them.

*Owing to extreme pressure on our space "THE WORLD OF LABOUR" and Lenin's "ON THE ROAD TO INSURRECTION" are held over till next month.*

# TROTSKY AND HIS "FRIENDS"

**I** GATHER from the *Labour Weekly* and the *Plebs* that Postgate and Horrabin are displeased with me. They rebuke me sternly. The creator of "Dot and Carrie" ("just a trifle shocking, please, Mr. Horrabin" was the instruction, was it not?) is scornful of "fluent journalists who write to order." Postgate, who should be a good judge of such matters, hints that I have changed my opinions at some word of command.

And all this because, in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* and in the *Daily Herald*, I spoke my mind about that tragically bad book of Trotsky's on Lenin.

Now if this were just a personal squabble, a piece of back-chat between "fluent journalists" (I thank thee, Horrabin, for teaching me that phrase) it would not matter a line of type. What they think of me, and what I think of them, are of not the least consequence to the Labour Movement. I apologise to them if they have a different appraisal of our triple importance. And I should not trouble to comment on it, or even on the fact that either wilfully or from "incurable sloppiness" they quite misrepresent what I wrote, but for the fact that their attitude does by chance throw not unimportant light on a quite important historical event.

Why is it that Postgate and Horrabin are—or were a week or two ago—so blindly devoted to Trotsky that any criticism of their idol has brought them out with bell, book and candle against the critic? It is not because he is one of the greatest revolutionary leaders the working-class has had. For they are angry with me who said just this of him. It is not because they have studied carefully the controversies in the Russian Communist Party and have come to the considered conclusion that Trotsky was right, for Postgate makes perfectly clear in his pontifical article ("now at last we are able to give the true story") that he has scarcely studied the subject at all. And Horrabin's study seems to have been confined to editorial perusal of Maurice Dobb's certainly excellent article in the *Plebs*.

No. Their enthusiasm for Trotsky is based simply on the fact that they conceive him to be in revolt against the Russian Communist Party. And, having themselves resigned in pique from the British Party, they are thrilled to find Trotsky—as they fondly imagine—playing the same rôle in Russia.

They are furious that Trotsky should have been forced to resign his office. They demand apparently that he should have been allowed to continue, while a member of the Government, to launch attack after attack on his colleagues. This they presumably call “liberty.” It is not liberty. It is not even anarchy. It is just muddle-headed nonsense. A government is not a theoretical debating society, but an executive organ. And no executive organ can function if its members are carrying on open polemics against each other. It is not anything to do with “Communist discipline.” It is just common sense. Suppose Arthur Henderson last year had disagreed violently and publicly with MacDonald’s foreign policy, and had, in the course of the argument, proceeded to publish a History of the War containing bitter personal attacks on MacDonald’s conduct in 1914. Would he not have been asked at once to resign? And would anyone outside a lunatic asylum have declared that this was a spiteful and sordid intrigue against him?

Trotsky disagreed with his colleagues, fought for his point of view, was beaten, and proceeded to campaign against them publicly. It was an intolerable situation that had to be ended.

How dangerous it was the example of Postgate and Horrabin—and herein lies their only importance—proves. For just as they, knowing and caring little about the issues, at once became “Trotskyists,” hoping, “under the banner of his great renown” to damage the Communist Party, so did their analogues in Russia also begin to rally round Trotsky. Disgruntled Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, S.-R.’s, even monarchists, began to look to him as the leader who would break the Party. It may surprise Postgate and Horrabin, but it is a fact that last year Tsarist intriguers in London were boasting that they would “use Trotsky and then kill him.” There was real danger—which Postgate and Horrabin, who appear to regard revolutionary politics as a series of personal squabbles, will perhaps not understand.

And it is precisely here that lies the danger of Cæsarism.



Trotsky was, of course, not aiming at becoming a Napoleon. He is—nor have I ever suggested otherwise—a perfectly loyal revolutionary. But events are apt to be too strong for men. Suppose that Trotsky, with a motley following whose only link was his leadership, had continued to fight against the Communist Party. Suppose that he had won. His triumph would have been a personal one. His power would only be a personal power. Either he must have gone down in his turn—as the Tsarists hoped—before a triumphant counter-revolution, or he must have established a regime dependent entirely upon his own genius, his own dynamic power, his own wonderful qualities of leadership and personal ascendancy over men. And what in the world is that if not Napoleonism?

There, for those with eyes to see, was the tremendous danger. It was a tragic business indeed: far more tragic for those of us who have known Trotsky personally than for the Postgates and Horrabins: most tragic of all for those who had worked side by side with him in the tremendous tasks of the Revolution. But it had to be done. Either Trotsky must, at any cost, be disciplined; or he might, by reason of his very greatness, destroy the Revolution.

One word more. I am convinced—I think I made it plain in my review—that to a very large degree the source of the trouble was Trotsky's illness. He was—as the Lenin book made pathetically clear—a sick man, a man not perfect master of his nerves or mind. I doubt if, in full health, he would have made such blunders, if he would have failed so wretchedly to see whither he was drifting. In sickness he became more nervous, more impetuous, more egotistic. His temperament had always been a troublesome servant. It became a perilous master.

If it is true—as it seems to be true—that Trotsky has now recovered his health, then probably we may count the whole wretched episode past. For Trotsky in health will resume his rightful place as the great revolutionary leader. He will see into what perilous paths he was drifting while not master of himself.

He will be grateful to those who successfully restrained him. But his scorn for those who tried to exploit him while he was sick, who tried to use the splendour of his reputation as a weapon against the Russian Communist Party, will be devastating.

W. N. E.

# BOOK REVIEW

“MIRRORS OF THE KREMLIN, BY A COMRADE WITH A DUSTER”; OR, SUBJECTIVISM IN POLITICS.

*Since Lenin Died.* By Max Eastman. Labour Publishing Company. 2s. 6d.

**A**N ironic fate has overtaken this book. Written just after the heat of the Trotsky controversy in the Russian Communist Party, it expresses a burning and passionate partisanship on behalf of Comrade Trotsky and a fierce and vehement denunciation of the unscrupulous villainy of the other leaders, and of the corruption and disruption of the Russian Communist Party. Unfortunately, at the moment of its appearance, comes the news of the reconciliation of Comrade Trotsky and the villains of the piece, and on top of that comes a personal repudiation of the book in advance by Comrade Trotsky himself.

(This will not, of course, prevent its use, has not prevented its use already, in the pettier columns of the Right-wing Labour and bourgeois Press. However, we are used to that.)

The controversies of International Communism are notoriously not the same, nor are the methods of procedure the same, as bourgeois controversies. Whoever steps into them from the muddy bourgeois point of view of “personal politics” is liable to get his fingers scorched.

This book is of value still as a test of political judgment. If its publication were a question only affecting the author, one’s immediate instinct on reading it would be simply to say:—

Max Eastman has made a bad mistake. He has let his artistic sense, which enabled him to do good propagandist work for the revolution during its romantic period, run away with him. He has not only forgotten any Marxism (of this he is uneasily conscious, as repeated footnotes show), he has forgotten any serious politics at all. This is an excited book, a personal book, an artistic book (some of it is as dramatic as a good novel). He says strong things of which he probably does not realise the force or the consequence. He is carried away by his own argument and lapses into pre-communist old style “Liberator” types of outlook. It is unfortunate if this book should compel him to burn his boats politically.

In fact, however, the production of this book is a political act, and has to be treated as such, whatever the psychology that produced it.

What is the difference between the Marxist and the bourgeois outlook on current events and questions? There are many aspects that might be brought out, but for the moment a very simple statement may be made. The bourgeois outlook sees always the surface of events, the immediate process, the question of the day, the problem of the moment, without seeking to inquire further; beyond, is only speculation and day-dreaming. Even the most powerful bourgeois statesmen, of the Pitt or Bismarck type, are only strong in the sense that they look to the more permanent interests of their particular State, calculate

ahead over a generation, but are still wholly unconscious of the wider march of history, of the inevitable disappearance of their particular State and of the whole regime with which they are associated. This necessity they only envisage as a "possibility" or a "danger" to guard against. That is to say, even the most objective bourgeois statesmen are unable to rid themselves of this element of subjectivity. Only Marxism is fully objective, fully scientific. Marxism alone takes all the facts of human history into consideration and bases its calculations upon them, sees the process of growth and decay of every phenomenon, continually inquires into the cause and the underlying connections and never accepts the temporary event or personal manifestation at its own surface valuation.

This difference becomes blatant, when we come to the ordinary daily expressions of the bourgeois outlook, the expressions of current bourgeois journalism and politics, which are, unfortunately, the principal educational school of the workers in Western Europe and America. Here all political analysis disappears into the personal. All events happen because such and such a person conceives such and such an idea or undergoes such and such an accident. The war happened because of the Kaiser, Napoleon was defeated because he had the stomach-ache, &c. Politics turns into the struggle of persons for power (and even international politics turns into the struggle of enlarged persons, called nations, John Bull, Uncle Sam, &c.).

From this basis the deepest political knowledge becomes the knowledge of what happens "behind the scenes." On this basis a whole vast literature arises of "Politics from Within," "Secret History," "Indiscretions," "The Truth About ——" "Sensational Revelations," "The Curtain Raised," "What I know," &c., &c., all of which in a thousand forms, from snappy paragraphs for the million circulations to twelve and sixpenny volumes for the readers in circulating libraries, constitutes the chosen political pabulum supplied by the bourgeois regime for the education of bourgeois democracy.

This literature is undoubtedly better than the would-be "serious" political literature of the bourgeois ("Thoughts on the Empire," "Principles of Liberty," "My Ideals," "Raising the Race," "Ethics of Citizenship"), and is often useful, so long as its contents are not believed, for gauging atmospheres. But as a substitute for politics it is inadequate.

Let us take one or two examples. First, an example from ordinary bourgeois politics—the displacement of Asquith by Lloyd George in 1916, which forms an important turning point in modern bourgeois history.

This displacement took place by a process of intrigue, the full details of which can only be known (and probably not even completely in their case) to the direct main participants. For this reason it forms a sensational attraction for the bourgeois journalistic outlook. Two types of treatment may be observed. One is an indignant repudiation of the whole process, a vehement sponsoring of the honour and integrity of Mr. Asquith so foully abused ("if the British people only knew"), disgust at the shady adventurer types brought into the shrine of imperial politics, pessimistic outlook as to the future of British politics. The other is a simple sensational interest in the romantic, startling, incredible character of the whole performance, triumphant acclamation of "the Man

and the Hour," avid desire for more and yet more intimate details of "how it really happened."

It is clear that neither of these types of treatment have anything to do with the politics of the case. In the light of events we can summarise quite simply and say that the older, more stable and conservative bourgeois interests, represented by Asquith and Lansdowne, which were alarmed at the uncertain future and the possibilities of revolutionary change and were consequently wavering in the direction of peace, were replaced by the driving war-profiteering interests, represented by Lloyd George, which drew the whole bourgeoisie after them in their reckless pursuit of "the bitter end"—and so performed their historic task of working for us. The fact that this drive necessitated certain intrigues, the importation of certain new adventurer types and demagogic methods, disruption of certain parliamentary traditions and so forth, all this is only of incidental illustrative interest, affording certain useful indications as to the relative strength of the forces, social elements, &c., but is in no sense the politics of the case. Even to the bourgeois governing outlook all this would be irrelevant; the question being, not as to the integrity of Mr. Asquith or the brilliance of Mr. Lloyd George (passionate declamations on which would only have aroused complete indifference), but as to which governing force at the given moment best represented bourgeois interests.

Let us add to this another example from working class history—the collapse of the Second International in 1914. Here a tremendous number of personal histories took place, in the leading ranks of all the parties, in the hour of betrayal, not a fraction of which has yet been told, and most of which will probably never be told. Nevertheless a complete collection of "inside" stories of the collapse would not constitute a true Marxist account of it. The essence of the collapse was not the betrayal of certain leaders—which was only the expression. If that were all the lesson, it would be a poor lesson. As Marx himself wrote of the collapse of 1848:—

What a poor chance stands a political party whose entire stock-in-trade consists in a knowledge of the solitary fact that Citizen So-and-so is not to be trusted.

The essence of the collapse was the collapse of a certain ideology, the collapse of a certain type of movement, the exposure of the workings of Opportunism in the working-class movement in the imperialist epoch and its inevitable outcome.

1921 constitutes another example which can be readily filled out. "Black Friday" will have been of value to the movement, not to the extent that it is treated as simply an exposure of certain individual leaders, but to the extent that its revolutionary lesson is understood.

\* \* \* \*

Now in the light of this let us come to Max Eastman's treatment of the Trotsky controversy of 1923-1924.

Let us begin with the question at its lowest. Whatever else it was, that controversy was at any rate a big event. It shook and tested the Russian Communist Party, was of dominating importance in the Russian situation, was closely followed by the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries, as well as

by the international revolutionary movement, was in short a leading fact of world politics. Such a fact is at any rate worth understanding, worth a careful examination of the political forces involved both in Russia and all over the world, an endeavour to inquire what they represent, to estimate their objective political significance, and draw conclusions from the point of view of the international revolutionary movement.

We are aware of the general situation in Russia, the problems raised by Nep and the transitional economic situation, the inevitable danger of new strata developing strength and trying to find political expression, the inevitability of that attempt after political expression trying to find its way through the workers' party, the Communist Party, as the sole organ of political expression in working-class Russia, and the supreme necessity of absolute solidarity against any such inroads. We know that elements of a secretly organised Menshevik "Opposition" had already been found within the Party and dealt with. We know the individuality of Trotsky, his genius and his admitted political instability over a long period of years, which have shown him to be as unreliable in "peaceful" times as he is valuable in the moment of war. And we know at the same time the readiness of the enemy forces to seize on any possibility of division or ingress into the workers' ranks.

We turn to the actual alignment of the controversy and find a grouping of forces of immense significance. We find on the one hand elements of every type other than the proletariat: we find elements of the Youth appealed to, elements of the Army staffs, elements of the Intellectuals, ranging themselves, elements of the Nep bourgeoisie ranging themselves, and then outside Russia the imperialist bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks, the Right-wing labour organs, the renegades from Communism—all openly staking their hopes on Trotsky. Whether or how far Trotsky by his actions was responsible for such an alignment taking place, that is a question for the moment irrelevant. We are concerned with the objective fact of the alignment. On the other hand we find the solid forces of the organised workers expressing themselves with absolute unanimity (on all the previous big issues there has always been some minority vote—in this, none) expressing themselves through the Communist Party and the Communist International.

It is clear that we are here face to face with a class issue of world importance. To fail to see that issue, to fail to discuss it and consider what it implies, and in the light of that total situation to examine the particular events, acts, expressions (acts and expressions which in isolation might seem to be no more than "blunders," but in a given situation can become of extreme seriousness)—to fail to do this means in fact not to deal with the controversy at all, but only to register certain emotional subjective reactions which have no value save as a very revealing picture of the psychology of the writer.

We turn to Max Eastman and what do we find? *We find in Max Eastman as in his view the essence of the whole question, the old familiar bourgeois recipe of the personal struggle for power.*

Lest this may not be believed, it is necessary to quote his own final summing up in conclusion:—

## CONCLUSION

A group of leaders against whose domination Lenin warned the party, having disguised their own thirst of power privately under the legend that Trotsky is a Bonaparte, and having disguised the private legend publicly under the legend that he is the leader of a "deviation to the Right," and having thus built up an ideology exactly twice removed from the simple truth, have succeeded in deceiving, or bewildering or bulldozing or otherwise silencing or scattering to the ends of the earth, all those strong Communists who might oppose them.

"A group of leaders," "thirst of power," "legend," "deceiving," "bulldozing," "silencing." And this is a "Marxist" account—not of events in some South American Republic, where even there it would be a contemptible substitute for an analysis, but might at any rate have surface value as a record of events—but of leading developments of the Communist International and the Russian Revolution, containing and representing the vanguard of the world working class and the central point of world history.

To the bourgeois mind, of course, this will appear an eminently reasonable account—it is just as they are sure it probably did happen, just as they know (they have seen the inside of this kind of thing) these things do happen. And all the abuse and denunciation of the Communist leaders, the suggestions of scandal (from the White Press) they will lap up with greedy delight.

Max Eastman is, however, a little uneasy. In a footnote elsewhere he tries to defend himself against the suggestion that he has forgotten his Marxism, and his defence finally gives him away. He says:—

A great many Marxians will consider this whole book of mine too personal . . . My reason for demonstrating so exhaustively, and so often repeating, the fact that the attack upon Trotsky was and is dishonest, is not that I think that the essence of the question, but that *unless he knows this*, the western reader cannot possibly come at the essence of the question. Owing to the discipline of the Party and the International, and the necessity of revolutionary solidarity in Russia, the whole news-explanation of this dispute is in the hands of the bureaucracy: and they are using Marxian ideas as weapons in a personal fight. The only way to get down to the *facts* which interest a Marxian, is to expose this dishonest use of Marxian *ideas*.

"They are using Marxian ideas in a personal fight." It is a commonplace of Marxist analysis to take some particular ideology or type of expression and discover its basis or character from the standpoint of Marxism, *i.e.*, its class basis, relation to class struggle, &c. Here, however, a reversal has appeared. *For Max Eastman Marxism is the ideology: the reality is the "personal fight."* This is the New Marxism of Max Eastman by the light of which he is enabled to attack the leaders and party of the Russian Revolution.

\* \* \* \*

So the whole Trotsky controversy is degraded into a cheap film-drama for Western European and American readers.

First, enter the Hero, Trotsky.

Trotsky is a proud man, and he has that consciousness of self that proud men have, and that makes their relations with people too personal (p. 12).

The organisation of the Red Army, created by Trotsky, understood by him, loyal to him (p. 82).

Trotsky marshalled the workers and soldiers of Russia for the Bolshevik insurrection (p. 16).

Trotsky began to realise that, although his political analysis of the coming revolution had been the more happy, Lenin had created an organisation and invented a political method (p. 12).

An elevation of thought and language that is unexcelled in the literature of revolution (p. 83).

The almost quixotic delicacy of Trotsky's conduct in the matter of personal relations with his comrades in the revolution. His æsthetic, or, if you will, ethical elevation in such matters, is painful (p. 63).

Ugh! Trotsky may have committed many crimes, but he never deserved this.

Second, enter the Villains (plainly marked).

The deliberately unscrupulous campaign (p. 89).

Cheapest tricks of the demagogue (p. 92).

A campaign of subtle and plausible misrepresentation (p. 93).

Not the slightest breath of sincerity (p. 128).

Third, enter the Innocent Victim (the Party—"bulldozed").

A condition of intellectual mob hysteria (p. 60).

A thoughtless, blind and convulsive stampede . . . the emotional and intellectual weak points of the Russian Communist (p. 52).

Why did 3,000 party workers, agitated by a speech from Zinoviev, put their names to this statement, which is obviously false (p. 67).

From these quotations, which could be multiplied indefinitely, the reader who has not yet read the book should be able to construct its character.

\* \* \* \*

This is not history. It is not politics. And it is certainly not Revolutionary Communism, Marxism, or loyalty to the working class.

R. P. D.

*PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED*

*The Legal Minimum.* By J. Hallsworth. (The Labour Publishing Co. 2s. 6d.)

*From Capitalism to Freedom.* By H. W. Parkinson. (The Labour Publishing Co. 12s. 6d.)

*Labour, Social Reform and Democracy.* By Dr. A. S. Rappoport. (Stanley Paul & Co. 15s.)

*The Employment and Welfare of Juveniles.* By O. Bolton King. (John Murray. 6s.)

*What the League of Nation Is.* By H. Wilson Harris, M.A. (Allen & Unwin. 2s. 6d.)

*The Marxian Economic Handbook and Glossary.* By W. H. Emmet. (Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

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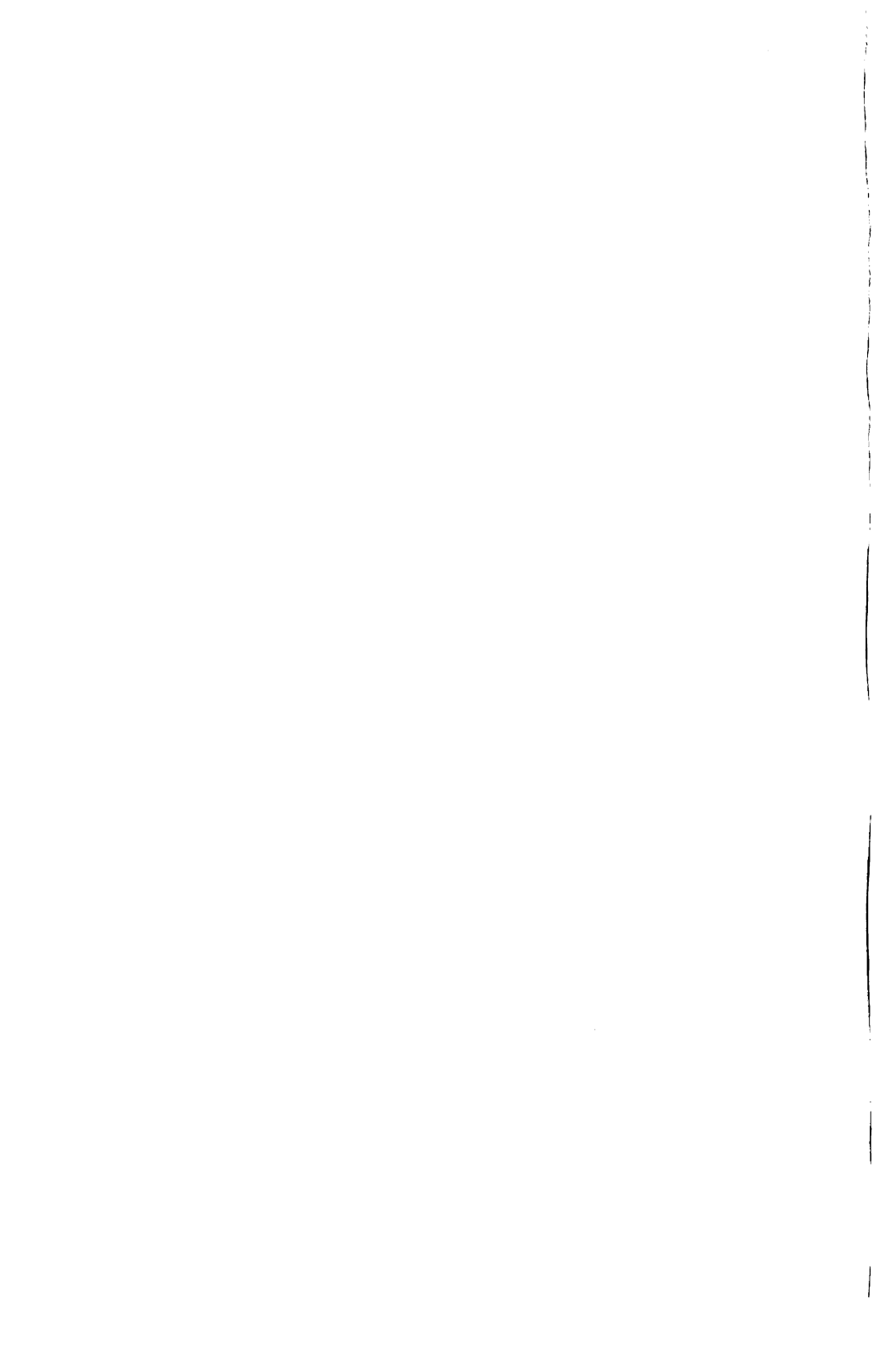
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*Capitalist Imperialism after Versailles.* By Sydney B. M. Potter. With a foreword by John Beckett, M.P. (Sparkbrook I.L.P. 2d.)

*The International Development of the Industrial Welfare or Personnel Movement.* (International Labour Office.)





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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 385
	<i>BRITISH FASCISM</i>	
	With a Postscript— <i>THE WORKERS' ALLIANCE</i>	
Indian Politics : An Analysis	- - - -	„ 399
	By CLEMENS DUTT	
The Problem of the Hour—Is Unity Possible?	- - - -	„ 410
	By A. J. COOK	
The Writing on the Chinese Wall	- - - -	„ 412
	By W. N. EWER	
Art and the Labour Movement	- - - -	„ 420
	By HUNTLY CARTER	
On the Road to Insurrection—IX. The Approaching Catastrophe	- - - -	„ 426
	By V. I. LENIN	
The World of Labour	- - - -	„ 436
	China—Trade Union Unity	
Book Review	- - - -	„ 443
	The Great Boyg Gets Panicky. G. A. H.	

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*British Fascisti—A Joke?—Social Conditions—British Ruling Class Tactics—Honouring Mussolini and Denikin—Birkenhead's Little Threat—Fascism and Reformism—MacDonald and Fascism—Labour Government and Fascism—Unprepared—Future or Present?—So Far—Trusting the Police—State and Fascism—A Trafalgar Square Incident—Pollitt Case Moral—Prevention is Better than Cure.*

ON Empire Day 5,000 members of the British Fascisti (according to the *Daily Herald* estimate) marched "in column of fours" to Hyde Park to take part in a demonstration. This was the second large-scale public demonstration of Fascism in Britain. The first was on Armistice Day last year in Trafalgar Square, when 2,000 took part in the procession. In 1923, when the organisation of Fascism was first formed in Britain they were not able to muster a hundred members, according to their own account, for a meeting in Hyde Park. This is a sufficiently rapid growth to merit attention. If it were simply a question of a certain organisation terming itself the "British Fascisti" it would be less important (though the mustering of five thousand organised effectives for a demonstration procession would not be an easy feat for the London Labour Movement). But the organisation terming itself the British Fascisti is, of course, not an isolated freak phenomenon, but simply the parading section of a much wider and deeper social movement, of which there is already plenty of evidence. It is worth while paying a little more attention to the question of Fascism in Britain.

IT is still customary in the Labour Movement to laugh at the Fascists in this country. This is a very stupid attitude which is likely to cost dear. In the columns of the right wing labour Press the Fascists are always a tremendous joke. "Blue-blooded exuberance," "children playing soldiers," "neurasthenic buffoonery," "Boy Scout mentality," "comic opera organisation,"—these are typical quotations from the right wing Labour Press.

It is, of course, natural that the right wing Labour Press should wish to avoid treating seriously a question which would raise for it inconvenient problems. But this avoidance does not mean that the working class will escape the serious problems in practice. As these problems will ultimately have to be faced, it is clearly better to do it sooner rather than later. No doubt, when the next stage comes and the attack begins to come closer to their own organisation, the right wing Labour Press, which is so consumed with laughter on the question of Fascism at present, will drop the laughter and begin to raise a howl about "democracy," "constitutional rights" and "British liberty." But neither attitude is of the slightest use to the working class. The question of Fascism is not a question of whether the antics of a certain ex-General are or are not ridiculous. The question of Fascism is not a question of whether certain mythical "constitutional rights" do or do not exist in practice when it comes to the test. The question of Fascism is simply a certain aspect of the class struggle which the working class will have to deal with, as with other aspects.

**I**S there a basis for Fascism in this country? This is the first question which it is necessary to consider. A consideration of the social structure and forces in Britain will show that there is every basis. In the first place there is a very large proportion of intermediate strata of the population, of petty bourgeois elements with very narrow and easily controlled political interests, and of a parasitic proletariat closely allied to their masters and virtually unorganisable to the working-class movement. This proportion is larger in Britain than in other countries. The 1921 Census showed nine millions of the population engaged in productive industries, and eight millions in "services." Of these "services" more than half are covered by Commerce, Finance and Personal Service. Two-thirds of the workers are unorganised; and these two-thirds are not an average outside margin in all industries, but mainly represent the workers outside the big productive industries. The easily worked up imperialist "jingo" agitations for the past thirty years in the big towns, the monster circulations of journals of the type of the *Daily Mail* (itself a real forerunner of Fascism in its whole character more than twenty years before the name), all these go to show

the vast field of possibilities. Britain, so far from being likely to be immune from "Continental" diseases of Fascism, has all the basis for becoming the classic land of Fascism.

**I**N the second place the tactics of the bourgeoisie clearly do not rule out the possibility of Fascism. To those who are misled by the sedulously instilled myths of law and order, it would be well to study a little the history of the British bourgeoisie for the past three centuries (which in bloody violence could hardly be equalled by any ruling class since the Roman Empire), as well as the action of this same bourgeoisie as a ruling class in the Empire outside Britain to-day. They would speedily learn the mailed fist basis which lies behind the velvet speeches of a Baldwin. In the recent Bloemfontein shootings of unarmed Africans, it was proved that the shooting came, not from the police, but from the howling mob of white exploiters with guns, whom the police chief declared it impossible to control. The Amritsar massacre was rewarded with a prize of ten thousand pounds for the chief butcher from the ready purses of the British bourgeoisie—ever open for such a purpose ; while the Indian who mildly criticised it in a book was subjected by the British Courts to a fantastic fine of thirty thousand pounds. In America, the unchecked lynchings, exploits of the Ku Klux Klan and armies of private gunmen of the big industrialists (all which the executive of this most powerful capitalist State find it "impossible" to control) furnish a further instructive picture of the workings of modern millionaire-democracy. The British and American bourgeoisie, more than any other—from the very completeness of their power—regard "law and order" as only existing for the subjection of the rest of the world and never as applying to themselves. The Ulster example before the war was only a foretaste of the atmosphere, on a comparatively trifling issue. When their wealth—the whole object and meaning of their existence—becomes at last in question, the nature of the fight will soon be clear.

**I**T is, of course, notorious that Mussolini (like Denikin) has been decorated with British honours by the King—thus serving to show in a public and ostentatious way the official bourgeois

policy. Even the butcher Tsankov, who came to power by the murder of the peasant Prime Minister (constitutionally elected with an overwhelming Agrarian and Communist majority in the elections) and who is now engaged in executing the leaders of the two parties representing two-thirds of the population in Bulgaria, has been acclaimed by the official British Press as a saviour of civilisation. These signs—it is always easier to acclaim liberty abroad—should show sufficiently clearly the lie of the land to any workers who do not wish to be deceived. The tactical preparations of the British Press are equally clear. More openly in the more disreputable journals, more discreetly in the more “respectable,” the same lesson is instilled. When the heckling and expressions of popular feeling at the last election became displeasing to the bourgeois candidates, and were distorted by the Press into lying stories of violence (the lies have since been exposed in many cases by accredited testimony) the “moderate” democratic *Observer* hastened to suggest a “Citizens’ Guard reinforcing the constabulary.” When a few months later one or two minor industrial disputes threatened, the same moderate *Observer* threw out the threat: “By bringing Italian life into confusion through similar demands and misused power, the Left provoked the Fascist solution.” This menace (which was repeated in almost identical terms in the *New Leader*) is always a favourite one in the current Press.

**L**ORD BIRKENHEAD declared in a recent speech to the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, replying on behalf of the Government to the toast of “His Majesty’s Ministers”:

“There must come a day when those who represent organised Labour must be our successors. I venture to say quite unprovocatively and sympathetically that if and when the time comes when with real power our place is taken by them, **THEY WILL RETAIN THAT POWER ONLY IF** they make themselves the mouthpiece, not of one section of English life, but of the nation as a whole, and make themselves the responsible trustees and guardians of the ordered continuity of English life.”—*The Times*, February 21, 1925.

“They will retain that power only if.” “Nation as a whole.” “Continuity.” What does this mean? It means that two perfectly plain alternatives are here put, by a responsible member of the Government and representative of the bourgeois bloc, to the

Labour Party. Either they must repeat the MacDonald Labour Government, which accomplishes nothing, but only carries out the dirty work of governing for the bourgeoisie. Or, if they attempt to make any change, then they will be dealt with, parliamentary majority or no parliamentary majority. Lord Birkenhead inclines to believe the former hypothesis is the more probable. "He believed that if and when their time came they would not fail." He is probably right in this. The Labour Party has already had to dilute itself and adapt itself to bourgeois society to such an extent in order to reach even a third of the electoral votes, that by the time it reaches a parliamentary majority, if it ever does, it will have lost all connection with Socialist and working-class aspirations. But this does not solve the problem for the working class.

**A**N examination of the conditions leading to Fascism in other countries will show that the working-class movement is approaching a similar situation here. Fascism arises where a powerful working-class movement reaches a stage of growth which inevitably raises revolutionary issues, but is held in from decisive action by a reformist leadership. For this reason Fascism is a post-war phenomenon of Western and Central Europe. In Russia, where the issue of the Revolution was faced, there is no Fascism. It is Italy and Germany that are the two principal countries of Fascism, the two countries where the working-class movement was strongest in numbers and the possibility of power, but was most confused in leadership and paralysed by the inner treachery of the right wing leaders, and so rendered an easy prey to Fascism (with which the right wing leaders at once allied themselves in the name of "law and order"). This is the battle which is already opening in France, under the guise of the issue between the Left Bloc (Fascist-Imperialist) and Communism. There is every hope that the French workers, from the experience of Italy and Germany, are preparing better to meet it. It is the issue which is visibly approaching in this country, from the very growth of the working-class movement, and for which we must equally be prepared. Fascism is not the child of revolution. Fascism is the child of Reformism.

**I**F we turn to the utterances of the right wing Labour leaders we shall find the atmosphere no less prepared. The Fascist revolution in Italy was acclaimed by the *Daily Herald* with "admiration" for a "bloodless revolution." The *New Leader* declared that "we must welcome Fascism half-way." And Mr. MacDonald burst into lyrical enthusiasm :—

" . . . if we see in the Italian Fascismo movement nothing but a rather loud and dictatorial revolt of political hooligans, we miss the real reason why Italy seems not only to have accepted it, but welcomed it. The life and spirit of Italy were being stifled by economic and political conditions which, like the sheaths of buds in the spring time, have to be burst before the energies of the tree can expand in freedom . . . a national revival which appealed to the youth, to romantic tradition, to co-operative idealism."

A poetical passage : and revealing a little further into the soul of Mr. MacDonald than many of his poetical passages.

**T**HE alliance between Fascism and Reformism revealed above may seem puzzling to those who think of the right wing Labour leaders as "democrats." It is certainly not puzzling to those who are aware of their class-rôle as simply odd-job-men for the bourgeoisie, who must dance to the parliamentary tune when necessary, and drop it when necessary. But to those workers who still trust to the right wing leaders as moderate democratic leaders, and instinctively think of Fascism as a violent lawless anti-working-class phenomenon, it may be of interest to learn that *the first legal recognition of the British Fascisti was the act of the Labour Government*. For this statement we have the authority of the President of the British Fascisti (it is naturally unnecessary to look for it in the official "Record of the Labour Government").

"The legality of their organisation was officially recognised by the late Labour Government by the granting to them of their articles of association as 'The British Fascisti, Ltd.'"—General Blakeney, President of the British Fascisti, in the *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1925.

At the same time as the Labour Government was granting this legal weapon to an association openly proclaiming aims of violence outside the law against the working class, they were sentencing to four years servitude the Indian working-class leaders for advocating Indian national freedom and working-class rights.



**W**HAT preparations has the working-class movement of this country made against this danger? None. None at all. It is necessary to be quite clear on this point, as it is the central fact of the situation and the starting-point of any consideration. There are no preparations whatever by the working-class movement of this country against the danger of Fascism. The Fascists, who have already made their little trial runs of stealing documents, knocking off hats, robbing offices and kidnapping speakers, can proceed to further and slightly more adventurous attempts with impunity—so far. The working class is still hypnotised by the belief in bourgeois legality into passive acceptance of every outrage. Two types of outlook are most characteristically visible in the working-class movement. The first is a pathetic belief that in a “civilised” “democratic” country these things cannot happen, and if they do the police will deal with them. Yet not a single case—raid, robbery or outrage—has ever been dealt with by the police; and the Pollitt case has shown that, not only is the crime not interfered with, but, even when the perpetrators are brought to justice and admit their crime, they can count on escaping punishment. The experience of this country will need to be added to the experience of every other country to shatter at last this hopeful faith in the police. The second type of outlook is the belief that this is a question of a future possibility; that in the event of a Labour Government (but apparently not before) endeavouring to carry out Socialist measures there may be “resistance,” which the Labour Movement will have to deal with—how is not made clear. The practical meaning of this counsel is to do nothing now.

**F**ASCISM, however, is not a question of future possibility, but of present fact. Long before there will be any question of a Socialist Labour Government, the whole issue will have become acute. This is the inconvenient fact which is left out of account by the hopeful theorists who argue the tactical advantage of having the constitutional “right” of government on the Labour side in the struggle with Fascism. The enemy will not be so foolish as to allow matters to reach such a point. Long before (as in Italy), in proportion as the Labour Movement becomes strong and menacing,

they will exercise their guerilla warfare upon it, in order either to provoke a struggle (in which case the Labour side will certainly be represented as the anarchist rebels against law) or, if the Labour Movement remains passive in the majestic name of democracy, then to harry and destroy in detail the whole organisation, by a simple continuance and enlargement of the process already begun. To imagine that there will be a "united democratic front" against such tactics is a vain imagining. Already the present outrages of the Fascists, because they have only so far been exercised against Communists, have not even been protested against by the official Labour Party lead; and the official Labour leaders have even made themselves the protectors of the Secret Police against the working class. Carry the situation a little further forward to a time of real crisis. It only needs a manufactured bomb outrage "proved" against the "Red" leaders, a provoked incident in one or two mining villages, and all the "democratic" leaders will be running howling into the camp of "Law and Order"—on the same side as the Fascists against the working class. There never will be an issue of Constitutional Democracy versus Fascism. There will only be an issue of Fascism versus the working class.

During the London traffic strike the British Fascisti sent a letter to the Home Secretary, offering "successive bodies of, say, 300 men from time to time as the situation may demand, for the purpose of assisting the authorities in the prevention of violence to individuals, the destruction of property or the intimidation of those who desire to remain at work."

*Manchester Guardian, May 5, 1924.*

A large quantity of papers, including minutes and letters, relating to the National Minority Conference held last week end were carried off. No other property was stolen, and the motive of the raid is presumed to have been political. . . . The doors and a cupboard containing books and papers had been forced almost off their hinges, letter filing cases had been rifled and lay empty on the floor with a litter of discarded papers. . . . The stolen papers included the minutes of all the private meetings and all the correspondence which led to the National Minority Movement.

*The Times, August 27, 1924.*

The activities of the Fascists have so far developed in two main directions: (1) strike-breaking preparations; (2) guerilla escapades against the left wing. Both are present facts, not surmises of what

“ may ” happen “ when there is a Labour Government. ” Against both the Labour Movement has shown itself unprepared. What prospect of preparation is there for the next stage when it comes ? For, be it noted, the development of Fascism is following lines absolutely parallel to other countries.

**M**OST serious of all in the present situation is the trust in the “ State ” to protect the working class against Fascism. This is an illusion which will lead to a rude and disastrous awakening. In their daily economic lives the workers already know that only their own organisation and strength can protect them. But they have still to learn it in every sphere. Cases like the Pollitt case, episodes such as the Ulster episode, will do much in the task of education. The machine of the State is, in its cutting edge, always a machine of the exploiting class, whichever the phrasemaker at the head of it. Despite all the fairyland of theoretical democracy, in actual practice the blessed “ Constitution, ” through some twist, turn, accident, forgotten law, precedent, privilege or what not, always turns out against the working class in the moment of testing. In actual fact, so far is there from being a division between the State and Fascism, that in practical daily work it is often difficult to tell the boundaries between the Secret Police and the Fascists, so closely intertwined are they in their activities. This is a situation very far removed from the Sunday School pictures of “ democracy ” presented by the Labour Party leaders at meetings. It is, however, the reality : and the Labour Party leaders know it, and themselves use the Secret Police and protect them, although they do not tell their followers about them. The extent and elaborateness of the counter-revolutionary preparations of the governmental machine in this country are still not realised by the British working class.

**T**HE close connection between the State machine and Fascism is a matter of international experience. In Norway, according to the statement of the Norwegian Labour Party, the Fascists have been organised directly by an official high in the Ministry of the Interior. In Italy the Fascist ‘ revolution ’ was made easy by the King, and similarly in Spain.

In Germany the trial at Leipzig last year of members of the famous Organisation Consul (which admittedly organised the murders of Erzberger, Rathenau and many others) revealed a similar close collusion with the State machine. The principal leaders, including the notorious Captain Ehrhardt, had of course "escaped." Lieut. Hoffmann, one of the prisoners, was interrogated to give a "true and authoritative account of the Organisation Consul." He demanded that *in the interests of the State* this should only be done in secret.

In spite of a protest from the judge the State Prosecutor associated himself with a formal demand to this end put forward by defending counsel.

The court was cleared, and Lieut. Hoffmann then gave :

A full history of the Organisation and of relations existing between it and the State authorities during the Communist revolt in Central Germany. The accused appeared to rely on the defence that they had just cause to assume a friendly neutrality on the part of the German Government at any rate in such emergencies as these.

*The Times*, October 23, 1924.

**I**N Britain the first initial experiments of Fascism have already revealed the same attitude on the part of the police authorities. There has not even been yet the pretence of a Fascist sentenced in order to keep up appearances. The police have in every case only intervened so far to save the Fascists from the population. A typical case was the Trafalgar Square Labour Demonstration, last October. Here a group of Fascists, headed by a man called Eyre, broke in at the end of the meeting, and behaved, according to the subsequent statement of the magistrate who tried the case, "very provocatively" in order to create a scene. In the ensuing scuffle the Fascists immediately fled to the police for protection, and Eyre was saved by being taken away "under arrest" (his own statement to the police officer was "I think they would have killed me if you had not come"). A worker, Canarn, on the other hand, was arrested for interfering with the police. The sequel was instructive. The Fascist, who had admittedly caused the provocation, was released after being bound over. The worker was sentenced to twenty-one days' imprisonment.

**O**F classic importance for the future is the Pollitt case. Here there was no ambiguity as to the offence, nor as to the full Fascist responsibility (they opened a fund). The words of the Judge were definite :—

“ It would be disastrous if Pollitt, admittedly a Communist who had made seditious speeches, did not get that to which he was entitled—fair justice at the hands of the British Law.

This case raises the question of the liberty of the subject. . . . What a terrible business it would be if people could take the law into their own hands and could if they chose seize upon a particular person holding views which were obnoxious to them and perhaps to the majority of individuals, and lock them up.”

The defendants were all acquitted. The reception of this acquittal was even more significant. There was no word of protest from the capitalist Press. There was no expression of disapproval from either Front Bench in Parliament. The Labour Party and Independent Labour Party saw no occasion to take it up. The *Manchester Guardian*, so solicitous of liberty abroad and ready to write long leaders of moral disquisition on the basis of trivial false rumours from Russia (such as the alleged Shaw boycott, from which many pretty morals in the interests of Liberalism were drawn—until the story was found to be false) became silent on this home issue. The Fascist precedent was well established. The pointer for the future has been given. If it is all so easy in time of full peace, what may be expected as soon as there is a little excitement in the air ?

**P**REVENTION is better than cure. It is urgently important that the working-class movement should not lose time in taking up the question of Fascism in this country. Prepared, the working-class movement has nothing to fear : if the issue is allowed to drift, the same experiences may be expected as in other countries. Preparation consists of two things : first, publicity and exposure of the movements and plans of the enemy ; and second, local defence organisations of the workers to prevent disturbance. It is better that these steps should take place in an organised manner under a central authority. We would seriously recommend the General Council to consider the advisability of setting up a committee to go into the whole question, working in conjunction with the

Trades Councils (who could probably furnish valuable information), to report to the coming Trades Union Congress : or, failing that, that the question should at anyrate be raised at the Congress.

R. P. D.

## The Workers' Alliance

**T**HE delaying decision on the Workers' Alliance at the Conference of June 4 raises urgent questions. What is the position ? It is admitted that the capitalists are preparing an attack in all the principal industries. It is admitted that the object of the capitalists is to divide the workers. It is admitted that the only chance of the workers is to unite at once in a common Alliance of action against the capitalist attack. Yet so far nothing definite. Why not ? The Executives of the Unions concerned met with full powers. They had full powers to adopt the decision of the Alliance in principle, leaving details to be worked out by a Committee. They did not do so. Why not ? This is the question to which the workers will demand an answer. Is it considered there is time to lose ? Every moment the capitalists may deliver their attack, and the workers are still unprepared. Every week the figures of unemployment are rising ; the danger of local and sectional agreements increases. It is obvious that every moment that is lost plays into the hands of the capitalists. Is there doubt of the will and readiness of the workers for a united struggle ? A thousand signs all over the country have shown the readiness of the workers to be far in advance of the majority of their leaders. Herbert Smith, whom no one would accuse of rash or reckless statement, has declared :—

“ He was quite certain that if a referendum was taken in Great Britain of the workers in the mining and engineering industries there was no question that the men would decide on a general strike.”

There is no question of the will of the workers for a united struggle. Why then is it not realised ?

It is necessary to face the facts openly. The only power which can weaken the workers is the power of capitalist influence in the

workers' ranks. A flood of capitalist propaganda, a flood of threats and tales of ruin, is being let loose to frighten back and spread hesitation among the workers' representatives. At the same time a process of blocking is going on. Certain definite, perfectly well-known forces in the workers' movement, representing the right wing and well known to be in close association with the capitalists, are deliberately blocking the Workers' Alliance. At the June 4 Conference this process was taking place, in open collusion with the capitalist Press, which was privileged to publish lengthy (unrepudiated) reports of right wing leaders' speeches at this private conference. As in the case of international Trade Union unity, the tactics of these right wing blockers is necessarily concealed and disguised at first, in order to avoid the appearance of opposing working-class unity. Their tactics may take the form of pleading the obligation of sectional agreements ; they may take the form of pleading the constitutional rights of the General Council ; they may take the form simply of tactics of delay. Whatever the form, the practical effect is the same. The success of the tactics of the blockers means the prevention of working-class unity. It means handing over the workers helpless and divided to the capitalist attack. This is the brute fact which stares every worker in the face. The Workers' Alliance is the acid test of working-class unity in action. It is necessary to force the opponents of unity into the open in order to deal with them. As a public issue before the working class, their blocking could not survive for an instant. It is necessary to demand of every supporter of working-class unity in principle, to support it in fact by standing for the Alliance without reserve and at once. The most urgent concentration of forces is needed to control the situation. Unless the strongest pressure is brought to bear, we are already faced with a repetition of 1921—before the battle is joined.

By the time these lines appear, decisive events may have already taken place. The employers may have delivered their attack, before the workers are prepared. Sectional negotiations towards sectional settlements may have begun. The Report of the Committee set up by the Conference may have already revealed the alignment of forces at the top of the working-class movement. Whatever the situation, it is certain that the watchword in the immediate future remains the same : Forward with the Workers' Alliance of

Action ! The Workers' Alliance is the strongest weapon of the working class to meet the capitalist attack. The capitalists know this and fear it. The whole tactics of the capitalist class is directed towards preventing by every possible means the realisation of the Workers' Alliance. The whole tactics of the capitalists is directed towards creating division and hesitation and uncertainty in the workers' ranks. We must not allow these tactics to succeed. It is necessary now as never before to maintain an absolutely firm front. The intrigues of the blockers must be swept aside. The Workers' Alliance must be achieved by the strength of the will of the masses for unity. This is the supreme issue at the present moment.

R. P. D.

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### NOTICE

*We still have several hundred copies of "The Diplomacy of Ramsay MacDonald" by U.D.C. Orders for these are coming in slowly, but as we want to sell out as soon as possible, we have decided to sell what are left at the reduced price of 2/- a dozen.*



# INDIAN POLITICS: AN ANALYSIS

By CLEMENS DUTT

*Present Tendencies in India.*

**T**HE death of C. R. Das, the leader of the Swaraj Party, came at a critical moment. For India at the present time stands before a new stage of political development. That is the explanation of the present spectacle of confusion in Indian politics, a confusion not merely obvious to outsiders, but apparent and alarming to the central figures on the Indian political stage. During the crowded experience of the post-war years many changes have taken place, which have served to demonstrate clearly the nature of the class forces involved in the play of Indian politics, and which have culminated in the present position of complete bankruptcy of Indian nationalist politics on existing lines. The collapse of the non-co-operation movement, as led by Gandhi, marked the end of one stage in development. The crisis which is now threatening the Swaraj Party, which took the place of Gandhi's movement as the representative movement of Indian nationalism, marks the end of another stage. Much to the surprise of the Swarajists themselves the logical conclusion of their policy is showing itself to be a relapse to liberal politics. It has been apparent to all that C. R. Das was recently angling for a possible reconciliation with the British Government. His policy was supported by other Right wing leaders such as Mr. Motilal Nehru, and there were even faint indications of a response from Great Britain, in so far as a modification of the Indian Constitutional Reform Scheme was the chief point at issue. Meanwhile the rank and file of the Indian nationalist movement stand aghast before the collapse; while new forces, in particular the slowly growing force of organised labour and the more rapidly growing appreciation of its importance, indicate that an entirely new situation is gradually emerging.

*The Economic Bases.*

To obtain a proper appreciation of the various factors which have determined the present situation, it is essential to examine the economic bases of Indian politics. In the light of such knowledge,

the developments which have caused such confusion and uncertainty in the minds of the chief protagonists stand clearly explained, and it is found, indeed, that the whole history of the last five years, including Gandhism and its inevitable collapse, and "Swarajism" and its relapse into moderatism, could all have been predicted with astonishing accuracy. In spite of the vaunted "spirituality" of India, and of the mysticism which is supposed to be such a feature of the Indian mind, the effects of economic factors seem to be more clearly demonstrable in India than even in materialistic Western Europe. The reason for this is, perhaps, to be found in the very evident economic exploitation that has always been the background of British domination in India, and in the consequent tug-of-war of various British and Indian commercial interests which is so largely responsible for the reality of Indian politics.

These various interests can be roughly characterised as follows. On the British side, we have a practically united front in defence of British interests. The prime concern of British administration in India, and of British capitalist politicians at home, is, naturally, the protection of the interests of British imperialist capitalism in India. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, in an illuminating phrase, recently spoke of "our duty to our imperial position, to our kinsfolk in India, and to a thousand millions of British capital invested in India." Behind British rule, therefore, stands British capitalism, and the concern of the one is the interest of the other. That phrase of a thousand millions of British capital investments in India is worth noting also by those Indians whose conception of British capitalism and its relation to India seems to be limited to the competition of the Lancashire textile industry. In the present stage, foreign capital investment is playing a far more important part than is the dumping of foreign manufacturers or the draining of raw materials.

On the Indian side, the two great bulwarks of British domination have always been, firstly, the passive acquiescence of the vast mass of 300 million ignorant exploited workers and peasants; and, secondly, the active support of the few million titled tools and mercenaries constituting the Indian landlord class and aristocracy with its hangers on. Besides these, a number of new forces have gradually come into prominence, and it is, of course, just this continuous development of new social classes, and the antagonisms resulting

therefrom, that renders vain any hope of establishing a state of equilibrium in the tug-of-war of interests such as to allow of the perpetuation of the *status quo*.

First in class consciousness, if not in ultimate importance, is the rising Indian capitalist class. They are already strong enough to challenge successfully the British claim to exclusive exploitation of India, but they fear their own workers too much to dare risk an attempt to throw off the British connection. Next comes the ever-increasing educated middle-class, professionals, intelligentsia and petit-bourgeoisie with much less to lose and much more to gain from a thorough-going policy of India for the Indians. As a social force, however, they count for little, for taken as a whole they are weak, incapable of self-reliance, hesitant and timid. The crucial factor of the present day is the emergence of a class-conscious working class. The capitalist transformation of India creates out of the masses a modern homogeneous proletariat in defiance of the traditional limits and differences of castes, sects and races. They form the advance-guard of a movement which will eventually put an end to the dumb passivity of the peasant millions. More and more of the latter, whose poverty and exploitation continually increases, are day by day thrown into the ranks of the wage labourers.

#### *The Political Parties*

As yet the working class is practically unorganised. The various political parties, however, reflect pretty accurately the economic needs of the other sections we have mentioned. Thus the Liberal or Moderate party voices the interests of the landlords and more substantial Indian capitalists. At one time they dominated the National Congress, but they were soon swamped by the swelling influx of the petit-bourgeoisie. During the rapid period of development during the war and immediately after, British capitalism was ready to make big sacrifices to secure the loyalty of the Moderates. As a matter of fact very little was required, the promise of assistance for the development of Indian industry and the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme of constitutional reform sufficing for the purpose. The reforms drew off the big bourgeoisie from the National Congress, which was left in the hands largely of the petit-bourgeoisie. The latter, under the leadership of Gandhi, with his banner of

non-violent non-co-operation, attempted to put themselves at the head of the growing movement of the masses, but, as in so many analogous cases in European history, they succeeded of course only in betraying it. The final collapse of Gandhism took place in February, 1922, when the Bardoli Conference renounced mass civil disobedience, but for two years afterwards Gandhi's followers conducted a losing struggle for the old negative programme. The revolutionary crisis, however, was past, direct action was out of the question, and the active nationalists could less and less content themselves with preaching Gandhi's version of Tolstoyanism. The important bourgeois section that had not been rallied to the Moderate banner by the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were determined to use the Councils as a new field of activity. They formed the Swaraj Party in December, 1922, in defiance of the Gandhist majority in the National Congress, but in the course of the next two years they obtained the ascendancy also within the Congress itself.

#### *The Swaraj Party*

The history of the Swaraj Party is an illuminating chapter in the history of Indian nationalism. It illustrates the development of a peaceful constitutional opposition, an ordinary "Redmondite" nationalist party, from a bellicose party which entered the Councils with the sole intention to obstruct, to wreck and to destroy. In this transformation the Swaraj Party has shown itself true to the character of its leadership and the nature of the electorate it serves. It is definitely a bourgeois nationalist party, and its prominent figures are practically all connected with capitalist and landlord interests. The electorate constitutes a small fraction of relatively well-to-do elements, numbering hardly 2 per cent. of the population, and in enlisting their support, a task which the Swarajists found more difficult than they expected, little attention could be spared for the desires and needs of the remaining 98 per cent.

The Swaraj Party was formed with a view to the elections held at the end of 1923. Just in the nick of time they received the benediction of the National Congress at a special session of the latter. Naturally their first programme was a radical one, thunderous in its demand for responsible government, and declaring, in the actual words of the text, for "uniform, continuous and consistent

obstruction within the Councils, with a view to making Government through the Councils impossible." Except in the Central Provinces, however, they did not obtain a majority, and this simple objective had to be abandoned. Their first step was to bargain for the support of a section of the Liberals. By the terms of this bargain the forty-three Swarajists in the Central Legislative Assembly received the support of some twenty-four Liberals on condition that obstruction should only be resorted to if there was no response from the Government after a reasonable time to a resolution demanding a reform of the constitutional machinery. This demand was moved and carried in the Legislative Assembly in February, 1924, by seventy-six votes to forty-eight. There was, of course, no response, and obstruction was at last entered on by refusal of supplies—the throwing out of the Budget. The rejected measures were, of course, all restored by use of the Viceroy's power of certification. Even this obstruction, however, proved too unconstitutional for the Liberal "Independents" who had entered into coalition with the Swarajists. This year, when the time for the annual display of obstruction came round, the Independents discovered that it was not logical to refuse supplies, when the vote was rendered powerless by the Viceroy's prerogative, unless it was backed up by recommending the people not to pay taxation. Accordingly, this year the Independents refused to vote with the Swarajists and the Finance Bill was passed.

The renouncement of the original Swarajist policy of obstruction is naïvely explained in an official statement of the party issued in May, 1924. It states :—

Our position is really not so much one of "obstruction" in the parliamentary sense as that of resistance to the obstruction placed in the path of Swaraj by the bureaucratic Government.

A transparent cloak for the confession that they had returned to the paths of ordinary constitutional opposition.

A further change of policy also took place, of considerable interest as laying bare in the clearest possible way, the class character of the Swaraj Party. Originally the party was pledged not to accept office, to serve on Committees, or to move resolutions and introduce Bills. This was an unnecessary limitation for a constitutional party representing capitalist interests. Thus we find that

the manifesto above-mentioned declares that the Swaraj policy "must in future be more and more effectively directed to the varying needs and problems of our national life." Accordingly, the programme was modified so as to allow of the introduction of "resolutions, measures and bills necessary for the healthy growth of our national life." No clearer proof is required that by national interests the Swaraj Party understands Indian capitalist interests than to note that the use made of the above decision was for Swarajists to serve on the Government Steel Protection Committee, and to vote for the Steel Protection Bill, granting an enormous bounty to the Tata steel interests without a thought for the conditions of the exploited steel workers.

#### *The British Labour Government*

It should not be forgotten that some measure of responsibility for the stultification of the Swaraj Party lies at the door of the British Labour Government. For years India has been ground down in suffering under the political oppression of Tory imperialism. Some Indian nationalists were disposed to see signs for hope in the coming of a Labour government. But an ominous presage was the letter of Mr. MacDonald, rightly interpreted as a threat, the meaning of which was to be made clear in the nine months' regime that followed. The British Labour Government changed nothing at all. It was made clear that there was to be no advance towards self-government, no freedom for the thousands of political prisoners, no introduction of political liberty, no relaxation of military autocracy, no amelioration of the lot of the millions of workers and peasants. It demonstrated the complete identification of the British Labour Government with the interests of British capitalism. Further, the Labour Government was responsible for the addition of two measures of the first importance to the long list of crimes against Indian political freedom. The first was the Cawnpore Communist trial (in which a pioneer group of Indian Communists were convicted on a charge of "waging war against the King" for the crime principally of receiving political letters from Mr. M. N. Roy), which struck a blow at the very possibility of working-class political organisation. The second was the Bengal Ordinance, the virtual introduction of martial law in Bengal, which served as an

excuse for the arrest and imprisonment without trial of the Left wing leaders of the Swaraj Party. The effect was two-fold. It finally killed the possibility for "civil disobedience" and in so far assisted the Swarajists. But it made the Swaraj Party itself helpless before the ascendancy of the Right wing. The Swarajists were driven into the hands of the capitalists and into the paths of barren constitutionalism. Nor has there been any real change since the fall of the Labour Government in the British Labour attitude. In spite of the hopeless bankruptcy of the sham constitution, Lord Olivier still maintains that there was "no *prima facie* case" for the Labour Government even going so far as to set up a Royal Commission. Colonel Wedgwood, in a letter to Lajpat Rai, speaks as if the Swarajist had betrayed the Labour Party rather than the reverse. He notes that there is in the Labour Party :—

A growing feeling of being completely out of touch with the Swarajists and out of sympathy. "Just another set of self-seeking bosses," is the feeling prevalent.

The Indian nationalist press could, perhaps, be pardoned for hinting that the same description might be more aptly applied to their experience of the British Labour Government.

#### *The Reversion to Liberalism*

At the present time the Swaraj Party clearly stands before a crisis. Its relapse into moderatism means that there is now very little difference between Swarajists and Liberals. This is evident in such accessions to the party as Mr. P. C. Ray, Secretary of the Calcutta National Liberal League, who recently declared : "I do not now find any material difference between me and Mr. C. R. Das in regard to our political objectives, or in the methods of obtaining them." The fact, also, that such a typical loyalist as the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri could say that he "was very near the end" of his membership of the Liberal Party, and was "inclined to be a Swarajist," throws a clear light on the present tendency of the party. The only point in reality that separates the two parties is that of obstruction on principle. If the Swarajists were only to give that up, the last distinction would be gone and the Liberals and Swarajists together could co-operate with the British administration in securing law and order and promoting measures for "the healthy growth of the national life." But for such docility, the Swarajist leaders would

expect some tangible reward, notably positions of greater responsibility that can be given by the present puppet Councils. It is to this bargain with the Government that the Swarajist leadership is now tending. Mr. C. R. Das, in particular, was advancing step by step in this direction, and at the end it seemed that very little would suffice for a complete "reconciliation" between him and the British Government. To show his readiness, he had not merely emphasised the ideal of Dominion status as the whole goal of the nationalist movement, he had not only taken every opportunity to denounce violence and all forms of revolutionary activity, but he went out of his way to utter panegyrics on the British Empire (that "free alliance" and "great Commonwealth of Nations" as he called it at the recent Faridpur conference), and to declare how little was wanting for him to undertake to begin to co-operate with the Government. Speaking in the Bengal Legislative Council in March, 1925, on the motion for the rejection of the Ministers' salaries he declared :—

I am not opposed to co-operation, but co-operation is not possible under this system. Honest co-operation cannot be offered now because the system does not allow it. It can be done when you have improved your system, when there is real give and take, when there is anxiety on the part of Government to relieve the distress of the people, to recognise the rights of Indians.

Again, at the Bengal Provincial Nationalist Congress he declared with regard to the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms :—

If there was a chance for self-government under it I would co-operate. If some real responsibility were transferred, I would co-operate.

And he affirmed his confidence that he could see "signs of a real change of heart" on the part of the Government.

It is clear that the major aim of the Swaraj Party under the leadership of Das became to strike a bargain with the Government for the reform of the reforms. Up to now the Government has only gone so far as to appoint a committee, the Muddiman Committee, which has issued two reports, a majority and a minority report, both of which provide a clear exposure of the unworkability of the Act. Lord Birkenhead encouraged Mr. Das with the proposal that he should co-operate in putting down revolutionary violence, and it is currently reported that the question of a possible modification of the reform schemes is one of the objects for which the Viceroy has



made his present visit to Great Britain. This is about the sum total of the signs of Government "change of heart," and there is no reason to believe that the Government will feel any need to hurry to secure another support for its rule in India by rallying the Swarajist leaders. But a bargain of some sort is inevitable, whether in the near future or not, and with it the reversion of the Swarajists into the Liberals of 1914 will be complete. But there will be this difference. The rank and file of the Swaraj Party, and the mass of active nationalist up and down the country, have passed through many experiences since 1914, and will no longer follow their leaders blindly. The rank and file are already alienated. They are not interested in the parliamentary manœuvring. Hence a widespread feeling that the nationalist movement is at a standstill, which is not confined to the masses. The *Bombay Chronicle* speaks of a "general paralysis and stagnation." Lala Lajpat Rai speaks of "chaos and confusion." "The political situation is anything but hopeful and encouraging," he declares. "The people are sunk in depression. Everything—principles, practices, parties and politics—seem to be in a state of disintegration and dissolution."

There is, therefore, an admitted failure of the nationalist movement on all sides. Gandhi's political influence has been destroyed. He has admitted the Swarajists "defeated and humbled him." His yarn-spinning franchise for membership of the National Congress is arousing a final revolt. At the recent Maharashtra Nationalist Conference he was openly requested to retire from politics. But the Swarajists are not much better off. A pact between them and the Government would be an open betrayal of the nationalist movement and a split in the Swarajist Party would be inevitable. It would be the old story over again, British imperialism winning the allegiance of a new set of leaders only to find that they have not the masses behind them.

### *The Labour Party*

So far the masses, the millions of illiterate workers and peasants have been entirely left out of account. True, it has become fashionable to recognise their existence. Even Mr. Das was once insistent on the need of "Swaraj for the masses, and not for the classes." But events have proved that this is nothing but a verbal trick and

means nothing in practice. Several of the Swarajist leaders, however, have been genuinely dismayed at the absorption of the party in bourgeois interests to the utter neglect of interest in even ordinary labour welfare questions. With experience of contact with British Labour Party leaders in their minds, the result has been the sudden new formation of an Indian Labour Party. But there are many features connected with this Labour Party which give rise to serious doubts as to its future as an organised movement. In the first place it appears to consist only of leaders, and they all members of the Legislative Assembly. Further, these leaders are mostly personalities already well-known as bourgeois nationalists, whose personal rivalries with the nationalist leaders, and general standing in the nationalist movement is unaffected by the fact that they appear as leaders of a Labour Party. Starting under these handicaps, the party is almost poisoned at birth, and could almost be written down as a mere parliamentary manœuvre. But the need for attention to labour economic questions, not to speak of political organisation of labour, is so urgent that it would be strange if the new party could give no help in this direction. But whether it can ever become a party of the masses, and a political organisation too, is another question. With the present bankruptcy of nationalist politics, the stage is set for a re-grouping. Supposing, however, the Swaraj Party splits, as indicated above. Will the rank and file go into the new Labour Party? It is extremely unlikely. The new Labour Party cannot take the place of a nationalist organisation. It must be concluded that its function must be limited to the representation of the needs of the youthful trade union organisation. Even so, if it is to become a live organisation, representing working-class interests, its impetus must come from below, and not from above. If it limits itself to solid work in assisting trade union organisation, the political careerists will leave it, the real trade unionists will come to the fore, and it could develop into a body of real value and significance.

It must be remembered that labour organisation is still at a very elementary stage. In many respects labour conditions are notoriously the worst in the world. Labour legislation is as backward, or more so, than in China or Japan. Legislation legalising the existence of trade unions is still only pending. Not unnaturally, therefore, trade unions are only weakly developed, and the Indian

Trade Union Congress has negligible power. Labour is disgracefully unrepresented in the Legislative Assembly and Provincial Councils, while existing Labour leaders are only too often merely bourgeois philanthropists, or even middle-class careerists bent on obtaining public notice or Government recognition.

*Wanted—A Workers' and Peasants' Party*

Any Indian party which would avoid the fiasco of present nationalist politics must base itself on a social-economic programme for remedying the present disabilities of Indian Labour. Demands for adequate labour legislation, including the establishment of the rights of trade organisation, must find a prominent place in its programme. It must concentrate its attention on housing, education and the social conditions of the people. It must fight the rent oppression of the landlords and work for the improvement of peasant conditions. So far these things have been dropped because they have been against the interests of the Indian capitalists and landlords. It will be remembered that even Lajpat Rai, now heading the Labour Party, spoke more of the danger of hurting Indian industry than of helping Indian labour. The nationalist leaders have refused to advance any such programme as we have indicated, because they will not countenance an invasion of their positions as capitalists or landlords. Mr. Das called for help from public funds for the Bengal peasants. But he must have known that such help would only be swallowed up by the rack-renting landlords, and that the real help must come from a revision of the present oppressive rights of the landlords. A popular party based on a real social economic programme would lose the present nationalist leaders, but it would have the masses behind it. In championing the cause of the masses it would inevitably be thrown into the struggle against imperialism. British imperialism is the biggest exploiter of the Indian workers and peasants, and the native capitalists and landlords look on it as their ally in exploitation. Such a party, therefore, must be more than a labour welfare party ; it must be a mass nationalist party. It is along these lines alone, the lines of a workers' and peasants' party, that a new nationalist party can rally the whole country to its support, and achieve national independence.

# THE PROBLEM OF THE HOUR— IS UNITY POSSIBLE?

By A. J. COOK

*General Secretary, Miners' Federation of Great Britain*

ONCE again ringing through the industrial areas of Britain—in every mine, workshop and factory—is that blessed word Unity. Economic conditions in Britain compel the workers and their leaders to seek help and guidance to face the problems of 1925. We have to face a great capitalist offensive—wages, hours and conditions are being attacked in every industry. The forward march of Trade Unionism that met such a severe check in 1921 is again in danger of receiving another check in 1925. There is unanimous agreement among the workers that 1921 must never be repeated.

Unemployment, underemployment and low wages are now the order of the day. In several industries, including our own, the members are below the bread line. The question is being asked, "Can conditions become worse?" In some quarters there is a kind of fatalistic belief that they cannot get worse and any change must mean an improvement. I am convinced that, bad as conditions are, we are in great danger of having still worse, yes, far worse conditions, imposed upon us.

The form of attack is clear: hours and Trade Union conditions. The industrial and financial capitalists see their opportunity to wrench from us the gains of many years. The miners are in immediate danger. Our hours and National Agreement as well as our conditions are being attacked. With a strong Tory Government in power the capitalist class are determined to take full advantage. Now or never is their cry. As one expressed himself to me, "We have been waiting for years for this opportunity." Can we resist the onslaught? That depends entirely upon the methods and tactics adopted by the whole Trade Union Movement. The times call for courage and vision. We must not drift into disaster.

No one Union or industry can face this crisis alone. We are interdependent, all affected directly and indirectly. Unity is possible with the will to conquer all obstacles. The Constitutions, Agreements and bargaining methods of each organisation need examining and overhauling. Leaders cannot carry the burden alone, the members must assist.

- (a) It is necessary to understand the problem facing each organisation.
- (b) How far Unions can be united for a common purpose in the same industry.
- (c) What method shall be adopted to inform the members of each Union of existing conditions, especially during a crisis, and methods of consultation.
- (d) How far certain principles can unite us together for a common object.
- (e) Can we arrange to act together after consultation for defensive or offensive action.
- (f) What methods and tactics shall be adopted. Time and conditions should decide the tactics.
- (g) The relationship between the T.U.C. General Council and the Labour Party in a crisis.
- (h) How we can act together to ensure 100 per cent. organisation.

These are a few of the many difficult questions that demand an answer. I appeal to every leader and every active worker in the Labour Movement to find ways and means to unite together. Where there's a will there's a way. A good start has been made. The will to conquer the difficulties has shown itself among the leaders. The meeting of leaders and their executives is bound to result in real understanding and progress. It is well to understand one another's difficulties and to examine the different points of view. No one man can build this alliance. It must be built from within the Unions and cemented together by the rank and file.

What can be done and should be done must be left to the joint bodies in Conference. We must have faith and discipline in our movement and toleration for one another's opinions. The masters are united. It is for us to weld our forces together to protect and finally emancipate the workers of Britain.

# THE WRITING ON THE CHINESE WALL

By W. N. EWER

**T**HE Shanghai disturbances (let us use the fashionable euphemism) are perhaps of no great importance in themselves. But their significance is tremendous. As an event they are a small matter. As a portent they are of the first order. They will have their place in history as a boundary-stone marking the close of one era, the opening of another. They are the writing on the Great Wall of China.

Since the war of 1895 revealed the complete military impotence of the Chinese Empire, one of the chief pre-occupations of the imperialist world has been to provide for the partition and exploitation of the natural wealth and the labour power of China. China was the "Sick Man" of Asia. And with the cynicism of Nicholas I. the Powers began to "make arrangements for his demise."

Japan and Russia fought a war over the expected death-bed. Britain and Russia were more than once on the verge of hostilities. Peking and the Treaty Ports were the scene of unending and complex diplomatic and financial intrigues. Hopeful diplomats began to mark out spheres of influence in coloured chalk on the map. Each nation made sure of a jumping-off ground—Hong Kong, Tsing-tao, Shan Hai-Kwan and the rest.

The great war brought an interlude. But when the smoke of battle and of the Peace Conference had passed, the capitalist eyes turned again instinctively to China, as the biggest prize still available in the world. And White capitalism—particularly American capitalism—realised that during the war Japan had, quietly but effectively, used her opportunities. She had entrenched herself in Shantung. She had compelled China to accept much of her famous "twenty-one demands." The astute Ishii had even persuaded the simple Lansing to admit Japan's "special interests." Had the war lasted another two years, Japan's mastery of China might have been assured.

America's counter-strokes were: First, the refusal to allow the Shantung Clauses of the Peace Treaty to operate; second, the calling of the Washington Conference.

Her power was irresistible. Great Britain was the ally of Japan, but the debtor of America. And the strong racial prejudice of Canada and Australia made the "Yellow" Alliance a paper affair without meaning. At the demand of Washington, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was broken. Japan, isolated, was compelled to abandon Shantung, to forgo her "demands," to relinquish her advantageous position and to fall back into line with her competitors.

The Washington Conventions were—for all that China was represented at the Conference—a pact between plunderers. They were an endeavour to "make arrangements for the Sick Man's demise" which would obviate the necessity of fighting for the inheritance. That he was dying was taken for granted. That he had no economic function save to be exploited, no political function save to be partitioned, was unquestioned. Anyone who at Washington had suggested that China—not Dr. Wellington Koo, the darling of Western drawing-rooms and the "good copy" of Western journalists, but the Chinese masses—might have a word to say before the funeral was fixed, would have been regarded as a rather silly crank.

The financial counterpart of the political work of Washington had already been accompanied by the formation of the Bankers' Consortium the year before. Economic power had preceded political power by twelve months. And all was ready for the comfortable and communal enjoyment of the booty. Imperialism, like minor forms of capitalism, was abandoning competition for the methods of the international trust. Sentimental radicalism praised God and Mr. Secretary Hughes that there would be No More War, and complacent humanitarians thought it would be so much nicer for the Chinese to be exploited internationally.

But though there may be honour among other thieves, there is not among imperialist nations enough of that estimable commodity to allow them to trust one another for five minutes. The signatories of Washington, having declared before God and man that the Pacific Ocean should be forever the sea of peace, settled down steadily to prepare for the day when they would fight each other for its control.

The simple military and naval mind has learned to get on with

its job and to pay no attention to the bland assurances of politicians. During the years when Lords Grey and Oxford vied with their sovereign for the title of Peacemaker, the British Sea Lords concentrated their forces in the North Sea, and the British War Lords worked out plans for war on the French frontiers. So now, as a sop to Japan, Great Britain and America had promised to build no naval base in the Western Pacific. But the British Admiralty decided to get Singapore ready; and the Americans got to work at Hawaii. While on the economic field rival capitalists watched each other suspiciously, and mutual jealousies reduced the consortium to inaction.

And all the time the fruit seemed to grow riper. The Central Government at Peking became almost daily weaker. The military Tuchuns defied its authority, and—provided with arms and assistance by various Powers—waged a curious civil war over half the provinces of China.

The foreign Powers and the foreign banks deplored the growing anarchy. But they took good care that Chang and Wu and the rest should be able to carry on. And equally they took good care that those provisions of the Washington Agreements which would have given the Central Government financial resources were left in abeyance. Foreign financiers sneered at the corruption of Chinese politicians with all the scorn of the seducer for the frailty of his victim. And month by month the suggestion grew stronger that the only way out from anarchy and corruption was in foreign control—control of finance, control of railways, control of armed forces.

Only jealousy and suspicion kept them from translating suggestion into action. Had they been able to agree on a candidate, they would have set up a dictator of their own who—in Burke's phrase—would have "kneeled to them on the necks of his countrymen." But when England and America favoured Wu-Pei-Fu and would have induced the consortium to give him a loan, Japan and France favoured Chang and the plan collapsed. And when a little later England proposed to take advantage of the Lin-cheng banditry to demand foreign control of all revenues and the establishment of a foreign-controlled gendarmerie, America refused her consent.

Then came the scheme—still favoured—for using the Washington Conventions themselves as a means of new encroachments.



The Chinese Customs dues, as all the world knows, are limited by treaty. Without the consent of the Powers no Chinese Government can increase its tariffs—and in a country in the stage of economic development which China has reached, Customs and Excise are the main source of revenue open to the Government. At Washington the Powers—most of them States with high tariffs of their own, none of them believers in Free Trade—graciously promised that the Chinese should be allowed to increase their Customs duties up to five per cent. *ad valorem*, with an additional  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in consideration of the abolition of internal Customs dues. But as France even now has not ratified the Convention, nothing has been done. Now it is suggested that France shall give her ratification, and that a conference be called to approve the Customs increases—but only on condition that China gives guarantees, in the shape of acceptance of foreign control, for the “restoration of order” and the “security of foreign capital.”

So the Washington plan has been working, clumsily and creakingly. Swaying uneasily between the new ideas and the old, between the collective exploitation and the armed struggle for monopoly, the Powers have been laying their plans for the colonisation of the richest territory in the world. The diplomats hoping to arrange successfully to do it without quarrelling, the soldiers and sailors getting ready for business in case the diplomats fail. No one of course worrying much what the Chinese thought about it all—except the Tuchuns and a few corrupt politicians and other useful tools.

And now like a thunderclap in the midst of it all, the Shanghai affair, calling the attention of startled governments to a fact which they had curiously ignored—the existence of a Chinese people, with views of their own about their own destiny. Suddenly they have discovered that in these years something has been happening in China besides the military promenadings of the Tuchuns and the rise and fall of puppet governments. And they are seriously disturbed by the discovery.

The lightning flash of Shanghai should not have been needed. But foreign imperialisms are curiously deaf—even deaf than native capitalisms—to the rumbling premonitions of trouble.

For they are more aloof from the masses around them. And the foreign colony in China is perhaps the most aloof, the most isolated, of any in the world. The diplomats, in their Legation quarter at Peking, are as detached from the main currents of Chinese life as though they were hermits, sworn to solitude. The mercantile classes are intent upon the making of and spending of money. The Chinese to them represent cheap service, making life luxurious even on the income of a clerk. Their ambitions lie in Tooting or Yonkers: their immediate interests in the racecourse or golf-links. The proudest boast of Shanghai is that the bar in the English Club is the longest in the world.

Therefore, they have not noticed—save for a half-conscious uneasiness—the change that was taking place all round them. Euro-China, like Anglo-India, has believed devoutly that the East does not change. And it has shut eye and ear against any evidence that seemed to controvert that comfortable doctrine.

And yet, while they have remained, obstinately and complacently, blind and deaf, China all around them has been changing. The mass, which, according to their cherished theory, was doomed to perpetual inertia, has, in defiance of that theory, begun to move. And the movement, being under the continued pressure of forces which created it, is an accelerated one.

Those forces are not far to seek. And there is no need to attribute unrest, as does a bewildered Euro-China, to the underhand intrigues of Bolshevist emissaries. Certainly—but that is a different matter—the existence of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is in itself a tremendous factor. The workers and peasants of China know that over the boundary to the north is a republic of workers and peasants who have successfully revolted against imperialism and against capitalist exploitation.

But even that is a minor influence. It has accelerated an inevitable development. So have other influences. The war had its effects. The phalanx of imperialism was broken, even more dramatically than in the Russo-Japanese war. The driving of the Germans from their concessions and from their great harbour at Tsing-Tao made a deep impression. And those thousands of Chinese workers who worked behind the lines and in the Channel ports during the last war years—nobody paid much heed to them.

But they were learning, in their own way, as the Chinese students in Europe and America were learning in theirs.

These, however, are, as I say, incidental accelerating forces. The original impulse, the real motive power of the Chinese movement is capitalism itself. Very swiftly and very brutally capitalism—and for the most part an alien capitalism—has been forcing its industrial system upon China. It has created a proletariat with proletarian reactions—a proletariat which still has its close connections with the peasant masses behind, and which has not been broken to passive acceptance by generations of habit.

It is not accidental that the movement has started in Shanghai. For Shanghai is the masterpiece of Euro-China. A city of amazing wealth and of grinding poverty : the richest and the poorest in all the East. A city which can boast the biggest bank building, the longest cocktail-bar, and the worst slums in all the world. A city aggressively ruled by alien capital : for whose municipal council only aliens are allowed to vote : on whose park-gates it is written that “no dogs and no Chinamen are admitted.” Shanghai is the epitome of foreign capitalism in China. It sums up the folly which has added racial insult to economic exploitation.

Now there are men who will swallow insult for the sake of profit. There are men who will tamely submit to exploitation if their pride is not hurt. But there is no man who will let himself be at once robbed and spat upon without turning.

The Chinese worker has been ripened for revolt by the imperialists themselves. He has learned from others that to be able to revolt he must first be organised. Sun Yat Sen's is, of course, the historic name. But it has been a thousand nameless leaders who, under his influence, have done the work. Sun saw that the growing nationalist revolt must be linked with industrial revolt. He taught that the movement must be not anti-foreign, but anti-imperialist, that in demanding the revision of the treaties, in demanding fiscal and judicial autonomy, the object must be to rid China not only of foreign political interference but of capitalist exploitation.

He did his work while supercilious European writers derided him as a woolly-brained visionary and assured their readers that the only people in China who mattered were a few Generals, one of whom would sooner or later make himself dictator and make short

work of the Republican and Socialist fantasies of the Kuomintang. And while they deplored, or chuckled over, the division of China into warring factions and the absence of any national unity, that unity was being built up under their noses, not by the Generals but by the people. While the Changs and the Wus were fighting their serio-comic civil wars, civil associations on a national scale were being built up from one end of the country to the other. Trade Unions, Students' Associations, Merchants' Associations, Professional Associations were expressing a solidarity far more real than the spectacular divisions of the soldier-politicians. And it is a solidarity based upon Sun's watchword of "Down with Foreign Imperialism." It began with the proletariat and the students : it captured—for the time being—even the bourgeoisie : it permeated the peasantry : it has begun even to affect the armies of the "War-lords."

That is why, when the struggle broke out in Shanghai, an astonished Europe saw all China, from Peking to Hong-Kong, rally in support of the Shanghai strikers. It is the rally of a national consciousness based upon class consciousness. The merchant class has been drawn irresistibly in. But the real binding force is the force of labour solidarity. It is Chinese Labour which, in Peking, in Tientsin, in Hankow and elsewhere is demonstrating its unity with Shanghai. The newspaper correspondents rightly emphasise that it is the "rabble" or the "riff-raff"—polite terms for the proletariat—which is the backbone of the business.

How strong the movement is the conduct of Chang Tso-lin dramatically testifies. He was for the moment the pet of the foreign colony. His rival in the north, Feng Yu-hsiang, the "Christian general," had dropped into disfavour. He was suspected of patriotic tendencies, even of friendly relations with Karakhan. So it was arranged that Chang should smash him and his army (which is also suspected of patriotism). It was to happen within a few weeks when Shanghai upset all calculations. For the astute Chang, alarmed at the wave of national sentiment and at the feeling among his own troops, suspected that if he were suspected of attacking another Chinese at the behest of the foreigners, he would soon be a general without an army, and perhaps without a head. Like a wise man he played for safety, and joined with Feng in a patriotic gesture.

There are signs now that he has recovered his courage and is willing again to essay the task allotted him by his patrons. But the mere fact that he hesitated, that he feared, for the moment, to go against the stream, is tremendously significant. And as in the North so in the South.

The unhappy Yunnanese, who were confidently expected to drive the Kwangtung "Reds" out of Canton, or at the least to keep Southern Civil War usefully in being, have been swept away. While the Prime Minister of Great Britain mechanically repeats the old phrases about China's troubles being largely due to her lamentable divisions, China is visibly unifying herself under his eyes.

That perfect unity will not endure. All the resources of corruption and cajolery and intimidation will be used to break it. There will be—as always—leaders who will fall out or sell out. There will be defeats, and probably disgraces. But these will be incidental. This is no affair of leaders ; it is the mass movement, the mass awakening of a people. And it will go irresistibly on bringing unforeseen and unforeseeable things in its train.

Shanghai is the dramatic beginning of a development of world-historical importance : a fact which one would have thought glaringly obvious, were it not that so few people seem to have the faintest glimmering of it. But that is often the way with big facts.

# ART AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

By HUNTLY CARTER

**W**E expect forms of art by workers that shall make the Labour movement, its history, its present aims, Unity, Power, and its future, Freedom of the Workers, plain, intelligible and attractive to all.

It is a hard fact that the business of art expression once exercised by the common people, as in the Middle Ages, has fallen into the hands of servile ruling-class representatives. There is no problem more urgent than the recovery by the workers of the right to express art on behalf of their own class. Of their ability to do so there is not the slightest doubt. As I have said, every human being is a potential artist. But hundreds of thousands, nay millions of human beings are not encouraged, are not allowed the time and facilities to express art, by the classes that govern them. To understand that art expression is a common thing we have to turn only to negro sculpture, which in recent years has become a fresh source of inspiration to the acknowledged new masters in sculpture and painting. They are agreed that negro sculpture is a great form of art and not a museum curiosity. This work is done by people who are called savages, who have never had any training in the technique of art. They simply sit down and express whatever moves them in wood and other material and produce results that are a marvel of art and craft to the most experienced modern artist.

The decline of art expression amongst the workers and the loss of the great principles of working-class expression and propaganda, is not due to loss of ability in workers to express themselves creatively. It is due to specialism by which the artist falls into a specialised culture class, and translates into form and colour his specialised creative feelings about things. As an interpreter of social values he is like a bricklayer or bricklayer's labourer who stands towards the building trade as a bricklayer or labourer. He stands towards society as a painter or sculptor or caricaturist,

not as a human being. It is due also to the industrial revolution; to the rise of capitalism and the capture by the capitalists of artists as capitalistic propagandists.

The present-day forms of art, even those called Socialistic, in opposition to those called capitalistic, middle and leisure class, are really expressions of a capitalistic and middle-class point of view. So-called Socialistic artists think of the social and industrial problems mainly in middle-class terms and use middle-class technique. They may wish to express the full horror of the extremes between Capital and Labour, between riches and poverty, they may be aware of Labour economic problems and of the bottomless pit of slavery and tyranny, but what they produce is invariably middle-class propaganda. It is in fact the kind of propaganda which Upton Sinclair has written an extremely important book to expose. In "Mammonart" he produces abundant documentary evidence to prove his thesis that all art expression is propaganda, and that artists are bought and sold, as in a slave market, by the ruling class to express their point of view. He mentions a few, including Dante, Milton, Molière, Rousseau, Voltaire, Byron, Shelley and Keats, who have tried to avoid the capitalistic net and sought to represent society on a democratic basis. But I think that if we examine their work very closely we shall find they are expressing their own ideal of democracy and not the truth of democracy extracted from them by hard, bitter and shameful experiences. Like Mr. George Bernard Shaw, they are at bottom individualists who make a profession of democracy or Socialism. They are like the townsman who tries to express the life of the agricultural labourer without any actual experience of that life, and succeeds only in producing an idealised Garden of Eden picture of what he thinks that life is. Of the extreme horrors and humiliations of the labourer's life, of his struggle to make both ends meet on a bare pittance, nothing is shown. The point is that he does not express the labourer's life as the labourer would express it. Look through the files of certain of the Socialist journals and you will see what I mean. Turn to the cartoons in *The New Leader* for example, and there you shall find the middle-class artist engaged in alleged Labour propaganda. In one cartoon you will see a well fed and clad labourer driving his plough and team of fat, sleek horses in a landscape which appears

to have been specially prepared by God for the greatest enjoyment of man. Not a cloud in the sky, not a sign of mud or wage-slavery anywhere. The parasitic slave-owner who eats into the soul of the farm labourer is completely absent. This sort of thing is entirely false. More, it is a mischievous misrepresentation of actual facts. And it is not an isolated example of lying Socialistic propaganda.

Here are two or three more. In the *Daily Herald* of January 19, 1925, there appeared a cartoon reproduced from *The Labour Woman*, edited by Dr. Marion Phillips. It was called "Rescue the Drowning," and was the work of Mr. Eric Gill, the sculptor. Mr. Gill has I believe Socialistic leanings. At anyrate I once heard him deliver a lecture to the Fabians, and a pretty mess he made of it. He has made the same mess of his Socialistic cartoon. This cartoon starts from the artist's best middle-class intelligent opinion of Socialism, and is embroidered with the eccentricities of his own individuality and technique which have nothing to do with Socialistic propaganda. They are in fact individualistic propaganda. We see women on a raft rescuing women from an alleged stormy sea, what time a man hauls up Labour's flag, Justice. The faces of all the women and the man are alike, made on a sculptured standardised pattern. In the background are two capitalists who look like the elders in Sir James Barrie's "Little Minister." On either side is a figure bowed in adoration, supposed to be representatives of the police and the military. Above them floats the banner inscribed "Safety First." It should be Flesh and Blood, and Money First. Mr. Gill is the sculptor who carved some figures in Westminster Cathedral, which caused a great deal of discussion amongst the dealer-art critics. The proper place for the cartoon which the *Daily Herald* has patronised is Westminster Cathedral. It is full of cheap religious sentiment (look at the Christ-like face of the flag-hauler) and not a true Labour note is seen anywhere. A similar unsatisfactory treatment of Labour subjects may be seen in the cartoons by Mr. Paul Nash in *The Labour Woman*. Mr. Nash is an artist of undoubted ability in his own class. But his power to apply his pencil or brush to the political or social platform is another matter. His "The Machinist," though very important as a design, has no social value. He is very flattering to his own technique, but he tells us nothing about the true life of the seamstress. The figure



seated at a machine with her back towards us reminds one of the society woman trying the experiment of doing a little work. All these cartoons in *The Labour Woman* by established middle-class artists exhibit the same effusive and stupid approach to something that does not appeal, by its nature, to Labour sentiment and opinion. The cartoonists may want to express the Labour point of view, but they simply cannot do it. The most they can do is to follow the general rule of the middle-class artist, to live in seclusion, to go round stealing any objects that appear important, houses, gates, lamp-posts, middle-class human beings, lovely faces, necks, noses, bosoms, doormats and chimney pots, any structure, any thoroughfare, anything in fact that can be pushed into a picture and made to tell a capitalistic or pseudo-Socialistic tale for a price.

The remedy for the inadequate representation or downright misrepresentation of Labour conditions and aims by means of art expression lies in the hands of the workers themselves. To reassert the right of art expression, to apply vigorously and continuously the principles of art to Labour problems, especially the present great struggle for freedom, is an outstanding task for workers.

The recovery of art expression as a working-class instrument capable of remaking society and bringing a new spirit into public life has been made in Soviet Russia. It has been made by separation, by the need of a working-class culture and style suited to a working-class society, and by the encouragement given to the workers by the Government. According to *Das Neue Russland* the number of artists and artistes or theatre workers is 24,298. In Moscow there are 5,562, in Leningrad 3,320, in Odessa 3,201. All these people express a working-class point of view. In another issue of this journal it is shown that worker-artists are on the increase, and in colleges they are forbidden to practise any æsthetic form of art, or forms, practised by the bourgeoisie. Composition or modelling is replaced by construction or building as the engineer understands it. Art for Art's or Beauty's sake is replaced by Art for Life's or Service's sake. Factories and machines, flaming fires and smoke play a great part in all forms of art expressed by workers. The Trade Union Delegates whose Report on Russia was recently published can testify to the existence of many proletarian forms of art.

The production of proletarian forms of art is both urgently necessary and possible in this country. At the present moment there are practically none produced except those which are produced by workers for capitalists for profiteering purposes. I refer to the forms produced in the objective world of mechanical industry, the Panhard racing-car, the bird-like aeroplane, the many things related to efficiency, swiftness, value, power, and containing great beauty of colour and form. These objects are made by industrial workers for the use and enjoyment of the ruling class. They could be made equally as well and beautiful for the use of the workers themselves. Our public galleries as a whole contain no examples of working-class forms of art. Including the National Gallery, they are choked full of middle-class excrement and imbecilities. Photographs of the ruling and leisure class, dull cheerless photographs of middle-class surroundings, comic versions of the scenes of life or copies of nature perpetuated by artist-slaves who are too weak to be indifferent to the money of a wealthy and powerful capitalistic society invade every nook, befoul every corner of our public galleries. Most of the exhibits in the Royal Academy are the limit of silliness, meaningless form, and shocking flattery designed to satisfy the largest ruling-class appetite.

To produce proletarian forms of art, the workers must turn their backs on this sort of thing. They must firmly refuse to have any truck whatever with capitalistic or leisure-class artists, and steadfastly refuse to accept means of evolving from them into a working-class likeness of the middle-class artist. Unless they do so, they will lose their own individuality. The present power of middle-class art traditions is immense. I think we can see an example of this power at work in a cartoon which appeared in George Lansbury's *Labour Weekly* of April 11. It was drawn by George Bissill, the miner-artist, and the subject was "Labour rises from the tomb of capitalism." It was a variation of the ancient theme Christ is Risen. Here Labour was Christ and Capital was the Tomb. Technically it showed great ability. It was a first-class example of pattern-making and of the intelligent use of a big firm line. But it smacked of the middle-class pulpit not of the mine, and had very little relation, if any, to the Labour situation. To-day Labour is not rising on clouds, in the best Raphael-like manner, to the blue empyrean as Keats

might say, from a skull representing Capital. It is engaged in a fierce struggle for Unity and Power, and capitalism is anything but a skull as yet. Worker cartoonists must not indulge in this kind of symbolism unless they want to be laughed at. They must stick to realism. It is actual life at which they must aim. Their own life as it is lived through the senses and the consciousness. Not the industrial life lived through the fancy of other classes. They have, for instance, full possibilities for expression in the mastery and new spectacle of machinery, and for caricature, for the use of stinging line, in capitalistic types and action. They have a very wide field of caricature and need not resort to standardisation of type as Will Dyson did in the *Daily Herald* when it was a Labour paper edited by George Lansbury. Dyson standardised the Capitalist with his beetle head, comfortable paunch and air of complete possession, and the worker either as a bag of bones or a Hercules. These types, especially the fat man and the herculean labourer, have persisted. Look how they are repeated by other caricaturists, especially Will Hope. The fat man conception of the capitalist has even invaded the middle-class realm of caricature. In a caricature "Civilisation and the Industrial System," exhibited recently at a fashionable West-End gallery, the Industrial System was represented by a massive pot-bellied, half-naked muscular beast of a figure, which was a summary, no doubt, in the caricaturist's opinion of all concerned with industry.

Encouragement to Labour artists should come from Labour journals, especially the extreme Left ones, like *The Sunday Worker*. George Lansbury is on the right path in encouraging George Bissill. The latter is undoubtedly a find. But artists of this quality must be told to stop fooling with Labour subjects and to get in powerful blows for the Labour Movement.

# On the Road to Insurrection—IX<sup>1</sup>

## THE APPROACHING CATASTROPHE AND HOW TO AVERT IT

By V. I. LENIN

[TRANSLATION COPYRIGHT]

### 2.—*The Complete Inaction of the Government.*

**E**VERYWHERE there is a systematic and ceaseless sabotage of all control, and of every attempt at the organisation of control by the State. One must be either an extraordinary simpleton or a hypocrite not to understand, or to pretend not to know, the origin of this sabotage and the forces by which it is maintained ; for this sabotage by the bankers and capitalists, this obstruction of all control, inspection and registration, is adapted to the forms of the democratic republic, to the existence of "revolutionary democratic" institutions. The capitalist gentlemen have learnt perfectly this oft-repeated lesson which the partisans of scientific Socialism verbally acknowledge, but which the Mensheviks and S.R.'s have been eager to forget since their friends were installed in the ministerial and secretarial armchairs—this truth, that the economic essence of capitalist exploitation is quite unaffected by the substitution of democratic republican forms for monarchical forms ; and that to protect capitalist profits with as much success in a democratic republic as under the autocratic regime, it is only necessary to modify the methods of struggle.

The latest method, the present republican democratic method of sabotaging all control, registration and inspection, is for the capitalists (this goes without saying), and the Mensheviks and S.R.'s., to recognise verbally, without protest, the "principle" and the necessity for control, but to demand its "gradual" application. It is with these seemingly plausible pretexts that the capitalists veil their real activity, which is to make control miscarry, to transform it into a fiction by the creation of a mass of

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<sup>1</sup>Continued from THE LABOUR MONTHLY, May, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 5, p. 303.

complicated and bureaucratic machinery, dependent upon them, doing nothing and incapable of doing anything.

To make it clear that these are not just airy assertions, we will base our case on the evidence of the Mensheviks and S.R.'s. ; that is, of the people who have had the majority in the Soviets during the first half-year of the Revolution, who have participated in the "coalition government" and are, therefore politically responsible before the workers and peasants for the benevolent neutrality they have observed towards the capitalists, who were occupied in making abortive every attempt at control.

The official organ of the most important of the "plenipotentiary" (don't smile!) organs of the "revolutionary" democracy, the *Isviestia* of the C.E.C. (that is, of the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Worker, Soldier and Peasant delegates), published in No. 164, on September 7, a decree of a special institution for dealing with questions of control, an institution created by the Mensheviks and S.R.'s, and entirely in their hands. In this decree, this institution, which is the "Economic Section" of the C.E.C., officially acknowledges *the complete inaction of those central organs for the "regulation of economic life" that have been formed around the Government.*

Can one imagine a more eloquent testimony to the bankruptcy of the Menshevik and S.R. policy than this, signed as it is by the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s. themselves?

Even under tsarism the necessity of regulating economic life had been recognised and some institutions had been created for this purpose<sup>3</sup>. But they could not put a stop to the disorganisation, which never ceased to grow and finally reached monstrous proportions. Also from the beginning of the Revolution it was recognised that the first task of a republican revolutionary government was to take decisive measures to put an end to the disorganisation. When the "coalition" Government was formed, with the participation of the Mensheviks and S.R.'s., it gave, in its solemn declaration to the whole Russian people on May 6, its formal promise to

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<sup>3</sup> During the war from 1915 on, there appeared "Special Committees"; for Defence, controlling metallurgical industries; for Food Supplies, Transport and Fuel, regulating the corresponding branches. Further, there were functioning central and local bureaux for sugar, leather and flour; and these can be considered substantially as the forerunners of the Soviet organs of 1918-1921.

establish the control and regulation of economic life by the State. The Tseretellis and Tchernovs as well as all the leading Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries swore then with great oaths that they would not only answer for the Government but that the "plenipotentiary organs of the revolutionary democracy," which were in their hands, would effectively supervise the Government and control it.

Four months have rolled by since May 6 : four long months in the course of which Russia has sacrificed hundreds of thousands of soldiers for an absurd imperialist "offensive" ; four months during which disorganisation has not ceased to grow, so that the catastrophe is now imminent ; four months which the hot season allowed us to use for river-transport, for agriculture, mines, &c. ; and after these four months, the Mensheviks and the S.R's. are compelled to admit officially "the complete inaction" of the institutions for control that were formed around the Government!

And now these same Mensheviks and S.R's., with the most serious air, like true statesmen, are going to tell us (we write on the eve of the opening of the Democratic Conference, September 12) that the way to remedy the situation is to replace the coalition with the Cadets by the coalition with the big-wigs of commerce and industry, with Riabouchinsky<sup>3</sup>, Boublikov<sup>4</sup>, Terestchenko<sup>5</sup> and Co.

Truly one may demand an explanation of this extraordinary blindness of the Mensheviks and S.R's. Must they be considered as inexperienced babes in politics, who do not know what they are doing and are genuinely self-deluded? Or rather is this peculiar political blindness due to their possession of such a wealth of posts as Ministers and Secretaries, governors and commissars and so on . . . ?

3.—*The Measures of Control are known and can be easily carried out.*

But, it will be asked, are not the measures of control things exceedingly complicated, difficult, untried and even quite unthought-of? Is not this the reason for the delays of the Government

<sup>3</sup> The big industrialist of Moscow who uttered the famous phrase about "strangling the Revolution with the bony hand of famine."

<sup>4</sup> A railway "expert" and Duma deputy, notorious for having imitated the Lamourette kiss of pretended reconciliation by embracing Tseretelli at the Moscow State Conference in August.

<sup>5</sup> A big sugar factor of Kieff, before becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs in the coalition Government.

—that the statesmen of the Cadet party, of the commercial and industrial classes, the S.R. and Menshevist parties, have indeed been labouring for six months to discover, investigate and study these measures, but that the problem appears to be a terribly difficult one and not to be so settled so quickly ?

Alas ! this is how the poor ignorant resigned peasants are put on the wrong scent, as well as the public that does not penetrate to the essence of things and can be made to believe anything. In reality, Tsarism, the *ancien regime* itself, which created the " Committees for the War-Industries " <sup>6</sup>, knew the fundamental measure, the chief means and essential method of control : the organisation of the population by trades, by branches of industry, &c. But Tsarism was afraid of such organisation and, therefore, restricted it as much as possible, and artificially hindered the application of this known, easy, perfectly practicable method of control.

Crushed by the cost and the scourge of the war, more or less the prey to disorganisation and famine, each of the belligerent States has long since decided upon, experimented with and applied *a whole series* of measures of control which almost all involve the organisation of the population, the creation or encouragement of organisations of various kinds with the participation and supervision of the representatives of the Government. All these measures of control are of public notoriety, they have given rise to a flood of speeches and writings, and the laws on control published by the most advanced belligerent States have been translated into Russian or described in detail in our Press.

If our Government really wished practically and seriously to enforce control—if its institutions were not condemned to " complete inaction " for fear of displeasing the capitalists—the State has nothing more to do than borrow wholesale from the considerable number of measures of control already worked out and tried. The only obstacle in the way—an obstacle that the Cadets, the S.R.'s. and the Mensheviks conceal from the eyes of the people—is that this control would expose the unbridled profiteering of the capitalists and would dry it up at the source.

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<sup>6</sup> Organisations of industrialists formed during the war to regulate the distribution of orders from the State amongst the various enterprises ; they were approved by the Duma on August 27, 1915. Their president was Goutchkov, Minister for War after the February Revolution.

To throw more light on this important question (which is nothing more nor less than the question of the programme of *every* revolutionary government that wants to save Russia from the war and from the famine) we are going to enumerate these chief measures of control and examine them separately.

We shall then see that for State control to be realised in the twinkling of an eye, a government—if it is to be called “revolutionary-democratic” otherwise than in derision—has only to decree, in the very first week of its existence, the application of the essential measures of control, to establish effective sanctions against the capitalists who attempt evasion, and to invite the population itself to supervise them and see to it that they are compelled to carry out the provisions of the law.

Here are the chief of these measures :—

(1) The merging of all banks into one, controlled by the State—the nationalisation of the banks, in other words.

(2) The nationalisation of the trusts; that is to say, of those very important capitalist groupings that exercise a monopoly (sugar, petroleum, coal, metals, &c.).<sup>7</sup>

(3) The suppression of business secrecy.

(4) The obligation for all industrialists, merchants and employers to group themselves into trusts.

(5) Encouragement or enforcement of the organisation of the population in consumers' societies, under the control of the State.

Let us now see what would be the result of each of these measures, given that they are carried out in a really revolutionary and democratic way.

#### 4.—*The Nationalisation of the Banks.*

Everyone knows that the banks are the chief nerve centres of the whole present economic system, under the capitalist regime. To talk about the “regulation of economic life” and to leave out the nationalisation of the banks is either to display the crassest ignorance or to deceive the credulous public with big words and marvellous promises which one has absolutely no intention of keeping.

It is absurd to control and regulate the supply and distribution of cereals or of all products generally, without controlling and

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<sup>7</sup> Thus in 1912, the capitalist trust Prodameta sold 75 to 95 per cent. of the iron rails, axles, &c., that were sold in Russia; the trust Prodvagon executed 97 per cent. of the orders distributed in Russia; the same for coal.



regulating the operations of the banks. It is to go hunting for a few doubtful kopeks while neglecting the millions of roubles close at hand. The banks at the present time are so closely connected with commerce (in cereals as in every product) and industry that without taking possession of the banks it is impossible for anything serious, "revolutionary," "democratic," to be done at all.

But is not this seizure of the banks by the State perhaps an extremely difficult and complicated operation? This is what the capitalists and their defenders try in their own interest to make the public believe, so as to frighten it.

In reality the nationalisation of the banks would not take a farthing from anyone, and it presents no technical or moral difficulties whatever; it is prevented only for base motives of personal interest, by a handful of plutocrats gorged with lucre. If the nationalisation of the banks is so often confounded with the confiscation of private property, the fault is with the bourgeois Press whose interest it is that the public should be deceived.

The ownership of the capital with which the banks operate and which is concentrated in these institutions is certified by printed or written slips called shares, bonds, Bills of Exchange, receipts, etc., . . . Not one of these slips is suppressed or altered by the nationalisation of the banks, by the merging, that is, of all the banks into a single State Bank. Whosoever has fifteen roubles in the Savings Bank retains his fifteen roubles after the nationalisation of the banks; and whosoever has fifteen millions keeps his fifteen millions also, in the form of shares, bonds, Bills of Exchange, warrants, notes, &c.

What then is the use of nationalising the banks?

To make control possible. In fact real control of private banks and their operations (even if business secrecy is abolished) is impracticable, for it is absolutely impossible to verify the mechanism of the extremely complex, subtle and artificial procedure employed in the preparation of balance-sheets, in the founding of fictitious enterprises and branch banks and in the use of men of straw, &c. . . . Only the merging of all banks in one—in no way modifying property relationships by this step and taking away from no one, we repeat, the tiniest portion of his property—makes effective control *possible*—on condition, of course, that all the other measures indicated above are put into force.

It is only by means of the nationalisation of the banks that the State will be able to find out whence come the millions and the milliards, where they go to and which way they pass. And only the control of the banks, on which the whole of capitalist circulation is pivoted, will allow us to realise, in fact and not in words merely, the control of the whole of economic life, of the production and distribution of the most important products, and so to organise "the regularisation of economic life" which otherwise will remain a mere ministerial phrase, only useful to dupe the people. Only the control of banking operations, conditioned as it is by their being concentrated in a single State Bank, will enable us, by using it to prevent any concealment of income and with the help of easily applied supplementary measures, to make effective the collection of the income-tax which at the present time, thanks to the possibility of concealing income, is no more than a fiction.

It would be enough to decree the nationalisation of the banks ; the directors and officials themselves would be responsible for carrying it out. The State needs no special machinery, no special preparatory measures : nationalisation can be realised by decree, "at one stroke." The economic possibility of this measure has been created just by capitalism, which has put property into the form of Bills of Exchange, shares, bonds, &c. . . . It only remains to *unify the book-keeping* ; and if a revolutionary democratic State were to command the immediate convocation of assemblies (in every town) and congresses (in every province and for the whole country) of directors and officials for the purpose of immediately merging all the banks into one State Bank, this reform could be accomplished in a few weeks. It goes without saying that the directors and higher officials would offer resistance and would attempt to deceive the State and cause delay, for these gentlemen would see themselves being deprived of their sinecures and would lose the opportunity for all sorts of specially profitable shady operations ; for this reason, and only this, they would sabotage the measure.

But the fusion of the banks does not present the slightest technical difficulty ; and a power which was revolutionary in more than words (that is to say, which would not be afraid to break away from inertia and routine) and democratic not in phrases only (which would act, that is, in the interests of the majority of the people and

not of a handful of plutocrats)—such a power could realise this measure in the twinkling of an eye if it decreed that directors, administrators and big shareholders who tried to protract the business and to conceal documents and abstracts of accounts should be imprisoned and their property confiscated.

Nationalisation would have immense advantages, not so much for the workers (who rarely do business at a bank) as for the mass of peasants and small industrialists. It would mean a colossal saving in labour ; and supposing that the State kept the same number of officials as there were before, it would result in a much larger number of people making use of the services of the banks, which could increase their branches, extend their operations, and make them more accessible to the mass of the public. Small proprietors and the peasants would have a better chance of obtaining credit. As for the State, it would be able, first, to have *knowledge* of all the big financial operations and to obtain an exact record of them ; and then to *regulate* economic life ; and finally in the big operations it undertakes itself the State would save millions and milliards by not having to pay fabulous “ commissions ” to the capitalists. It is because of this, and this alone, that all the capitalists, all the bourgeois economists, all the bourgeoisie and its valets, Plekhanov, Potressov and Co., are ready to fight furiously against nationalisation of the banks, to invent thousands of pretexts and bad arguments against this urgent and all-important measure ; although *even* from the point of view of “ national defence,” that is from the military point of view, it would bring immense advantages and would increase the “ military strength ” of Russia.

But, it will be objected, why do such advanced States as Germany and the U.S.A. regulate their economic life quite well without ever dreaming of nationalising the banks ?

Because these States, whether they be monarchical or republican are not merely capitalist, but also imperialist. As such, they carry through the necessary transformations in the reactionary bureaucratic way, and what we have in mind here is the revolutionary democratic way.

This “ slight difference ” is of primary importance. The words “ democratic revolutionary ” have almost become conventional

expressions amongst us (particularly amongst the S.R.'s. and the Mensheviks), just like the expression "Thank God!" that is used very often by people who are not so ignorant as to believe in a God; or like the phrase "honourable citizen" that is sometimes used in addressing contributors to *Den* and *Edinstvo*, although almost everyone knows that these periodicals were founded and are maintained by capitalists in the interests of capitalism and that it is far from being honourable for Socialists to contribute to these organs.

So it is we use the words "revolutionary democratic" as a conventional expression, a *cliche*; but if we *reflect* upon their meaning we see that to be democratic is to take into consideration the interests of the majority of the people and not of the minority, and that to be revolutionary is to crush pitilessly all that is harmful, all that has had its day.

No more in America than in Germany does the government and the ruling class lay claim, I am sure, to the title "revolutionary democratic," which our Mensheviks and S.R.'s. have given themselves (and have prostituted).

In Germany there exist only four big private banks of national importance; in America only two. It is easier, more convenient and profitable for the lords of these banks to organise amongst themselves, secretly, in the reactionary and not the revolutionary manner, bureaucratically and not democratically by bribing State officials (the general rule in America and Germany), by keeping up the private character of the banks for the single purpose of maintaining the secrecy of their operations, so as to take millions upon millions of "surplus-value" from the State and guarantee the possibility of shady financial combinations.

America as well as Germany "regularises" its economic life in such a way as to make life a *military prison* for the workers (in part for the peasants), and a paradise for the bankers and capitalists. Their "regularisation" consists in leading the workers to hard labour and to . . . famine, and in guaranteeing to the capitalists (secretly, reactionarily and bureaucratically) profits even more gigantic than they made before the war.

Such a kind of "regularisation" is also perfectly possible in republican-imperialist Russia: moreover it is practised here at

this very moment, not only by the Miliukovs and the Chingarevs, but by Kerensky himself, with the help of Terestchenko, Nekrassov, Bernatsky, Prokopovitch<sup>8</sup> and Co., who defend, by their reactionary bureaucratic and bourgeois conduct, the "inviolability" of the banks and their sacred right to make the most monstrous profits. Let us speak the plain *truth*: in republican Russia there are people who want to "regularise" economic life by reactionary and bureaucratic methods, but who are prevented sometimes by the "Soviets" which have not succeeded in wiping out the first Kornilov but will spare no effort to smash another Kornilov.

That is the truth. And this simple and bitter truth is more useful for the education of the people than the lies with which it is deceived about "our great revolutionary democracy."

The nationalisation of the banks would facilitate considerably the nationalisation of insurance; that is to say, the merging of all insurance companies into a single one which would centralise their operations and would be controlled by the State. Here again, if the democratic-revolutionary State were to decree the fusion and order the directors, officials and big shareholders to proceed without delay, on their own personal responsibility, to carry it out, the congresses of officials would accomplish it at once and without the slightest difficulty. Hundreds of millions are invested in insurance by the capitalists and all the work is done by the employees. The fusion would lead to the lowering of the premium for insurance and would give a host of advantages and benefits to all the insured, whose number could be considerably increased without increasing the outlay of forces and resources at all. There is absolutely nothing—except the inertia, routine and cupidity of a handful of people occupying comfortable sinecures—to prevent the realisation of this reform, which would increase, moreover, the country's "capacity for defence" by economising the labour of the population and by opening out the widest possibilities for effective and not merely verbal "regularisation" of economic life.

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<sup>8</sup> Chingarev—Minister of Finance in the first coalition ministry, after Terestchenko  
Bernatsky—Minister of Finance, and Prokopovitch—Minister for Food Supplies, in  
Kerensky's last ministry.

# The World of Labour

	PAGE
CHINA : The Seamen's Struggle .. .. .	436
TRADE UNION UNITY : The Anglo-Russian Agreement .. .. .	438
Russian Reply to I.F.T.U. .. .. .	440

## CHINA

### The Seamen's Struggle<sup>1</sup>

**T**HERE is a growing discontent and indignation among tens of thousands of Chinese seamen at the shipowners' non-observance of the Agreement concluded between the Chinese Seamen's Union and the Shipowners' Committee as a result of the seamen's victorious strike in 1922. The Agreement, containing three clauses, was signed by R. Sutherland, Chairman of the Shipowners' Committee, A. Jamieson, British Consul-General at Canton, Luk King Fo, Secretary to the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs at Canton, and Chak Hon Ke, Delegate of the Chinese Seamen's Union. It was further guaranteed by Sir Robert Hotung. Be it as it may, the shipowners and the British Colonial Government in Hongkong have violated every one of the three clauses, while the Chinese seamen in the person of the Chinese Seamen's Union have kept strictly to the Agreement ever since its solemn conclusion.

*(Here follows the text of the Agreement.)*

(1) In gross violation of Clause I, the Blue Funnel Line of the Butterfield & Squires Co. in April, 1923, decreased the wages of the men in its ships to the former scale. The British Colonial Government, a signatory to the Agreement in the person of the H.B.M. Consul-General, ignored the protest lodged by the Chinese Seamen's Union. Moreover, in violation of Clause III, stipulating a minimising as far as possible of irregularities connected with the engaging of crews, the Colonial Government abetted the "B" House Union, thus enabling the replacement of the original crews of the Blue Funnel Line by strike-breakers from that organisation. Again, abusing its military authority and extending its iron rule to the water surface, the Colonial Government authorised the strike-breakers in the ships to carry arms.

Cases of similar violations are too numerous to be enumerated.

(2) For the sake of convenience, let us discuss Clause III before Clause II. The shipowners not only have violated Clause III and have no desire to assist, as they are in duty bound to assist, in inaugurating "a system of engaging crews which will minimise as far as possible any irregularities which may (rather, do !) exist in connection with the pay of men ;" but on the contrary,

<sup>1</sup> Specially communicated to THE LABOUR MONTHLY by the Chinese Seamen's Union, Hongkong.

in conjunction with the Colonial Government, they maintain a "B" House Union, an organisation of labour contractors, whose service to mankind it is to mercilessly fleece the seamen. Thus the Colonial Government, in collusion with the shipowners, prolongs the exploitation of labour by labour parasites, which should have been abolished by the Chinese seamen immediately after their victorious strike, barring the interference of the Colonial Government. This is not only a grave violation of the Agreement, but also a sinister act of provocation. As already mentioned, the Colonial Government by allowing them the extraordinary privilege of carrying arms in the colony, does not even refrain from openly supporting the labour exploiters.

(3) The shipowners have violated *completely* Clause II, stipulating that "if positions are not available for men ready to return to work, it is agreed that half pay shall continue for such period as the men are not employed, but not exceeding five and a-half months from the date of the general return to work."

Lest it should seem that the first and second clauses are much too liberal on the part of the shipowners, it must be explained here that, firstly, the said payment for a period not exceeding five and a-half months is no more than a beggarly compensation for the victorious strikers whose positions had been taken by the Philippine and other strike-breakers, called Hongkong by the shipowners. (Be it understood that the Chinese seamen have no grudge against the strike-breakers, for they know that unemployment is an inevitable characteristic of capitalist society and unemployment is the mother of strikebreakers.) Secondly, these clauses were won by the seamen as a result of a victorious life-and-death struggle for fifty-six odd days. Settlement was delayed just because of the shipowners' reluctance to accede to these very claims, thereby prolonging the unheard of hardships and damages suffered by the seamen and the common masses of Hongkong.

However, up till now not a cent has been paid by the shipowners, in spite of the Agreement in black and white. Where is "fairness" in the hands of the capitalists? Where is the "sacredness" of agreement with the capitalists? And where is the "law" in a colony?

The Chinese Seamen's Union in 1923 referred the matter to the British Colonial Government in Hongkong, but the latter washed its hands of the matter, despite the fact that His Majesty's Consul-General was a signatory to the Agreement. The Chinese Seamen's Union presented to the Chairman of the Shipowners' Committee, R. Sutherland, a list of the men entitled to the half pay and the amount, but he claimed that the list was not in proper form and that money would not be paid to the men without producing the names of those who had taken their positions. Such an impossible condition cannot be found in the Agreement and cannot be considered. Besides, how was it humanly possible to know then, and how is it humanly possible to produce now, the names of the strike-breakers filling the positions, who escaped with the ships under *military escort in the darkness of night*? Such pretexts are too obvious to baffle the seamen, who have seen the world and who have been through thick and thin.

The Chinese seamen know full well the unwillingness of the shipowners voluntarily to carry out the terms of the Agreement as well as their cunning

and collusion with the British Colonial Government. The Chinese seamen have not lost sight of Sir Robert Hotung, whose failure to keep his word will further expose him as a useful instrument, acquired by the allurements of the knighthood and otherwise to serve the colonial rule whenever things come to a head between the rulers and the ruled.

The Chinese seamen demand the shipowners to pay forthwith the half pay and to carry out the other two clauses. They demand the British Colonial Government, signatory to the Agreement, besides protecting the shipowners, to heed the seamen's demands. They demand His Excellency Robert Hotung, a British knight who has proclaimed a so-called peace conference professedly in the interests of the Chinese people, to fulfil his duty as guarantor ere he speaks again. They demand the coming British Prince to investigate the scandalous deeds of the Colonial Government and the shipowners, and to mete out due punishment, lest he should reveal a princely imperialism.

Several thousand Chinese seamen are entitled to five and a-half months' pay, the total sum far exceeding \$200,000. They are clamouring for their rightful compensation. The Chinese Seamen's Union, representing their interests, will never neglect its duty, and will realise at any cost the conditions won by the victorious struggle and heroic sacrifices. These conditions were by no means gifts from the shipowners. Those who will recall the fifty-six odd days of a life-and-death struggle in 1922 of more than sixty thousand seamen and eight combatant unions, the sacrifices of the workers and the panic caused by the blockade of Hongkong as a result of the interruptions of communications, will agree that whatever was acquired was acquired by the united gigantic power of the workers themselves. There is no need to recall already the machine gun patrols of the Colonial Government ready to massacre the workers at the time.

The whole body of Chinese seamen, 100,000 strong, are prepared. They appeal to their brother workers in China and in all countries, particularly the seamen and their organisations to help their Chinese brothers in their present just demands! Hand in hand, in a glorious United Front, they have every reason to expect the day in the immediate future when the British Colonial Government and the shipowners must redeem what they have hitherto atrociously violated.

## TRADE UNION UNITY

### The Anglo-Russian Agreement

ON April 30, the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions ratified the decisions of the Joint Conference between its delegates and those of the British General Council.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this ratification, which followed closely on the ratification by the General Council itself (April 21), further documents of the Conference have been published.

The most important of these is the British reply to Mr. Tomsky's opening statement on behalf of the Russian Delegation. This document makes clear the obligations assumed by the General Council. Its agreed text is as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> See *THE LABOUR MONTHLY*, May, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 5, pp. 304-309.



(1) It is suggested that the Russian movement should consider a reply to the Amsterdam resolution to the effect that in the interests of International Unity they are desirous of participating in an International Federation of Trade Unions which would include among its objects those enumerated in the rules of the Amsterdam International and a constitution, in general outlines not essentially dissimilar from that of the Amsterdam International. As the present rules of the International Federation were drafted to meet the requirements of the countries at present affiliated, and, without supplementary revision, may fail to meet legitimate requirements of the Russian Trade Union Movement, preliminary conversations and conferences are absolutely necessary. The object of such conversations would be to ascertain how best to develop the existing International Federation so as to facilitate the inclusion of the Russian and all other Trade Union organisations.

(2) The British section will undertake to submit to the Amsterdam International that this, in principle, complies with their condition for a conference as far as can be reasonably required, and will urge that full consideration must be given to those special difficulties confronting the Russian Trade Union Movement as representing a country with a great variety of very distinct nationalities. The British section will declare that an International Federation of an all-inclusive character cannot be fully developed except by making full provisions for variations in tradition, historic association and political differences in the various countries. The British section will also again affirm that the differences between the Russian Trade Union Council and the International Federation of Trade Unions can be most successfully dealt with by an informal conference.

(3) Subject to joint agreement on the above clauses, the British section will submit to the International Federation of Trade Unions the following proposals:

- (a) The Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions to call an immediate Conference with the representatives of the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions for the purpose of considering the position arising from the decision of the General Council meeting at Amsterdam on February 5 to 7, 1925, and also the conclusions of the joint discussion of this Conference. If such a Conference be convened the British section will endeavour to secure the fullest co-operation of all parties concerned.
- (b) In the event of the Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions deciding that they are unable to convene a Conference as proposed above, the British Trades Union Congress General Council will undertake to convene a Conference, and endeavour to promote International Unity by using its mediatory influence as between the Russian Trade Union Movement and the Amsterdam Bureau. In this capacity the British Trades Union Congress General Council will be inspired by a full appreciation of existing difficulties and a desire to create a united industrial international organisation capable of efficiently representing the international interests of the workers.

In the course of a long statement agreeing to this summary of views, the Russian Delegation

. . . reaffirms that the Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R. always conceived of the unity of the international movement as the concentration of all working-class forces in a single international, on the basis of national unity and of united national and international Trade Union organisations. . . . independent of any influence of the capitalist class, for the purpose of uniting the Trade

Union organisations of the whole world, both in their daily economic struggle and in their struggle for the final emancipation of the working class.

These statements, it is understood, will be submitted to the International Federation of Trade Unions : but the last Executive meeting of that body did not discuss the question, though Press reports state that "surprise" was expressed that the Russians had not yet replied to the I.F.T.U. letter conveying the resolution of the February General Council meeting.<sup>2</sup>

#### Russian Reply to I.F.T.U.

The matter has now been carried a step further by the publication of the Russian reply to the I.F.T.U., in which the demand for an unconditional conference is, in accord with the provisions of the Anglo-Russian agreement, repeated. The reply was drawn up by the new Foreign Relations Committee of the All-Russian Council and signed by Mr. Tomsky and Mr. Dogadov as chairman and Secretary of the Committee.<sup>3</sup> Its text is as follows :—

#### ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS

Moscow, May 19, 1925.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS,  
*Amsterdam,*

DEAR COMRADES,

Owing to a series of unforeseen circumstances the plenary meeting of the U.S.S.R. Central Council of Trade Unions could not be held on March 17, and as on April 6 and 7 there was a Conference in London between the representatives of the U.S.S.R. Central Council and the General Council of British Trades Union Congress, it could be held only on April 30 to May 3, 1925. The London Conference of British and U.S.S.R. Trade Unions fully and comprehensively discussed the whole problem of Unity as well as the relations between the U.S.S.R. Central Council and the International Federation of Trade Unions.

The plenary meeting of the U.S.S.R. Central Council, after approving the work and decisions of the London Conference, resolved :—

That the answer to the I.F.T.U. should be written by the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S.S.R. Central Council basing it on the results of the Conference between the Unions of Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. and the decisions of the present plenary meeting of the U.S.S.R. Central Council.

In view of those decisions and the interchange of opinions during the plenary meeting of the U.S.S.R. Central Council we consider it our duty to inform you that the resolution of the I.F.T.U. General Council as cited in your letter of February 16, 1925, has created in our affiliated Trade Unions the most distressing impression. We believed all the time that our interchange of correspondence would result in greater mutual understanding, and that a meeting of our representatives with the representatives of the I.F.T.U. in order to

<sup>2</sup> See THE LABOUR MONTHLY, April, 1925, Vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 235-6.

<sup>3</sup> This Committee, whose creation as a parallel Committee to the International Committee of the British General Council was agreed on at the London Conference, was appointed by the last meeting of the All-Russian Council. Its members are : Messrs. Tomsky (Chairman), Dogadov (Secretary), Melnichansky, Andreyev, Lepse, Losovsky, Figatner, Mikhailov, Glebov-Avilov, Chernishova, Schwarz, and Kutusov.

examine together the question of Trade Union Unity would represent the first attempt made at a business-like approach to this question. We hold this to be precisely the most important and vital question for the workers of all countries.

We desired only to obtain a joint unconditional conference between representatives of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union and the International Federation of Trade Unions.

The resolution you passed on February 5 to 7 obviously rejects our proposal and stipulates that the meeting can only take place after a preliminary declaration on our part that we desire to affiliate to the I.F.T.U. And this (according to the explanations of responsible representatives of the I.F.T.U.) means to affiliate to the I.F.T.U. exactly as it is, *i.e.*, again "on the basis of the statutes and constitution." The statements made by the leading representatives of the I.F.T.U. are of immense importance.

In an interview in *Het Volk* Mr. Oudegeest declared :—

"I am wholeheartedly in favour of Stenhuis's resolution since it changes the position only in this respect, that it confirms the decision of the Vienna Congress. The Vienna Congress charged us to enter into negotiations with the Russians on the basis of our statutes and guiding principles."

M. Joubaux, speaking at the National Confederal Committee of the French General Confederation of Labour declared :—

"The Amsterdam International adheres to the position it took up at the Vienna Congress." He further explained: "Prior to the holding of any negotiations whatever, the Russian Trade Unions ought to apply for acceptance into the bosom of Amsterdam and break with all the dissident organisations existing in various countries."

It is with profound regret that we reply that these explanations and statements go even further than the resolution accepted in Amsterdam to widen the breach, and at anyrate do not facilitate the cause of International Unity.

We would once more inform you, comrades, that we are in favour of a single International Trade Union Federation. Our aim, and, as we believe, the aim of the majority of the class-conscious workers of all countries, is the creation of a single International of the organised workers of the whole world, standing for the point of view of the class struggle and the final emancipation of the working class from the capitalist yoke. Compared with this great aim the constitutional question is of secondary importance. The Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R. are ready to affiliate to a united International Trade Union Federation whose constitution, in its general features, would not differ vitally from that of the I.F.T.U. This united International could also embody in its list of aims and objects the aims set forth in the I.F.T.U. constitution. But as you are aware, the Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R. had no opportunity of taking part in the elaboration of the Amsterdam International's constitution.

We are convinced that a united Trade Union International should be broad enough to take in, not only the Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R., but also all the other Trade Union organisations not at present affiliated to Amsterdam. In order to bring this about full and complete regard must be had to the differences in tradition, historical associations, and political peculiarities in the various countries. How is this to be realised? How are the present prejudices and mistrust between the individual sections of the disunited Trade Union Movement to be overcome without personal meetings, without

considering these important questions in all their aspects and in businesslike fashion ?

It goes without saying that the mutual acquaintance of the representatives of the British and U.S.S.R. Trade Union Movements, the mutual desire for common methods and the joint discussions for the purpose of realising the International Trade Union Unity so earnestly desired by both sides have undoubtedly given very good results. The recent Conference in London undoubtedly helped to strengthen the proletarian solidarity between the workers of Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. In the same way, a meeting of representatives of the U.S.S.R. Central Council with representatives of the I.F.T.U., provided mutual good-will existed, might serve as a first step towards the effective realisation of unity in the whole international Trade Union Movement.

This then is why we consider it desirable that the General Council of the I.F.T.U. should reconsider its decision of February 5 to 7, and should fix the time and place for a conference conjointly with the U.S.S.R. Central Council of Trade Unions, without any preliminary conditions, to discuss the question of realising Trade Union Unity.<sup>4</sup>

(Signed) M. TOMSKY (*Chairman*).  
A. DOGADOV (*Secretary*).

The publication of this letter drew at once a statement to Reuter's Amsterdam correspondent, from Mr. Sassenbach, one of the Secretaries of the I.F.T.U. Mr. Sassenbach remarked that there could be—

no question of new proposals, as the Russians have only reiterated what they have already said. The only interesting point is the tone of the latest communication, which is not abusive or satirical, like previous utterances.

The members of the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council provided for by the London Agreement have now been appointed by both parties. They are—

*British* : A. B. SWALES, W. M. CITRINE, A. A. H. FINDLAY, BEN TURNER and GEORGE HICKS.

*Russian* : M. TOMSKY, A. DOGADOV, G. N. MELNICHANSKY, I. I. LEPSE, and ANDREYEV.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The text here reproduced is that officially published by the I.F.T.U. in their *Press Report*. This has been collated with the version published in the Berlin *Ros Fahne* (May 21), which was the first newspaper in Europe to publish the document and with that given by the *International Press Correspondence* : a number of verbal emendations have been made.

<sup>5</sup> For a representative selection of comments on the Anglo-Russian Agreement both from the British capitalist and foreign Social-Democratic Press, reference should be made to the June number of *Trade Union Unity*, the new International Trade Union monthly.

# BOOK REVIEW

## THE GREAT BOYG GETS PANICKY

*Relations with Russia: A Speech in favour of International Trade Union Unity.* By Fred Bramley. (Trade Union Unity. 3d.).

THERE is a grim passage in Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* where Peer, the hero, escaping from the subterranean fastness of the Troll King, finds his path barred by an omnipresent Thing: turn and strive though he may, there is no getting round it. It is called the Great Boyg.

The workers of Europe to-day also find their path to freedom blocked by a Great Boyg—the ossified structure of Social-Democracy, now clearly and openly the “third party of the bourgeoisie.”

The Social-Democratic leaders have proved their worth to their masters in a hundred different ways. They have, like Noske in Germany, and the Social-Democratic leaders in Esthonia and Bulgaria, unashamedly supported and even led the crushing of working-class revolt by the most brutal White reaction. They have, like Vandervelde in Belgium and the German Social-Democratic Party, entered Coalition Governments with the most reactionary capitalist Parties. They have, like the French Socialist Party voting for Painlevé and the Moroccan war, supported their Governments in all kinds of imperialist adventures. And, above all, they have been in the forefront of the despicable campaign of abuse, slander, and calumny directed against the Russian revolution and the Soviet Government. Those who have read the Continental Social-Democratic Press for the past few years will know to what depths of rabid hatred of the first Workers' Republic these so-called leaders of the workers can sink. The tone and the phraseology is that of the *Morning Post*.

The power of this Social-Democratic Great Boyg, whose principal force lies in the leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party, has been nowhere more manifest than in its obstruction of the movement for international Trade Union unity. Dominating, as it does, the official machinery of the International Federation of Trade Unions, it has been successful up to now in sabotaging every attempt to secure unity. Men like Oudegeest and Jouhaux have served it as useful puppets. Against those who, like the British General Council, have taken up the fight for unity, it has not scrupled to employ all the weapons of misrepresentation, insult, and chicanery at its command. The violent attacks of the Continental Social-Democratic Press on the British Delegation to Russia and on the General Council's support of the unity campaign—attacks which coincide to the letter with the parallel attacks in *The Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, and the whole British Capitalist Press—are memorable.

It was in the atmosphere of mutual distrust and hostility engendered by these attacks that the February meeting of the General Council of the I.F.T.U. took place. An intransigent resolution was proposed by Mr. Oudegeest, one of the secretaries, in the name of the Bureau. This resolution

simply declared that there was no use in continuing the correspondence with the Russian Unions, and thus wrote *finis* to the Unity negotiations.

Against this die-hard resolution Mr. Bramley, in the name of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, delivered the speech now published as the pamphlet under review. No formal precis can give a just idea of the quality of this speech. In the circumstances it was a clever speech; and a strong speech, too. Mr. Bramley termed "an act of folly" the attempt to settle the differences between Amsterdam and Moscow by correspondence rather than by direct personal negotiations; and by a correspondence, moreover, which studiously emphasised the points of disagreement rather than the points of agreement.

He took exception to the attacks delivered on the speeches and acts of individual members of the British Delegation to Russia, while no reference had been made to the collective acts of the Delegation. He paid a warm tribute to the tremendous constructive work achieved by the Russian Trade Union Movement since the Revolution. Then, summing up the arguments in favour of unity, and contrasting them with the Oudegeest resolution, he observed with a fine irony:—

In various countries you find capitalist Governments negotiating to get an agreement with Russia, capitalist combines discussing trade agreements with Russia, and I think that we can state in advance quite definitely that before very long agreements will be signed. We shall look very well—shall not we?—as an International Federation marching behind capitalist groups, marching behind capitalist Governments, hurrying to catch up to them on account of agreements that have been reached with Russia.

One further passage deserves quotation. Every word of it, incisive, almost contemptuous, must have hit home

"It appears to me," said Mr. Bramley, "you can discuss any other subject under the sun without getting into that panicky state of trembling fear and excitement and almost savage ferocity which you get into when you are discussing Russian affairs. It may be some psychological problem which I am not able, not being a professor, to solve; but it is undoubtedly there. You can discuss calmly and without excitement the operations of the Fascisti in Italy; you can discuss with great calm the suppression of Trade Union organisations in other countries; you can discuss the activities of capitalist Governments, and their destruction of the Trade Union Movement in one country after another without this unnecessary epidemic of excitement; but when you begin to discuss Russia, you begin to suffer from some malignant disease which I am not able to say much about because I do not understand it. Now let us try and get rid of that. Why do you not follow the example of the British section, and look calmly at Russian problems, and deal with Russia as you are dealing with other countries? Get rid of the panicky fear that seems to invade and dominate your minds in dealing with Russia."

The result of this remarkable speech was, as all the world knows, that the Oudegeest resolution was silently dropped, and a compromise resolution—of no practical value, it is true—adopted in its place.

Yet it may be asked, have not British Trade Union leaders in the past found it opportune, on certain occasions and in certain circumstances, to deliver "left" speeches? And have not their subsequent actions belied those same speeches? That is quite true. It is true also that Mr. Bramley, right

through his speech, assiduously and explicitly repudiated Communism, that he repudiated the Minority Movement, that he openly declared himself to be a member of the extreme right wing of the Trade Union Movement. Now more than ever it is necessary for the workers to have no illusions about the leaders in our movement who, as against the Continental Social Democrats constitute the new and growing left in International Trade Unionism.

No one can doubt the truth of this. But is it the whole truth? No. Mr. Bramley's speech is not simply a clever speech delivered by an astute Trade Union leader. It is much more than that. It is symptomatic of the slow but profound process of the revolutionising of the British Labour Movement that is taking place before our eyes. Unemployment is soaring over the one and a quarter million mark. The capitalist offensive is threatening all along the line, with the foreign competition set on foot by the Dawes Plan as its pretext. The burden of a parasite-ridden, inflated, top-heavy capitalism becomes daily more intolerable.

These are the hard objective facts which are enforcing a transvaluation of all the old values. Here lies the ferment which finds its expression, in however attenuated a form, in the speech of Mr. Bramley.

The Great Boyg is beginning to crack up.

G. A. H.





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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month - - - - Page 449

### *THE MINERS' FIGHT FOR LIFE*

The Strategy of the Miners' Struggle - - - „ 465

By HERBERT SMITH

“Face Pidgin” — The Chinese Struggle - - „ 474

By TIEN SEN SHIAO

In the Light of Marxism - - - „ 482

By STUDENT

The Riff War of Independence - - - „ 489

By ALLEN HUTT

The World of Labour - - - - „ 497

China—Denmark—Germany—India—Poland

Book Review - - - - „ 508

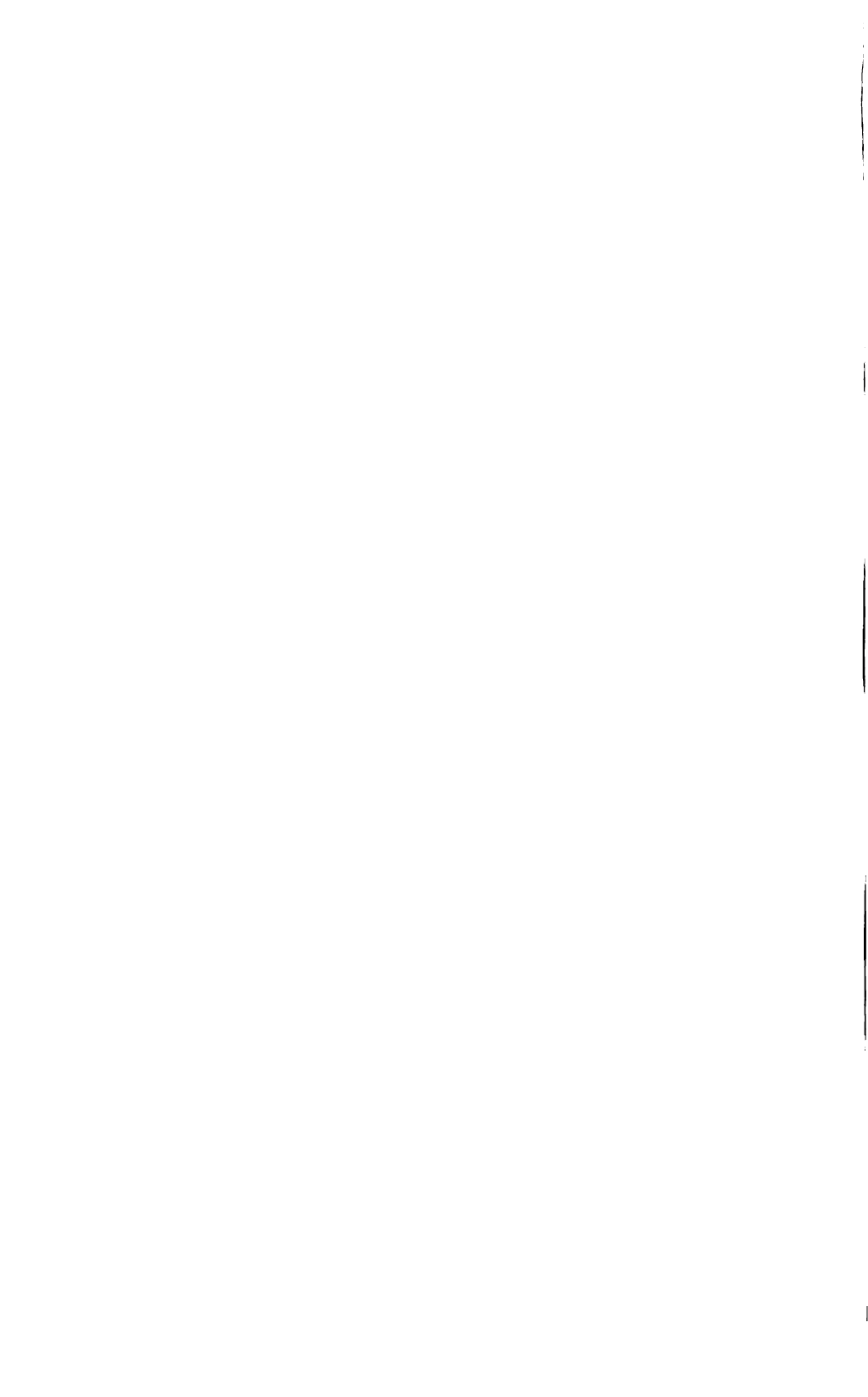
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# NOTES of the MONTH

*A Fight for Life—England's Decline—A Swift Attack—Dropping the Mosk—The Owners' Terms—"Can We Fight?"—The Economic Situation—Capital's Dilemma—Colonial "Quick Returns"—Reformist Game Up—China—Beyond Imperialism—Our Duty to China—Labour Party and Socialism—Right Wing Retreat—The "English" School of Socialism—Final Surrender—Working Class Socialism—United Class Advance—Miners Under Fire—The Crucial Case—Standing by the Miners—Imperial Gravestones—Workers, Unite!*

**A** GRIM struggle is beginning. The workers are faced with the heaviest attack since the beginning of the working-class movement. Behind that attack lies a revolution in economic conditions. The decline of British capitalist industry is dragging down into the depths the millions of workers dependent upon it. A process as cruel and merciless as the Industrial Revolution is taking place—and once again these conditions of suffering are the accompaniment of a transition from an old order to a new. A century ago the rising power was the Industrial bourgeoisie. Today the only rising power which alone can reorganise the economic structure is the Proletariat : but the consciousness of the new tasks is only being driven home with cruel lessons. The British bourgeoisie, in its hour of decay, is more and more shifting its basis of profit to the exploitation of the non-European workers, and from this basis seeking to drive the British workers to sweated conditions. To this deadly process there is no end save the Conquest of Industry by the workers. The struggle that is now beginning is more than a simple wage-fight which can reach an easy or rapid ending. It is a fight for life, which can only go on, however protracted and with however many ups and downs, until it reaches its goal in the Workers' Revolution.

**W**ORLD conditions of capitalist development, as the Marxists long ago foretold, have forced forward this struggle, have shattered the old favoured conditions of the British workers, and have thereby shattered the whole basis of

the old reformist sectionalist happy-go-lucky movement. Is the British working class ready for the struggle in front? This question is no longer at issue. Ready or unready, the struggle is here and will have to be faced. It is useless to-day to lament the failures of the past or the inherited handicaps of the British movement. The workers will have to improvise their means of fighting, and find their unity, whether through the Alliance or otherwise, in the struggle. It is to the credit of the movement that a group of leaders has stood forth even at the eleventh hour to essay the herculean task of uniting the working-class forces for the battle in front. Whether they will succeed in their task is still in doubt. All the capitalist influences in the movement are obstructing the urgent need of unity in action, and have already imposed ruinous delays. It is probable that few have even yet realised the full magnitude of the struggle in front. Never was there such need of every ounce of nerve and energy to save the situation against the enemies without and within.

**W**ITH relentless swiftness the owners have delivered their attack, as soon as it became clear that the June 4 Conference had failed to produce any immediate Alliance. The sequence of events is so plain that none can fail to see it. For months, while the miners and railwaymen were slowly preparing their demands, the owners played for time. Soft words and blarney, Baldwin's pipings, Joint Conferences were the watchword of the hour. "Our terms? We believe no good purpose would be served by stating them yet." Then came the hesitations of the Blackpool Conference. There followed June 4: polite lip service to the principle of unity, ill-concealed opposition to its practice, no plan for the urgent need of the hour. A short delay to make sure of the position; on June 16 the first meeting of the Committee, and still no plan, no decision, no readiness. At once, as we feared last month would happen, as soon as the results of the June 4 Conference became clear, the owners decided the moment was ripe. Like two heavy blows aimed with unhesitating precision came the simultaneous declarations of war from the railway companies and the coalowners. "Gentlemen, the parley is at an end. Here is our ultimatum."

“**W**HEN we recall,” declared Herbert Smith, “what has happened in the past few months, when we realise that, in spite of all this joint investigation, the owners had up their sleeve all the time the card they have now played, we begin to wonder whether the inquiry was entered on with any serious intention of getting at the truth, or whether it was merely considered as a means of keeping us in play until the owners chose to take the offensive.” Well said. That is at any rate a recognition after the event. If some members of the Miners’ Executive may have hesitated before, despite the lessons of 1919, they should at any rate now have a clear realisation of the enemy they have to face.

**W**HAT do the owners’ terms mean? They mean in the first place a staggering reduction of wages for men already thrown on to a bitter and desperate starvation level. “Our people cannot live on lower wages,” says Robert Smillie with the terrible stark simplicity of truth. The Coal Lords, drawing their tens of thousands in income for themselves, think otherwise. They think that the miners of Lancashire, strong and brave men, spending their health, their strength and their lives in dangerous, body-breaking labour for the profits and soft incomes of these lords, shall live themselves, their wives and their children on 27s. 11d., present money values. They propose that the miners of Northumberland shall come to 34s. 5d. This is assuming the same number of shifts are still worked. Abolish the last remains of the National Minimum. Make profits the first charge. Let Mammon be enthroned and worshipped. Throw the heaviest drops upon the poorest districts. It is doubtful if a more fiendish document has ever been presented by any set of owners in the present generation. Every sentence of it drips with the philosophy of Capitalism.

**C**AN we fight? Ask some of the hesitating leaders of the right wing. Can we do anything but fight? is the only answer. Is there any prospect of any improvement in the economic situation under capitalism? Is there any prospect of any help in any quarter save from the workers’ own strength? Do all

the little bustlings of the Labour Party in Parliament when there is a crisis, the little questions and appeals and votes of censure, make a halfpennyworth of difference to the realities of the situation? If the Labour Party stood forth as the leader of the working class in struggle, it would be another question. But at present the leaders of the Labour Party are acting as clogs on the workers' struggle—like Clynes "frankly admitting" that the workers have no chance, or Thomas preaching the "danger on either side" of a fight and "their responsibility to the community," and both repeating (their masters' voice) the hideous hypocrisy of "sacrifice all round." Such men are enemies: and their repetition of the capitalists' picture of the melancholy economic situation is nothing but capitalist propaganda. To the workers, who can see the facts plainly, the realities of the economic situation are nothing but a spur to the need for decisive and energetic action.

**T**O those who hesitate we would recommend consideration of the recent statement of the President of the Board of Trade on the economic situation. His review of trade prospects from the capitalist point of view brought out two big facts of importance to the workers. The first is that in present-day England the most prosperous trades are the luxury trades and the supernumerary trades. The basic industries are all depressed. His gloomy reports were of: Coal, exports down by 25 per cent.; Pig Iron, production down by 33 per cent.; Steel, same as pre-war, but on a basis of much greater producing power; Shipbuilding, a "bad position"; Cotton, "dwindling." His good reports were: Motors, "booming"; Cycles, "doing well"; Electrical Supply, "very prosperous"; Rubber, "a bright spot"; Chemicals, "on the upgrade"; Silk, "on the upgrade." Motors, cycles, silk, rubber, chemicals—a country cannot live on these. It is a picture of the decay of the metropolis of a vast imperial system, living on exploitation, and casting the workers of its basic industries on to the scrapheap.

**A**ND the explanation? The explanation furnished by the President of the Board of Trade was that "every country had far greater industrial capacity than before, but in a far poorer world." He omitted to add that a great part of that

increased industrial capacity was being financed by British capital, and was bringing increased profits to the British bourgeoisie, at the same time as it was throwing British workers out of work, and giving the British bourgeoisie their means of affording the stimulus to the luxury trades. But consider the picture given by this "explanation." Increased productive power on every side—and increased poverty. This is no longer the "wild" and "fanciful" prediction of a Karl Marx. It is the sober statement of a President of the Board of Trade. Is this an "inevitable" calamity like some natural evil of drought or pestilence, to be borne with patient suffering and "sacrifices all round" by capitalists and workers alike? Or is it not clamorous evidence that the evil is precisely the capitalist class control of industry, and that any policy which helps to maintain and perpetuate that is helping to maintain and perpetuate the evil?

**B**UT the second part of the speech of the President of the Board of Trade is even more important, for in it he comes to the capitalist remedy. The colonial policy of British capitalism is here stated with brutal frankness. After outlining briefly the sole remedy for the salvation of British capitalism as the "Development of the Empire" (*i.e.*, transference of capitalist exploitation increasingly outside Britain), and touching on the question of development in the Dominions, he dwelt with especial emphasis on the Slave Empire—the Crown Colonies—as the principal future field.

It was of tremendous importance that we should develop our Crown Colonies. *The duties of administration and the interests of British industry marched hand in hand and it was to these colonies that he looked for the quickest return, commercially and industrially, for any money we had to invest.*

Here is stated in plain terms the policy of investing British capital, won from the exploitation of the British workers, in the forced labour and plantations of the despotically governed Crown Colonies as the means to secure "the quickest return" for the parasites in the City of London. The experience of India has shown that it is only a step from the development of a colony as a base of

raw materials to its development as a centre of industrial production utilising those raw materials, without the cost of freight, on a basis of cheap labour. The "quickest return" of Imperial policy for the British bourgeoisie is quick ruin for the British workers.

**I**T is useless to lament this situation, or endeavour to meet it with quack remedies. In economic development there is no retreat. It is not possible to control the operations of capitalism while power rests with the capitalist class. Within capitalism 10 per cent. will always beat 5 per cent. This mighty truth is more powerful for capitalism than all the flags, laws, parties and patriotism in the world. To imagine that a puny measure of excluding sweated goods from Britain will make a halfpennyworth of difference to the conditions of the world market and world capitalist development is infantile. It is necessary to face facts plainly. The old isolated position of the one-time "aristocracy of labour" in Britain is smashed for good. The reformist game is 'up. Henceforth the future of the British workers is bound up with the workers overseas, with the direct struggle for the overthrow of British capitalism, with the international revolution. This is the basic meaning of the transformation of the British situation. To fall short of recognising this is to give a misleading picture and an illusory leadership.

**T**HE new situation is revealed by the struggle in China. The struggle in China is important to the British workers, not because we take a liberal paternal philanthropic interest, from our superior height, in improving the "conditions" of the Chinese factory workers, but because the Chinese masses are our brothers in arms, fighting our common fight, the fight of all humanity, against the imperialist exploiters. Every blow that they strike against the British exploiters we welcome and applaud as a blow struck in our own fight. We do not share the hypocritical attitude of the Labour representatives in Parliament, who speak of a "common purpose" with Baldwin and the first necessity of "protecting British lives," which means in fact using guns and bayonets to maintain the stranglehold of the British opium lords



and sweaters in China. We have no patience for the contemptible dishonesty of the Second International resolution, which coolly warns the Chinese workers against the dangers of "Asiatic nationalism" (let them look to their own Chauvinism, Pan-Germanism and Jingoism first, before they dare to attack the nationalism of a subject and enslaved nation). The General Council has spoken for the British workers in declaring their absolute comradeship with the Chinese workers in the struggle against British arms.

**T**HE example of China has lit up the world situation as it is to-day. The relation of the British workers to the Chinese struggle is very important. We are here at a turning point of history. In Morocco, in Turkey, in China the same thing is visible: the ebb of European capitalist-imperialist expansion has begun; the latest subjected nations are the first finding their way to freedom. In this critical period great care is needed. On the closest union of the European working class, involving their completest disassociation from their European masters, with the colonial liberation movements, which contain within them the seeds of social liberation movements—on this basis of alliance, welded together in the common struggle against imperialism, depend the sure foundations of world peace and world economic co-operation in the future, arising and built up on the ruins of the imperialist period. Without this co-operation, if the Western European workers allow themselves to become identified with their imperialist masters, heavy dangers loom in front, of racial wars, of economic dislocation, of the starvation of large numbers of the European workers and of the re-birth of new forms of capitalism for a further period in Asia and Africa and the New World.

**F**OR this reason, in the midst of all our "home" issues, the struggle in China, as well as in Morocco and elsewhere, is of intense importance to us. It is important that we should learn to play our part as true allies, steer clear of the liberal-philanthropic veiled imperialist agitations that lead nowhere, and learn to concentrate on the issues that matter. It is not enough to agitate on labour conditions, or call for the withdrawal of the notorious extra-territorial privileges. This also the American

imperialists, who are endeavouring to utilise the present crisis to out-manceuvre the British hold on China, are ready to take up in profession. What matters is that the present grip on China is being maintained by British soldiers, marines, guns and bayonets. To get these off China is our first duty. This is the one practical demand and practical work that tests real help. We are sorry that the joint resolution of the General Council and Labour Party Executive appears to have made no reference to the withdrawal of troops. It is to be hoped that this may be put right in whatever emergency resolution may be adopted at the Special Trades Union Congress. The complete withdrawal of all British forces and garrisons from China—this is the only possible position for the British working class. We need to learn from the splendid example of our French comrades in relation to the Moroccan War of Liberation. The stand of the French workers over Morocco, the stand of the British workers over China, are of great significance, and herald the beginning of a new period in world history. The struggle of the miners, and the struggle of the Chinese workers, are parts of a single struggle.

**T**HE isolation of the British workers is over. The reformist game is up. It is significant that just at this moment the Labour Party Executive has formally recognised the new situation and hauled down the flag of Socialism. The new programme of Reform and Reconstruction which they have drawn up is the final surrender to capitalist imperialism and alienation from the working class. Even the I.L.P. organ has protested against its imperialist character. Every trace of Socialism has been systematically wiped out. Nationalisation is gone. Even Nationalisation of the Mines and Railways is gone. The Capital Levy is buried. What is the meaning of this change? Why this surrender at the moment when the struggle is becoming more acute, when the desperate situation is imperatively demanding bolder measures, when the workers are demanding stronger leadership? The answer goes to the root of the new situation. It is just because the class struggle is becoming more acute, that even the simplest measures of Socialism now take on a revolutionary significance. The Labour Party as a party of class peace can no longer maintain even the

simplest proposals of Socialism. The Executive's new programme is simply the logical outcome of the path they have been travelling, away from the class struggle and therefore away from Socialism. Despite all the preachings of their theorists, Socialism and the class struggle are henceforth indissolubly linked in England. Whether the new programme will be accepted or rejected by the Labour Party Conference will have an important bearing on the immediate future of the Labour Party. But it is already clear that the British workers are travelling a different path, the path of Class Struggle, of International Solidarity and of the Working Class Revolution. Our answer to the economic chaos is the Socialist answer, which only the workers can put in force.

**T**HE right wing leaders are cowering before the economic situation, just as in every revolutionary period the right wing Socialists have always cowered before the "chaos and anarchy" and retreated full tilt into the capitalist camp, instead of realising that these conditions are the very signal of the revolutionary period and the call to decisive action. They see only the ruin in front, because they see only through capitalist spectacles. They see only the perishing of their golden palace of dreams, their easy reforms and evolutionary Socialism. Their thin film of "Socialism" slips from them like a garment, because they have never faced the meaning of the real break with capitalism, and are, therefore, left helpless in servility to capitalism. They can only see the economic situation in terms of trade returns. And so, in the moment of the testing time of real Socialism and leadership, they can only come out with cries of panic, of impotence and retreat. In a revealing article in the *Daily Herald*, significantly entitled "Are we thinking hard enough?" one of their number, C. T. Cramp, has come out with a confession of the bankruptcy of the right wing. He has just discovered for the first time the commonplaces of Marxism forty years ago about the inevitable decline of British industrial monopoly, and he is startled and non-plussed at the consequences for the working-class movement. He writes :—

We have been so accustomed to regard Great Britain as the workshop of the world that it seemed quite the normal thing for her to produce and export abroad the greater part of the world's manufactured

commodities or of its requirements in the shape of coal. It was therefore assumed that by the abolition of the capitalist class, and the assumption of power and possession by the working class, nothing more would be required to secure a sufficiency of the necessaries and comforts of life consistent with latter-day standards.

**T**HIS innocent statement, with its unconscious assumption of monopolist exploitation and imperialism continuing under "Socialism," which is regarded as a simple readjustment to benefit the British labour aristocracy in accordance with "latter-day standards," deserves to stand as a classic statement of the "English" School of Socialism. But now this world has fallen with a crash. Mr. Cramp writes:—

Capitalism in Great Britain is passing away. I believe it will disappear in ways which were not anticipated by those who first raised the standard of Socialism.

Not anticipated by Webb, Shaw, MacDonald and the English School of Socialism, he should have said ; but very strongly anticipated by Marxism. What, then, is the conclusion ? Does he recognise the Marxist outlook and the rôle of the international class struggle ? Not at all. His conclusion is the inevitable outcome of the English School of Socialism, which, in its hurry to be "practical" and "English," forgot to free the minds of its disciples from the simplest preconceptions of Capitalism. He writes :—

I think we have to ask ourselves whether, given a Workers' Republic, given in fact the realisation of all our slogans, we should be able to deliver the goods.

**H**ERE is the final surrender. This unhappy leader has so bemused his mind with capitalist economic propaganda that he actually believes it is impossible—yes, impossible—with all the increased powers of production, "given the realisation of all our slogans" (*i.e.*, the world workers' republic), to organise production to supply human needs. Or, even taking Socialism in his own narrow limited sphere, he believes the capitalist burden on industry is so light in this country, and its organisation so perfect, that a national organisation of industry on a Socialist basis would not appreciably alter the efficiency of industry or be able to win a

decent living for the workers during the transition period. Here is a picture of the effect of capitalist propaganda on the chairman of the Labour Party. We are witnessing the collapse of the English School of Socialism (whose existence was bound up with the supremacy of English capitalism).

**A**T this moment more than ever before there is need of strength and firmness. Not the retreat from Socialism, but the advance on Socialism, is the line of direction of the working class. The present economic situation can only be handled at all by handling it boldly. The miners are absolutely right when they declare that only nationalisation can assist to tackle the economic problems of the coal industry. The railwaymen are absolutely right when they declare that only nationalisation can put the railways on a sound basis. The facts of daily bread force them precisely in the direction from which the Labour Party Executive, which does not wish to face the class struggle, is retreating. But it is necessary to recognise what this involves. The question of nationalisation is not a question of an ultimate ideal organisation of industry. It is a question of a direct conflict between Profits and Wages. The same reason that drives the Labour Party right wing away from nationalisation drives the workers towards it. The coalowners declare that a living wage is incompatible with profits. The miners can only answer that profits are incompatible with a living wage. In the decay of British capitalist industry the wage struggle necessarily involves the attack on profits and raises the question of the conquest of industry. But this in its turn raises the question of united class action for power. In the present period the "conservative" Trade Unions inevitably begin to assume a revolutionary rôle, at the same time that the class-peace Socialists are retreating from all their positions. Socialism in Britain becomes visibly and clearly only having meaning as the expression of the class struggle.

**T**HE line of retreat, which is the line of the right wing, leads to no recovery, to no hope of recovery (for the objective economic conditions under capitalism preclude it), but only to further decline, to lower and yet lower wages, to the

decay and rotting of slow starvation. The line of advance, on the other hand, can only be the line of a united class advance. The economic basis of the old sectional Trade Unionism is gone. On the old lines, the right wing leaders are correct in saying that the situation is "unfavourable" for a conflict. What they fail to realise is that the more they retreat because of the unfavourable situation, the more unfavourable the situation will become. The dilemma is due to the initial error of regarding the situation in capitalist terms of sectional commercial interests, and not in terms of class strategy. They are right in saying that the united class advance will necessarily involve an attack on the existing capitalist control and organisation of industry. This is precisely the reason why the united class advance is the right strategy. The Workers' Alliance, however organised, is the inevitable next step of the British working class. This is clear to every thinking Trade Unionist. But the urgency of the question is that this step, which has to overcome the entrenched conservatism, individualism and capitalist corruption inherited from the old movement, is necessitated by a situation which is changing at terrific speed and allows of no reprieve for delay. It is a fight against time.

**T**HE miners' struggle is the central and supreme issue of the British working class at the present moment. It is not a question of a sectional struggle, which it would be in any case the plain duty of other sections to support. A battle of very much wider significance and of desperate urgency is being fought over the mines. The miners are to-day the advance-guard of the British working class in a new sense. They are occupying the most central and the most exposed position in the new economic situation and the new conditions facing the British workers. If they go under, the outlook for the whole class becomes desperate. For what is happening to the miners is only an advance version of what is hanging over every basic industry in England. For reasons, partly common to other industries, but affecting coal most strongly (Reparations coal, Versailles and the Dawes Report ; expansion of African output by half since the war, and of Asiatic and Australasian by a quarter), partly technical and peculiar to the coal

problem (displacement of coal by other sources of power dispensing with or economising coal), the heaviest brunt of the decline has fallen on the coalminers. But it would be criminal folly to imagine that the fate of the other industries is not bound up with that of coal, and that the same problems are not ultimately facing them. To leave the miners to their fate would be class suicide.

**I**T is a terrible process that is taking place. The best, the strongest, the most highly organised, the most militant and class-conscious section of the working class is being ground down before the eyes of the rest. Four years of starvation ; hundreds of thousands thrown out of the pits ; pits closing down ; no prospect of recovery in front ; and then the deadly blows of the new attacks, with the old weapon of the monopoly power to bargain lost and broken, and nothing left but the struggle of desperation. And all the while the rest of the workers are compelled to look on passive ; the help that is needed, and that they could give, and would readily give if they had the chance, is checked and delayed and prevented by a thousand doubts and obstructions and intrigues. " We have our own system of negotiations." " We must follow our own machinery." " The problems of our own section of industry must receive our attention first." This is the very language of capitalism. If this could happen, then the British working class would be doomed, and would deserve to be ; for to a movement soaked with the sectional individualism of capitalist philosophy, the only end could be common ruin with their masters. But this cannot happen : the will to unity of the workers, which is already aboundingly strong and evident, will triumph over every obstacle.

**T**HIS is certain. Unless the workers act, there will be no help for the miners. For what is happening to the miners is nothing but the normal process of capitalism. What will happen to the miners, what will be the fate of the hundreds of thousands who will be thrown out of the pits with the inevitability of an economic process, and with no training or opening for other work, is nobody's concern under capitalism, any more than the fate of the old craftsmen thrown out by machinery was any one's concern. Capitalism is nothing but social anarchy : the right of

the economically strongest (which has nothing to do with personal merits and demerits), and the driving of the weakest to the wall. Sympathy there may be and sentimental tears ; but there can be no help on capitalist lines, because there is no social organisation of work, and therefore no control of natural processes and transitions. What the miners get will depend entirely on what the united working class can extract from the united capitalist class. A living wage for every miner ; continuous employment for every miner at present in the industry, and shortening of hours, if necessary ; free vocational training for the miners' children ; these demands can and must be won, and the means to meet them exist in the surplus of the capitalist class. To leave the miners to struggle alone in their present difficult position is a repetition of capitalism : never was there more need of working-class solidarity.

**T**O the owners it is of no concern what happens to the miners. They are able to maintain their profits on decreased production, as elsewhere in British industry ; and the fat dividends of every important colliery company give the lie to their shameless pretence of not a penny of profits. They can prepare for their own protection against the future decline, and increasingly transfer their new capital and investments to other fields all over the world. The incomes of the British capitalist class remain high, and higher than ever, in the midst of the decline of British industry. Why ? Because they are strongly based on the imperialist exploitation of one-quarter of the world. This is the strong base which enables the British capitalists to face the workers in the home country and drive them down to lower wages. And this is the bitter irony of the newly discovered imperialist lesson which the Labour Party politicians are learning to repeat from their capitalist masters. The strongest weapon of the British capitalists against the workers is their financial-capitalist military organisation of the Empire—the Empire which Kirkwood loves and is helping them to strengthen and cement, while the workers of his own country starve. Kirkwood, Kirkwood, what of the sweated workers of England and Scotland ? What of the sweated workers of the mining industry ? Kirkwood ! *Your cement of Empire is the cement on the gravestones of the dead bodies of the English workers.*



**T**O the workers of England there is only one message—Fight! Fight as you have never fought before. The shades of hell are closing in. The economic future under capitalism is black without hope. Already the leaders of the Right are showing the white feather. The utterance of Cramp, the new programme of the Labour Party Executive, are straws that show the wind. Their way, the way of retreat, can only lead to slow starvation. There is no future for England under capitalism save decline, parasitism and war. The time of trial, the most critical period in the history of the British working class, is beginning. The first stage came in 1921. The second stage has come now in 1925. In each case the centre of the struggle has been the miners. In each case the decisive issue of the struggle has been the unity of the workers in the fight with capitalism. In 1921 unity failed, and four years of agony have shown the consequence. That unity shall not fail again is the supreme need. The signals are sounding clearly to the British working class. There is no future for England under capitalism. The future is with the united working class.

R. P. D.

*A Note on the New Leader and Fascism appears on the following page.*

### THE "NEW LEADER" AND FASCISM

*We have received a note of correction from Mr. Brailsford with regard to our reference last month to the New Leader, at the time of the Fascist Counter-Revolution, recommending that "we must welcome Fascism half way." The facts which we summarise from Mr. Brailsford's letter, are as follows:—*

(1) The *New Leader* published on November 10, 1922, an article from Odon Por which does contain a phrase almost identical with the one quoted. In this article Odon Por argued that Mussolini was really a Guild Socialist.

(2) This article was preceded by an editorial disclaimer which declared that "this tendency in the Italian Labour world to acquiesce in Fascism reflects nothing more than its own sense of defeat," and that the editor "could not believe in this immense transformation" nor in the constructive capacity of Fascism.

(3) In the two subsequent issues of the *New Leader*, Mr. Brailsford wrote of Fascism that "no one can review its record and doubt that Mussolini has simply fulfilled the orders of the big business men who financed him" (November 17): and of Mussolini that "I confess myself impatient of the predictions that he will show himself some unorthodox kind of Socialist" (November 24), &c., &c.

*We gladly publish this correction and regret the unintentional error of memory in ascribing to the New Leader the sentiments of their Italian correspondent. We believe, however, that it remains a very serious thing indeed, at the moment of Counter-Revolution, when the right wing leaders in this country were already acclaiming its success, for the leading organ of the largest Socialist Party in England to publish a direct and open White article, and accompany it by no more than a mild editorial note of polite scepticism ("could not believe in this immense transformation"). If this is the New Leadership in the face of the workers' most desperate struggle and direct enemy, then God help the workers!—Ed. LABOUR MONTHLY.*

# THE STRATEGY OF THE MINERS' STRUGGLE

By HERBERT SMITH

*President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain*

**I**S there a crisis in the mining industry? It is necessary to ask this question because we have had so many false alarms in the past that amongst the other workers there is now and then a tendency to doubt how far these recurrent crises are real. The answer then to the question is : Yes. There is a crisis, the biggest crisis with which the industry has yet been confronted. The crisis is both economic and political. On the economic side it is of such magnitude that at the acute stage reached by the middle of July 320,000 miners are unemployed : while in the impending struggle between the mine owners and the miners the condition of acute crisis is equally evident. In a word, it is the biggest crisis with which the mining industry has been faced within the memory of those now living.

## *What is the Crisis?*

What is the nature of the crisis? Its nature is threefold. In the first place it is a world crisis, a crisis caused by the shrinkage in the world's consumption of coal. This is the economic crisis.

In the second place it is a crisis caused by the conflict between the owners and the mine workers. This conflict arises because they cannot agree on the remedies for the world crisis. But lastly, and looming behind both the economic crisis of this last year and the immediate struggle of this month, there is a predetermining cause. This cause is nothing less than a technical revolution in the world's sources of power. The old method of burning raw coal for steam-raising is giving place on the one hand to coal substitutes such as oil and water power or, on the other hand, to entirely new uses of coal. One way or another, these new powers are superseding the present uses of coal. Such a technical change as this, if controlled

from the beginning, will be for the benefit of all. But we have had sufficient experience in the last hundred and fifty years of British capitalism to know that new productive forces, if uncontrolled, may work havoc with the lives and fortunes of millions of men.

The reason why I mention this greater change I will make plain before the end of this article. Meantime, for an understanding of the immediate position, it is necessary to concentrate on the immediate economic cause of the crisis. This, the shrinkage of coal consumption, is due to the continuing world crisis of capitalist production resulting from the war, varying in intensity from country to country. Symptoms of the crisis in production are the increased developments of other nations and the increased use of substitutes for coal. No country is exempt from this. Indeed, British coal production actually compares favourably with the rest of Europe.

*What do the Owners say?*

Faced by this enormous crisis, such as would tax all the energy and resourcefulness of the pioneers of capitalism in the time (long past) when capitalism was a productive force, what had our present lords of the mine and minerals beneath the earth put forward as a solution? Actually they did not attempt to face the problem. They assumed that this world cataclysm could all be focussed on the question of price. They argue in a purblind way that all that is wrong is that British costs of coal production are too high. They say that "if the cost of production is reduced it would solve the problem" and restore the British coal trade to the favourable position of 1913. That is to say, they are deliberately shutting their eyes to the real difficulties. Because, if they were to admit the full extent of the problem, then their darling desire, their pet remedy for everything—namely, to cut wages and lengthen hours—would be shown up as a hollow remedy. Nevertheless this is the stage reached by the representatives of British coal capitalism, that they are repeating the phrase "high cost of production" and are trying to stun and deafen the nation by this parrot cry into the belief that lower wages and longer hours will mend all.

Not only have they put forward this panacea publicly. But it is now clear from their conduct that the Joint Inquiry into the

economic position of the coal industry which they induced us to enter upon was simply intended by them as a means of getting the miners to fall into a trap. When we chaps began to put forward our own tentative conclusions, they dropped the Inquiry like a hot brick.

Now the suggestion of longer hours is one that under no circumstances will be accepted by the miners. Similarly, the suggestion of lower wages is one that we cannot agree to. The collier's wage is far too low already. Therefore, the owners' cure-all of longer hours or lower wages is not merely ludicrous as a solution of the world's coal problem, but is also so unacceptable to the miners that it leads straight to deadlock. This deadlock between owners and men is the internal or political crisis of the industry.

*What do the Miners say?*

What is the attitude of the miners? The Miners' Federation says first that the crisis is far greater than can be solved by any facile lowering of prices: second, that there is not one complete solution, but several partial solutions of the problem. These partial solutions if all taken together would go a long way.

Thus there is the recapture of the lost Russian market. Russia used to take some five million tons of coal. Last year our coal export was down about eleven millions from the pre-war level. Therefore half this loss could be recovered straight away. Of course it must be understood that the Soviet Union will not buy raw coal from Britain. But the Soviet Union will do something better. It is prepared to order coal in the shape of iron and steel goods (four tons of coal go to a ton of steel), a measure which would give employment both to British miners and British metal workers.

Again, there is the loss of exports through Reparations coal arrangements. Both the markets lost through Reparations and the lost Russian market could be recaptured if the Government were not under the influence of those who hate the Soviet Republics.

Lastly, there is the remedy of nationalisation. At the present moment the industry is burdened and choked by private capitalism. In every way, in coal production, in distribution, in the finances of the trade, private capitalism is the Old Man of the Sea, choking the productive forces. Watered capital, distributions of bonus shares,

swollen dividends, waste and extravagance generally have played their part in bringing the industry to the present pass. Whatever our opinions may be, Socialist or non-Socialist, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that coal capitalism has become a parasitic growth that must be swept away. The high cost of production is the high cost of capitalism. But nationalisation does not only mean the disappearance of parasitic profit-making. It means the application of science to industry. It means immediate plans for super-power electricity stations (using coal power) for wide spread electricity, for low temperature carbonisation plants with their product of oil, smokeless fuel, &c., &c. And—this is important—all these by products and subsidiary undertakings would be from the beginning reckoned as part of the coal industry.

These then are some of the solutions suggested by the miners. But the coal owners will have none of it. They cry ever more loudly, "lower costs of production!" They refuse to consider nationalisation. They refuse to have any truck with the unions, in the sense of Pit Committees as set forth in the Act of 1920. They refuse to allow new processes, *such as low carbonisation*, to be included in the ascertainment of the industry.

Finally they launch their attack, by giving notice to end the Agreement, and by submitting their infamous proposals for starving the miners.

#### *The Owners' Demands and the Strategy Behind Them*

The owners mean that whereas the colliers, in May last, were getting 62 per cent. above pre-war level when cost of living index stood at 73 per cent. above pre-war level, they would (assuming the cost of living index to stand at 70 per cent. this coming month) now receive 36 per cent. This I call starving the colliers. But there is more to it than that. The previously guaranteed minimum disappears: profits come first, wages come last. The National Agreement becomes shadowy and the real agreements are concluded district by district. This will arrest and turn back the gradual process of centralisation towards common agreements that has marked the growth of the Miners' Federation.

We have got to go behind these impossible demands, and see whether there is something to it. I would lay a wager the owners

have been reckoning that if they do not get what they ask for, they may under cover of these demands get back the Eight Hour Day—or rather the Nine Hour Day as it works out in practice. They could afford to promise high wages if they drove the miners back to the old hours. It would be a great victory for them, the longer hours: and a great disaster for us. Wages they could drive down a few months later: but the glittering prize they have been hoping for now is the lengthening of hours. And we cannot let them have it.

There is still another motive behind these demands. It does not affect every owner, it does not affect every member of the Government. But I have not any doubt that a large number of them are moved by it. That motive is the desire to *teach the miners a lesson*. I know they are saying it, some of them, "Let us have an end of these strikes, and disputes, and troubles, once for all! Let us give the miners, and the other damned Trade Unionists, something they will not forget! And anyhow, *we shall be able to sell our stocks at a good price.*"

#### *The Inevitable Struggle*

All that I have written so far, about the world crisis, its extent, its nature, its causes; about the owners' purblind policy of cutting wages or lengthening hours or both—a thing we will not stand; about our own policy of nationalisation, of scientific reorganisation, and recapture of the markets lost by Reparations and hatred of Soviet Russia—a policy the owners stiffly refuse to consider—all these things have but one conclusion. That conclusion is that we have *got to fight*. Our back is up against the wall. We have no choice. On this the Federation Conference was absolutely and completely of one mind.

Nevertheless, though we miners are united on this, it is worth while to point out for the benefit of the readers of *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* (amongst whom are included many colliers) what would be the effect of a retreat. A retreat would mean starvation wages now, *followed by yet another cut six or nine months hence*. And other workers will begin to feel the draught. A retreat would mean the partial break up of the Miners' Federation, it would mean that the owners would be strong enough to compel the miners to cringe, to abandon all the forward policies of the past fifteen years, and for

years to come to accept all reductions without a murmur. A retreat now might well prove a turning point not only for the miners but for the whole of British Trade Unionism. Fortunately there is no question of a retreat. I am not even arguing against it : for the simple reason that it has never been suggested. But I deal with it because I want our fellow Trade Unionists to realise that their lot is at stake along with ours ; and that in helping the miners, they will be doing so not for sentimental reasons, but for their own dear sakes as well.

#### *The Miners' Allies*

Since the owners have left us no choice but to fight, and since the Government appears also to be making preparations for hostilities, our last questions must simply be questions of strategy.

The main question of strategy is to weigh up the possible or actual allies of the Miners' Federation. The three most important working-class organisations that have to be considered under this heading are :—

- (1) The International Miners' Federation.
- (2) The Workers' Alliance.
- (3) The General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

The International Miners' Federation has been in existence for thirty-five years : but it is only this summer that it has set up a secretariat distinct from the national organisations. This, however, is a great step in advance : and its meaning only becomes clear if it is understood that this particular development brings us much nearer the point where a European miners' strike is possible, if not a world miners' strike. Even at this moment we shall reckon on the French and Belgian miners coming into line with us in whatever action is forced upon us. In which case we must be ready to back them equally. From Germany unfortunately nothing like the same kind of action is to be expected : but within the limits set by the multiple agreements in which they are entangled, we may expect the German miners to do their duty to the International. The United States miners are themselves threatened. But it is not entirely easy to get the U.S.A. and the British positions on to parallel lines. But we look confidently to the Americans at least to see that no coal leaves the U.S.A. for Britain during a lockout. As



regards other coal-fields in Europe, we know that the Russian miners (who are unfortunately not yet admitted to the International Miners' Federation) will do all that they can. We have a similar hope as regards other sections ; while in China and Japan the effect of the crisis here will perhaps rather be to benefit them than us. The crisis will push forward Trade Unionism amongst the miners of these countries : but since the interests of miners (and other workers) at bottom are identical all over the world such a development will benefit us also in the long run. To sum up, the International Miners' Federation we expect to play a bigger part (varying in importance from country to country) in this coming struggle than has ever been the case in the past.

But it is not yet possible to have a uniform world movement of the coal miners. Further, even if it were, the world stocks of coal amount to nigh a hundred million tons. So for both reasons we must consider what help can be got from other industries.

The Workers' Alliance was first discussed at the Conference on June 4, when a committee was appointed to work out a scheme. Six weeks later, on July 17, the situation had become more serious (or its seriousness had become more apparent and obvious) with the result that the proposed scheme submitted by Mr. Ernest Bevin on behalf of the sub-committee was favourably received by nearly everyone. That scheme is now remitted for consideration to the unions affected. However quickly they do this—and, to my mind, the quicker the better—this process must take time. So that as far as the beginning of August is concerned the Workers' Alliance cannot come into play directly. It may come in later. At the moment any action of the Trade Unions in the Workers' Alliance must take place through the Trades Union Congress.

But before we leave the proposed Workers' Alliance it should be made clear that the whole project hinges upon Clause 9 of the proposed constitution. Under Clause 9, the constituent unions bind themselves, in certain eventualities, to take their marching orders direct from the Alliance. If Clause 9 is not accepted, the Alliance is worth nothing to us miners.

But on the other hand, *if one single union accepts Clause 6, then the Alliance will be formed ; and the Miners' Federation will go forward with that one union.*

For the moment, as I have said, the unions work through the General Council. The General Council has already published its manifesto in support of the miners and appointed a special sub-committee to consult with us. That sub-committee meets within a few days of these lines being written ; and I do not wish to prejudice any steps that may be taken as a result of that meeting. One thing, however, is perfectly clear. The present situation is serious for the whole of British Trade Unionism, not simply in the sense that the miners constitute with their families nearly one-tenth of the population ; but in the sense that whatever happens to the miners is bound to have an immediate reflex effect on the whole of heavy industry, and a more remote, but none the less definite, effect on all other industries. Therefore, sentiment apart, the General Council is certain to make the fullest use of what powers they possess to bring to the miners the moral and material support of the whole British Trade Union Movement. Whether that will be by embargo on all movements of coal, or by withdrawal of labour in certain key industries, or by some other method, is for the General Council to determine.

The last part of this article has been mainly a discussion of the part that may be played by the three main working-class organisations that can aid the miners industrially. But more important than the support of any particular organisation is the support of the mass of the workers themselves. If we can have our fellow Trade Unionists fully understanding the miners' case, and how it is their own case also, we shall have that backing, both in sympathy and in action, which is worth more than anything else.

#### *My Appeal to Mine Workers*

Lastly, on the eve of this great struggle, I want to make an appeal to our mine workers to take their courage in both hands and face what may come boldly. They are not the first to go through great trials. Difficulties are before us : but they are not so great as the difficult tasks of the pioneers, the men who built up Trade Unionism in the mining industry. Let them read about the struggles in the early 'sixties ; or let them remember the struggles from '76 up to '88 ; and they will find inspiration in those memories.

After '88 we had the gigantic lockout of 1893 when Lord Rosebery was brought in as mediator, the same dodge as will be tried again to-day.

Other industries were locked out too in those days : but we had not then learned to move together. We are only learning it now. I remember well the great engineers' lockout of 1897. I remember that I left the pit I was working at, and I spent six weeks going up and down Yorkshire and roundabout, helping to organise the engineers that were locked out. I hadn't but three pounds ten of my own when I started : and after six weeks I was left with five shillings. So you may judge I had roughed it, sleeping where I could.

But all that was just what a single individual could do. Now we must look to more than individual effort—though without we have each individual doing his bit, we shan't be able to go far.

Our next big experience was the movement of 1912 for the minimum wage : and we learned lots then of what part the Government would play in a dispute. But our bitterest experience was in 1921, when we were rebuffed by the Liberal and Tory Coalition under Lloyd George, who sold us for a mess of pottage.

From our history, our memories and our experience we have learned much. It is up to us now, even through great suffering and privation, *to fight this battle to the bitter end, using all and every means to see that, whatever happens, our women and children are fed and sheltered.*

# “FACE PIDGIN”<sup>1</sup>—THE CHINESE STRUGGLE

By TIEN SEN SHIAO

**T**HE events now taking place throughout China are the biggest thing that has happened since October, 1917. But in 1917 the stage was crowded with the happenings of the great Imperialist War, shaking the world from Belgium to Mesopotamia and beyond. Capitalism had, to all intents, broken down in Russia, then fed with Allied loans and a meagre supply of the munitions for which the Russians were pleading; and the Revolution burst forth, as it were, without the full knowledge of all those who, in ordinary times, would have strained every nerve to throttle it.

To-day, the stage is clearer. Capitalism in China is prosperous, active and alive.

A great blow has been struck. The bankers of the Consortium capitals, London, New York, Tokyo and Paris, are staggered, and in front of them the four Governments cry out “unison,” and at once begin, each according to his desires, to discuss a different policy, all seeking the opportunity to slip further into China whilst the others are not looking.

Merchants and business men in Shanghai, Tientsin and elsewhere in China are sending frantic cablegrams to their London offices, urging pressure to be brought on the British Government to carry out the policy of the firm hand, meaning more machine-guns and more dead Chinese.

Enormous interests are at stake; interests which, in their potentialities at any rate, dwarf those Britain held in Russia into insignificance.

China has been called “a Paradise for employers,” the happily coined phrase of the American Secretary of the Chinese Y.M.C.A.

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<sup>1</sup>“To lose face” is an idiom of Chinese origin (Deu Lien), which has now come into everyday English use. “Pidgin” is a well known expression among Anglo-Chinese in the East, e.g., “that is his pidgin” meaning “that is his business.” When an Anglo-Chinese controversy arises, involving national prestige, it is sometimes colloquially defined as being a matter of “Face Pidgin.”

at Chefoo, quoted by H.M. Consul at Chefoo in the recently published Parliamentary Paper, China No. 1 (1925).

Nominees of one or other of the Big Groups in China follow each other in quick succession in writing to *The Times* to state that factories owned by foreigners in Shanghai and other Treaty Ports in China are, in general, immeasurably superior to the Chinese factories, as to construction, sanitation and conditions of employment.

There is not a word of evidence, of any kind, to support this claim of general superiority.

The Report of the Shanghai Child Labour Commission (1924)—a report that is a damning indictment of capitalism in China—tells us that over the whole field of factory employment in Shanghai the British, Americans, French and Italians employ a higher proportion of children under twelve in their factories than do the Chinese. The figures are as follows :—

Factories	Percentage of Employees under Twelve, Girls and Boys per cent.
French .. .. .	47
Italian .. .. .	46
British .. .. .	17
American .. .. .	15.9
Chinese .. .. .	13

So are the foreigners immeasurably superior to the Chinese if a callousness towards child life, and indeed towards everything save dividend-producing methods, be the standard.

The largest number of children employed in any one cotton-mill in Shanghai (where work is generally on two twelve-hour day and night shifts) is employed in the British Yangtszepoo Cotton Mill, where, out of a total of 3,800 employees, 700 are boys and girls under twelve.

The largest Chinese cotton-mill, the San Sing Cotton Mill, out of a far larger total of 5,339 employees, employs far fewer children, namely 430.

The foreigners in Shanghai also employ a greater proportion of women workers than do the Chinese. Miss Harrison, formerly of the London School of Economics, and now industrial expert of the Y.W.C.A. in China, reported that :—

Women and children, because they will accept lower wages, are rapidly being drawn into the factories.

Employers are doing in China what they scarcely dared to do in Lancashire a hundred years ago.

In contrast with these terrible industrial conditions the cruelly distorted mentality of the British stands out in the following extract from the *Hongkong Daily Press* of June 4, 1925, the organ of British rule in Hongkong :—

The riots in Shanghai will, we hope, at last convince the Powers that firm measures must be taken to *save China from herself*.

There is abundant evidence to show that when Lloyd George (speaking in the House of Commons on June 18, 1925) likened the movements in China to Sinn Fein he erred badly.

The struggle in China is not a mere phase of subdued nationalism, struggling through petty bourgeois organisations for nationalist expression.

The struggle in China is, in its essence, a struggle of the mass of the people, fighting against intolerable conditions. The roots of the conflict are embedded deeply in the lives of the Chinese workers and peasants.

That is why there is unity and solidarity from Peking to Canton, from Shanghai to Chungking ; yes, and reaching to Mukden too, the heart of Chang Tso Lin's territory, and even to Hongkong, the British Crown Colony, the key, in a military sense, to the whole British position in China. For what Hongkong says, especially when dictated by the chief of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, sooner or later becomes the corner-stone of British policy in China.

Nearly 436,000,000 souls are seething in what they pray will be their last struggle. Who knows what may happen ? A distinguished official who knows China well recently foretold that within three months every Englishman would have left China.

But the grinding exploitation of the Chinese girls and boys in the factories, the sale of foreign opium (largely conducted from behind the sheltered walls of the concessions and settlements), the financial stranglehold on Chinese railways, customs and finance itself, the market for Shell or Standard Oil (now boycotted and replaced by Russian oil from the Caucasus)—enormous as these interests

are, powerful as the groups and banks behind them may be, are almost capped by something greater.

The inevitable effect of what is happening in China, in Burma, taken from China only in the 'eighties, in India, and percolating through India to Egypt and Africa, indeed to every territory where black or yellow races are used to provide cheap labour and cheap cannon fodder for so-called civilised whites, is already evident in ominous rumblings.

In the face of all this, when the question is asked—"Will the great Powers give up without a struggle?" it is only necessary to quote the papers which say:—

The British Aircraft Carrier H.M.S. "Hermes" has left Malta for China, fully equipped with aeroplanes and bombs.

What is good enough for an Egyptian is obviously good enough for a Chinaman.

With long experience of bombing defenceless Egyptians and Arabs, English airmen should have no difficulty in scaring the 700 little girls and boys back to work at the British Yangtzepoo Cotton Mill.

British Labour can help us by raising its voice in protest against the terrible inhuman atrocities which have been and are carried out for the good of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation and its allied groups.

But the use of force, of machine-guns, bombs, armoured cars and tanks is not a sudden idea to meet an emergency, but a long and carefully prepared plan worked out by the business men in China, the representatives of the banks and business houses in collusion and with the active support of the Government in London, to smash, once for all, the Trade Unions in China.

As long ago as March, 1925, the Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Council, the oligarchy of business men who control Shanghai, wrote the following letter to the War Office in London:—

Mr. E. S. B. ROWE, Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Council

to

Sir HERBERT J. CREEDY, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War, War Office, London.

DEAR SIR,

At the instance of the Council of the International Settlement in

Shanghai I have the honour to request you to deliver to us on terms of long credit the following articles :—

200 Rifles, Webbs, S.M.L.E., III\*.

120 Cases of Webbs Ammunition 08.

This request is made in emergency, as the Shanghai Volunteer Guard is to be increased and requires larger quantities of arms and ammunition than hitherto.

I beg leave to express the confident hope that His Majesty's War Office will find it possible to comply with the request of the Council, and also to thank you for your good offices in the matter.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) E. S. B. ROWE.

It is inconceivable that these steps and preparations, which have been going on for a long time, were unknown to MacDonald.

We Chinese cannot understand why the British workers still keep MacDonald as their leader. To us he seems to be leading you backwards and backwards, but that is your Pidgin—not ours.

The supply of arms to the Shanghai Merchant Volunteers, a Fascist body, was admitted by the Secretary of State for War in the House of Commons on July 14, when he said that it was true that during the past six months applications had been received for the supply of arms to the Shanghai Volunteer Force, and that these applications had been complied with.

So the front line policy of the British, who are the predominant imperialists and who set the pace, is to smash the workers separately in each town ; to "shoot to kill" an unarmed crowd after ten seconds' warning, as Inspector Everson ordered before the Laoza police-station in Shanghai on May 30.

But whilst this policy may succeed in the British Crown Colony, Hongkong (where every unemployed adult is to be deported and where the British Governor Sir Reginald Stubbs has arranged for the flogging of the strikers), it will not succeed in China proper.

The butchery at Shanghai has already been condemned, even by officials.

When the news of the shootings which took place at Shanghai on May 30 and subsequent days reached Peking, the heads of the Diplomatic Missions of the powers interested appointed a Mixed Commission to proceed to Shanghai, there to carry out an inquiry in conjunction with a Chinese Commission, appointed by the Peking Government, and to report to the Diplomatic Body. The



head of the Mixed Commission was Mons. Tripier, Counsellor of the French Legation at Peking, Britain was represented by Mr. Vereker, First Secretary of H.M. Legation at Peking, and America, Japan, Belgium and Italy were represented respectively by Messrs. G. Graeme, Shigamitsu, Ullens de Schootan and Mendola.

The Report blamed :—

- (1) The British Police Officer who ordered the Police to fire on the strikers.
- (2) The British Chief of Police, Colonel MacEwan, who did not take command on account of absence.
- (3) The American Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council, Mr. Fessenden, held to be legally responsible.

The leakage of the contents of the Report caused great indignation among the British and Americans at Shanghai, and, correspondingly, encouraged the Chinese nationalists in their demands for redress.

The Shanghai authorities, however, were able to persuade Chamberlain to suppress this report. Fortunately, accounts appeared in the French Press and the evidence which was published in the Chinese Press has also reached this country.

It is extremely improbable that America will ever allow the indiscriminate bombing of Canton or Shanghai, as the local British merchants and some missionaries urge, and as the Admiralty, with the "Hermes," is prepared to do.

More and more it is being realised throughout the world that Britain, isolated and alone, is arraigned before the bar of humanity on the charge of manslaughter in the Chinese Amritsars of Shanghai, Hankow and Canton.

The hopes of the imperialists are now turning to new channels ; to diplomatic methods, International Conferences, carefully stage-managed, magnificent resolutions and promises, which are never kept.

Intervention on a grand scale such as the Allies undertook after the Boxer uprising is hardly thinkable. They cannot again march on Peking and sack the palaces. Not only would America never tolerate it, but there is a fundamental difference in the situation. In those days Russia was on the side of England and France ; now Russia is the best friend of China and the Russian Ambassador is doyen of the Diplomatic Corps at Peking.

Rather do the Great Powers pray that Chang Tso Lin, the War Lord of Mukden, will once more play the game of the foreign imperialists. Half a century ago the foreign Powers helped the effete and reactionary Manchus to crush the Taiping Rebellion ; and now for a dozen years they have backed and supported the forces of reaction in China. The Re-organisation Loan of 1913 provided Yuan Chih-Kai with millions, which turned him into a military despot, and enabled him to build up a huge army in the North and crush the growing germ of democracy in the South. Later, in the struggle between Wu Pei Fu and Sun Yat Sen, the Powers supported and recognised Wu Pei Fu, while the powerful clique controlling the news from Peking did propaganda against Dr. Sun Yat Sen ; and the Chinese subject to British rule in Hongkong were prevented by the Consortium Pact from giving financial aid to Dr. Sun Yat Sen.

And when Peking was at its wits' end seeking funds, Chang Tso Lin still had his group of Manchurian banks which could provide him with 50,000,000 dollars when necessary. The Manchurian banks are the Japanese Bank of Chosen, the French Banque Industrielle de Chine at Mukden, and the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank at Harbin. In the last month British agents have had frequent discussions with Chang Tso Lin.

In the South, Great Britain armed and organised the Anti-Sun Party in Canton. Chan Lim-pak, the comprador of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank at Canton, established a Merchant Volunteer Force, which aimed at overthrowing Sun Yat Sen.

Sun Yat Sen protested to the League of Nations and to MacDonald, then Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but without avail, without even acknowledgment.

Recently documents found on the premises of the general staff of the Yunnanese troops in Canton revealed the existence of a wide-spread plot for the overthrow of the Kuomintang Government and the establishment of a reactionary dictatorship dependent on British and Japanese support. The Commander-in-Chief of the Yunnanese troops in Canton, Yang Shih Ming, escaped on an English boat after the defeat of his army by the Kuomintang troops, and was taken to Hongkong—the centre of counter-revolutionary intrigue.

The policy, therefore, of the imperialist Powers in subsidising reaction in the North or South is clear, and renewed efforts will, undoubtedly, be made—perhaps before these lines appear in print.

What is the blood of a few thousand Chinese mercenaries compared to the dividends of the Consortium?

So far Marshal Chang has shown discretion, realising that to attempt, at the British or Japanese behest, to stem the tide of nationalism would land him in a smashing defeat, such as his prototypes Denikin, Kolchak and Wrangel experienced in Russia.

One doubts whether the hope of the usual consolation prize—awarded to Denikin—the K.C.B., would really compensate Chang for defeat and the loss of his head.

But Chang must be watched.

Marshal Chang is under fifty years of age. He has always acted as the agent of Japanese imperialism since, during the Russo-Japanese War, he fought on the side of the Japanese.

For various reasons, Chang is holding his hand.

British Labour must watch him closely, and should he attempt to oppose the democratic movement, must smash him as they smashed, by their protests, Denikin, Yudenitch and Wrangel, and sent Kolchak to his grave.

Less dangerous, but not outside the bounds of probability, is that some effort may be made to revive the fallen powers of Wu Pei Fu.

It seems to us that the workers in England have but two questions to ask :—

- (1) Does not the sweated labour of men, women and children in China throw English out of employment?
- (2) Is it possible to improve trading relations between England and China at the bayonet point, with machine-guns, armoured cars, aeroplanes and generally by a display of force?

There is another consideration which is agitating the imperialists furiously. If the Chinese win their freedom, if the Chinese Dragon and the Russian Bear come together, if China elects to join hands with the U.S.S.R., nearly half the earth will be emancipated from the grip of capitalism.

That is why "Face-Pidgin" will compel the imperialists to fight, at all costs, in China.

# IN THE LIGHT OF MARXISM

## Capitalist "Science" and Marxism

*Sound Economics, or in other words, the explanation and defence of the existing order of things.*

*The Times, April 13, 1925.*

**T**HE above quotation affords a useful starting point to illustrate the difference between Bourgeois Science and Marxism.

Bourgeois Social Science is built on the assumption of Capitalism as the natural permanent order of things (just as Aristotelian Science was built on the assumption of Slavery). The province of the scientist is regarded as to analyse it, explain it and find its laws. Any other treatment is regarded as "propaganda" and "unsound."

This assumption is completely unscientific. Capitalism is obviously an historical phenomenon, with a birth, growth and decay. Any scientific approach must be able to analyse it from outside, to analyse its growth and decay, in fact to treat it *dialectically*. This scientific method is the method of Marx. But this is completely beyond the range of a class whose whole outlook is bound up with Capitalism, and which can therefore only approach the tremendous social fact of the Class Struggle with little sermons, denunciations, proofs of non-existence, &c., *i.e.*, unscientifically.

Marx said that bourgeois Social Science was simply "Apologetics." The above quotation completely bears him out. That such a definition could be openly made in the principal bourgeois organ, including in its scope by name the leading bourgeois theorists, and accepted without protest, is a measure of the decay of Capitalism, and the now open decay of bourgeois learning.

Marxism, or the science of the working class, is to-day inevitably the inheritor of the scientific tradition ; because the facts of to-day are such that only the revolutionary working class is able to face them frankly and fully as they are, without any apologetics, humbug, convention, concealment, &c.

The difference between Marxism and bourgeois culture is, accordingly, not the difference between two "schools" of science. Bourgeois culture is by its own admission Apologetics, *i.e.*, the unscientific dogma of a decaying class. Marxism is simply objective scientific method applied to social life (already with the first beginning of the same practical power and success as accompanied the application of the same realist scientific methods to external nature), applied by the rising class which alone is strong enough to wield the new weapon and holds the future of humanity in its hands—the working class.

This fact is essential to realise. Once it is realised, the principal theoretical obstacle to a widespread Marxist understanding in Britain to-day (the myth of a "religious dogmatism" or supposed "sectarian narrowness" skilfully attributed to Marxism by bourgeois propaganda) is removed; and the way is open to a plain Marxist understanding of current realities in opposition to the mixed humbug and shallow confusion of current bourgeois thought.

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In the following notes the attempt will be made to take from time to time some typical current expressions and quotations, and examine them in the light of Marxism, in order to bring out certain elementary fundamental conceptions, as well as to approach some current problems and controversies in relation to the theoretical background. There is, of course, no absolute correctness in such a task, least of all in this country where we are still in the first stages of Marxist understanding; for this reason criticism and correction will be the more welcome.

### **The Secret of the Bourgeois Fallacy**

*It is no affair of the economic student as such to consider whether any or all of these payments—rent, interest, wages and profits—are right or wrong. It is his business to know how and why they are as they are.*

Mrs. H. A. L. FISHER : *Getting and Spending.*

This innocent little sentence contains the whole secret of the bourgeois fallacy at its starting point.

To the bourgeois mind the whole existing capitalist world around them appears as a natural eternal necessity. It is a basic assumption so deeply rooted that they are not even conscious of it.

Thus when they come to approach the question of economics, they quite naïvely see only two alternatives :—

- (1) To analyse, describe and explain this eternal God-given order (“rent, interest, wages and profits”). This they believe to be scientific, not realising that it is only Apologetics because of their unconscious assumption.
- (2) To appraise or condemn this order from the point of view of what the individual critic thinks “ought” to be. This is the Ethical or Sentimental approach, and they justly reject it as unscientific.

But that there should be a third alternative : to analyse capitalism, not as an absolute eternal system, but as an historical process with growth and decay, arising out of other social orders and leading to other social orders ; to analyse capitalism, in fact, not from within, but from without ; that there should be the possibility of a *dialectic* method, which is neither Apologist nor Ethical, but objective and scientific—such a conception is wholly beyond the range of bourgeois thought ; for if any bourgeois mind through exceptional experience should reach it, it would be torn out of its whole moorings of class-narrowness.

### **The British Idyllic Illusion**

*Because we have a Baldwin to deal with, instead of a Plehve or a Koltchak, there need never be in this country the hatred, the savagery, the repression of liberty on both sides which stained and distorted the class struggle in Russia.*

*New Leader, April 10, 1925.*

Here we have a glaring example of the Philistinism of the bourgeois outlook.

Koltchak was paid, subsidised and maintained by the British Government.

Baldwin was a Minister of the British Government which paid Koltchak.

But Baldwin is, of course, a real “gentleman”—he only pays others to do his dirty work.

And so our reformist Philistines tell the English workers they can go to sleep—for the gentlemanly British bourgeoisie is not as those awful Russians are.

**The Conservative Fallacy**

*The Tory or Conservative Party is a party, not of theory, but of history and fact. It knows that no paper theory can be any substitute for a living political organism. It teaches that the art of politics knows nothing of the tabula rasa. It insists that the existing institutions of a country or the world are the only material to which the statesman who understands his business will put his hand.*

*The Times, April 2, 1925.*

History and Fact ? Splendid. Here is already the starting point to Marxism.

But then comes the little sleight-of-hand. In place of the unimpeachable "History and Fact" is suddenly substituted "Existing Institutions" as "the only material" for the statesman to take into account.

Once again Science is replaced by Class Assumption.

For the sanctity of "Existing Institutions" is far from guaranteed by "History and Fact." Quite the contrary. That one social fabric arises out of the conditions of the preceding, that a given economic-political structure gives place, with a change in the basic economic conditions, to its successor, this much is certain. But the change is commonly accompanied by the intensest political conflict and violent breaks. That some portion of the old decaying political structure, some precious "existing institutions," *i.e.*, former class monopolies and privileges, can survive into the next stage, this is a very different question and not at all justified by "History and Fact."

Were this not so, Revolutions would be incomprehensible phenomena in social development, as they are to the Conservative, who can only attribute them to the brains of philosophers.

Thus "History and Fact" become transformed into "Existing Institutions," and these in their turn are found on analysis to be nothing but a dying Class, Monopoly and Privilege. The classless "Statesman" of the Conservative ideal is not so classless after all.

In consequence the Conservatives, despite the measure of power that their strong sense of fact gives them, in Imperialism, as unscrupulous wagers of the class war, &c., are in the end helpless and uncomprehending before the real forces of change.

**The Liberal Fallacy**

*Have these trade union leaders so little appreciation of what democracy means that they are prepared to abandon it in the name of efficiency? Have we really got to go back to the discussions of some five centuries ago in order to prove the value of self-government?*

*Manchester Guardian, February 24, 1925.*

*(On the Report of the Trade Union Delegation to Russia.)*

Liberalism, being itself a myth—the myth that capitalism is a classless society, and that under wage slavery all “citizens” are free and equal—is necessarily built up on a whole series of myths and legends.

There is the Myth of Democracy, the Myth of Parliament, the Myth of Equality before the Law, the Myth of a Free Press, the Myth of a Commonwealth of Nations, the Myth of Equality of Opportunity, &c. The life of the devout and active Liberal used to be spent mainly (outside his business) in protesting against the innumerable infringements of these innumerable myths—the more invisible and abstract the principle the better, so long as it veiled the real class issues and appeared to yoke capitalists and workers in a common cause. Latterly, the development of the class struggle has driven the majority of the Liberals openly into the camp of the Conservatives, while the remainder are trying to carry on their old game in the Labour Movement.

But of all the Myths and Legends it would be difficult to find a richer example than the desperate appeal of the *Manchester Guardian* leader-writer against the Trade Union leaders to “the discussions of some five centuries ago,” which apparently served “to prove the value of self-government.”

What these “discussions of some five centuries ago” were it would be impious to ask. A close interpretation of five centuries ago would bring us to Joan of Arc, and her burning by the English, but this cannot be the “discussion” intended. A rougher interpretation of “some five centuries” would bring us to the Wars of the Roses; but these also were probably not intended. Perhaps the leader-writer being a little hazy, as Liberals tend to be (outside their business), meant by “some five centuries ago” a little over seven centuries ago, when King John and the Barons with their army had their little “discussion” about scutage; or, alternatively,



he meant by "some five centuries ago" a little under three centuries ago, when King Charles and Cromwell had their little "discussion" which ended in such a cutting reply by Cromwell.

In any case it is to be feared that the coarse Trade Union leaders were not convinced by these venerable precedents of Liberalism into disbelieving what they had seen with their own eyes in Russia. And what was that? Something that no Liberal can understand—the freedom of the workers. A coarse material freedom, based, not on a spiritual ideal patterned up in heaven, but on the solid and earthly fact of the possession and control of the means of existence as the first condition of freedom.

### **The Labour-Democrat Fallacy**

*There is a big difference between carrying on a Government and passing resolutions at an I.L.P. Conference.*

J. R. MACDONALD to the Gloucester I.L.P. Conference.

*Daily Herald, June 14, 1925.*

There is.

### **Opportunism**

*The essential thing in Labour politics is to keep a grip of the realities of the modern world. It may be very nice to lisp a series of idealistic abstractions, but these cut no ice, so far as the immediate needs of the workers of this country or the movement are concerned.*

J. WHEATLEY in the *Sunday Worker*, June 21, 1925.

*I am primarily interested in creating some measure of prosperity in the trade . . . All the venom and spleen contained in his (Mr. Cook's) recent utterances will not increase the prosperity of the miners by one farthing in a century. The miners will look on and will still want for bread; they cannot live by froth alone.*

F. HODGES reported in *The Times*, February 17, 1925.

These two quotations are good examples of Opportunism—the advocacy of an alleged immediate gain through co-operation with capitalism as more important to the workers than the interests of the Revolution which is regarded as distant.

Two things are always set in opposition by the Opportunists (who commonly pay lip-service to the Revolution):—

- (1) "Idealistic abstractions," "froth"—by this they mean the Social Revolution, which alone can bring solid benefit to the workers, and must always be their supreme guiding and governing aim.

- (2) "Bread," "realities of the modern world," "prosperity in the trade"—by this they mean an alleged immediate gain through some form of class-co-operation such as co-partnership, industrial peace, imperial preference, &c.

The fallacy of the Opportunist outlook is as follows :—

- (1) It is false to separate the immediate interests of the workers from the interests of the Revolution. The stronger the workers are to fight, the more approaching in will and organisation to the Revolution, the stronger they are also to win immediate gains now by the only way in which such gains can be won, by their own strength.
- (2) In any bargain of co-operation with the capitalists, the workers always stand to lose more than they gain. The capitalists only offer co-partnership, &c., because it brings them more profit. An economic analysis would show that the same applies to Imperial Preference, which a portion of the Left were tricked into supporting by some very specious arguments of the Imperialists about sweating (as if it existed outside the Empire and not inside) under the belief that they were supporting the immediate interests of the English workers.

The Opportunist who puts a supposed immediate gain before the Revolution is like the donkey who chases the carrot set before his nose by his master and so drags his master's cart to market.

### Lenin on "Realists"

*He is no Marxist who to justify existing conditions distorts the theory which soberly confirms the objective situation, who goes so far as to adapt himself with the greatest possible speed to any temporary lull in the revolution, to throw quickly overboard his "revolutionary illusions" and to set about collecting the "realistic" shreds.*

N. LENIN : *Introduction to Marx's Letters to Kugelmann*, 1907.

Our British "Realists," who are fond of claiming relationship to Lenin, would do well to study the above passage.

STUDENT.

# THE RIFF WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

By ALLEN HUTT

“**T**HE Tunisian is a woman, the Algerian is a man, but the Moor is a lion.” So runs the picturesque old Moorish proverb : and the fortunes of war in the Riff have grimly underlined it. A handful of Berber highlanders, armed only with rifles and a few machine guns, have not only kept at bay, but are actually pressing hard the mighty war machine of a first-class imperialist Power. Despite the severity of the French censorship and the guarded or artificially optimistic character of the *communiqués*, the true facts are leaking out.

France has been forced to evacuate the long line of blockhouses north of the Wergha valley so carefully erected last year. Revolt is seething among the formerly “loyal” tribes—the heather is in truth ablaze under the feet of the French invader. This has enabled the Riffs to break the French front at several points, to come within an ace of cutting the Fez-Taza railway (the line of communication between Morocco and Algeria), and even to threaten seriously Fez itself, the capital and French G.H.Q. Important French fortified posts, such as Wezzan at the western extremity of the front and Taza at its eastern extremity, are in a precarious position. Fighting is practically continuous over a 200-mile front : and the situation, from the French point of view, is at best one of stalemate, as *The Times* frankly admits. It would be truer to say that, so far, the honours are with the Riffs.

Just how grave the situation is it has been possible to gather from a number of recent incidents. There is, for instance, M. Painlevé's aeroplane flight to Morocco ; there is the appointment of a new Commander-in-Chief to supersede Marshal Lyautey in the actual conduct of the war ; lastly, and most significant of all, we have learnt of the immediate<sup>1</sup> French evacuation of the Ruhr, and the transfer of the Moroccan troops so released to the Riff front. Jacques Doriot, in his article in *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* for June,

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<sup>1</sup> This was written on July 15.

prophesied that "Lyautey has a tough job before him . . . The war will be long and deadly." Events have proved the correctness of his prediction up to the hilt.

Events have brought even more striking confirmation of the justice of Doriot's contention that the war in Morocco is simply a classical instance of a colonial war, a war of imperialist aggression. For, by great good fortune, there has fallen into the hands of our friend a confidential document of a kind that only sees the light of day once in a generation : this he read in the Chamber of Deputies, and its authenticity is attested by the fact that its author, M. Vatin-Pérignon, the chief of Marshal Lyautey's personal staff, immediately resigned. The document is in the form of a private letter from M. Vatin-Pérignon, at Fez, to M. Pierre Lyautey, nephew of the Marshal, in France. It is dated May 25, 1925.

The letter denies that the French were "surprised" by Abdel Krim, and affirms that "the Marshal was so well informed and had so thoroughly foreseen what was to happen that, from January, 1924, on (see his reports to the Government) he was preparing for war." The line of blockhouses north of the Wergha (which served the useful purpose of keeping the Riffs out of the fertile Wergha valley and enforced the French prohibition of trade between that valley and the Riff) was constructed—

in May, 1924, while Abdel Krim, his attention taken up by the Spaniards, could not react. . . . This front was established on a strategic line . . . without striking a blow. After May, 1924, this front was reinforced, fortified and its communications with the base secured by a system of roads, bridges, and railways.

This system, it is explained, was intended to "hold" the enemy until the arrival of reinforcements.

These reinforcements were arranged for and ready either in Algeria, or in France. That is a secret of general mobilisation which has not been and must not be revealed.

It is foolish, the letter continues, to talk of "surprise" and "lack of foresight." "We were not surprised by a sudden attack." The question is then raised of what is to be done with "the enemy, as we cannot invade his territory," *i.e.*, by reason of it being in the Spanish zone.

Either he will treat with us. But what will be the value of that for the future? Or he will continue to attack us, now on one point, now on another: which means a perpetual state of war. Or, in agreement with the other Powers, we can invade his territory, and that is a very big business (*c'est une très grosse affaire*).

M. Vatin-Pérignon concludes by stating that:—

The Marshal is entirely and fundamentally in agreement with the Government, and the latter is doing all that it can, all that it should. The duty of all good Frenchmen, who do not forget that our future in Morocco, that is to say, our future in the Mediterranean (Algeria, Tunis), is at stake, is to support the Government on this point with all their strength.

He adds significantly:—

As for personal matters: contact with Herriot and Boncour is assured. Blum, as you say, is in touch with Berthelot,<sup>1</sup> and this contact is bound to become closer. For to-day I say no more.

The remainder of the letter is occupied with a highly revealing description of the business of securing "opportune comments" in the Press (including the Radical Press) and a flattering characterisation of the "good bunch" of war correspondents at Fez, who "have the right ideas" and whose dispatches will "dissipate certain misunderstandings and certain legends."

As M. Vatin-Pérignon sapiently observes, the war in Morocco "is a very big business." And in whose interest? The answer is simple. In the interest of the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas*. Imperialism, the era of monopoly, is especially distinguished by the export of capital to the "backward" countries. This is naturally the case in Morocco: and out of a total of 483 million francs of French capital in Morocco, the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas* controls over a half. It controls a capital of 198,250,000 frs. directly, through having its directors on the boards of the principal Moroccan concerns: and a capital of 48,000,000 frs. indirectly through subsidiary companies.

Thus, out of four French directors on the board of the State Bank of Morocco, two (one of them the managing director) are directors of the *Banque de Paris*. The State Bank has a capital of 15,000,000 frs. and its average dividend of late years has been 20 per cent. We find the same situation in the Commercial Bank of Morocco. The *Banque de Paris* has four of its directors on the

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<sup>1</sup> Permanent Secretary at the French Foreign Office.

Moroccan Railways Board. It has also interests in the Franco-Spanish Fez-Tangier railway. It dominates the chief electricity supply companies, such as the *Société Générale d'Énergie Électrique*, and has formed a prospecting company for hydro-electric development.

The Bank also controls the Morocco Breweries, the Maghreb Milling Company, which virtually monopolises the flour trade of the country, and the Municipal Slaughterhouses Company, which in effect controls the whole cattle market and has the concession for constructing all slaughterhouses, markets, &c. It has interests in three important land companies, the *Société Marocaine d'Exploitation Agricole*, the *Société Agricole du Maroc*, and the Sebou River Company. It is equally interested in constructional concerns, through the Casablanca Development Company and the Morocco Lime and Building Materials Company: this latter company, whose dividends—on a capital of 14,000,000 frs.—increased from 6 per cent. in 1917 to 20 per cent. in 1920, it was responsible for founding. Two of its directors are on the board of "Civil Construction," a company which undertakes general building operations. For port and harbour works it has interests in the *Société des Ports Marocains de Mèhédia-Venitra et Rabat-Salé*. It likewise participates in the Morocco International Tobacco Company, which paid over 30 per cent. in 1922.

This picture of giant imperialist monopoly is completed by the *Compagnie Générale du Maroc* (capital 20,000,000 frs.), whose chairman is also the chairman of the *Banque de Paris*. The *Compagnie Générale* controls a dozen of the most important companies in Morocco: its objects being genially described as "all operations likely to favour the development of Morocco."<sup>1</sup> Altogether, the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas* is known to control at least twenty-five companies in Morocco—probably more. And behind it stands the tremendous power of Standard Oil.

It was into the grasp of this octopus that defeated Spain handed over her nominal concessions for the iron deposits in the Riff. Now it may be true that the importance and the richness of these deposits has been over-estimated: none the less, the analogous deposits in

<sup>1</sup> These facts were made public by Jacques Doriot in a speech in the French Chamber (February 4, 1925). No attempt was made to deny them.

Algeria and Tunis produce a non-phosphoric ore containing 50 per cent. of metal ; and the mining companies in those two countries pay anything from 40 per cent. to 150 per cent. in dividends, while the value of their shares has increased seven to forty-fold. This is, indeed, to quote our admirable Vatin-Pérignon once more, "very big business" : and it gives us the real key to the war.

How has the French Labour movement reacted to this challenge? Does not the spirit of Jaurès, who was such a determined opponent of the whole Moroccan adventure, still live? It does : but not in the Socialist Party—not, that is to say, in its leaders.

While pursuing faithfully its will o' the wisp of a "left" Government—or to put it crudely, coalition with the Liberal bourgeoisie—the Parliamentary Socialist Party has been unable to escape the brutal fact that by its continued support of that Government it is actually sharing the guilt for a colonial war. The Paris correspondent of the most respectable of English Liberal newspapers has written :—

The position of the Socialist Parliamentary Party becomes daily more embarrassed. A revolt against the leadership has begun to manifest itself, particularly in the provinces. War in Morocco is extremely unpopular with the masses.

*Manchester Guardian*, May 30, 1925.

With *the best will in the world* the Socialists cannot bring themselves to support the Moroccan campaign. . . . The Socialists, in fact, are faced with a serious dilemma. . . . The Moroccan campaign is intensely unpopular in the country. Every day the party is losing adherents to the Communists. . . . The Socialists cannot any longer identify themselves with the task of Government even indirectly without compromising their principles and their future with the working class.

*Manchester Guardian*, June 18, 1925.

Even so, the Party has not had the courage or the will to vote against the Painlevé Government. On May 29, after days of crisis, it was appeased because the motion of confidence contained a phrase repudiating "every sort of imperialism involving conquest and adventure" (*sic!*). But dissension within the Party was rapidly growing. Socialist branches were passing strongly-worded resolutions of protest. A "left" wing began to form in the Party, grouping itself round the newspaper *L'Étincelle*, of which M. Maurice Maurin, a member of the national executive of the

Party, is editor. A referendum was taken of the Socialist deputies, and showed a majority of one for withdrawing support from the Government.

Yet when the day of the vote came, on June 24, sixty-five Socialists supported the Government, thirty-seven abstained, and only two voted with the Communist opposition. This, too, for a motion which "condemned" the "propaganda [Communist, of course] which imperils the lives of our troops as well as France's work of civilisation and her will to peace." On this occasion the well-known Socialist leader, M. Renaudel,

accused the Communists of having encouraged Abdel Krim to refuse the terms of peace offered by the French, declaring that French colonial civilisation, in spite of certain justifiable criticisms, represented liberty and French ideals. He went on to demand a policy which would nullify the effects of Communist propaganda.

*Daily Herald*, June 25, 1925.

M. Renaudel's "justifiable criticisms" no doubt refer to the definite military orders issued to French officers in Morocco to fire on labourers in the fields and to return only the numbers of "rebels" killed or wounded, "*without specifying age or sex.*"

The latest stage in this vulgar tragi-comedy has been the abstention of the Socialist Party in the vote of the credits (183 million francs) for the war. On this occasion M. Léon Blum observed :—

We could not, and we will not, vote against the credits. . . . We do not ask the Government to evacuate Morocco. . . . We would vote for the Government if it was in danger. . . . In spite of all, we are fighting against something which, in its essential characteristics, is an aggression, and on this ground we do not deny France the right to defend herself.

*Journal Officiel*, July 9, 1925.

We are not surprised that M. Blum is referred to in the Vatin-Pérignon letter as in "contact."<sup>1</sup>

And as with the Socialist Party, so with the orthodox leaders of Trade Unionism. M. Léon Jouhaux has written pontifically that :—

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<sup>1</sup> The same authority, it will be recalled, refers to the "assured contact" with M. Paul-Boncour, the extreme right-wing Socialist leader. On this gentleman, see the "Notes of the Month," *THE LABOUR MONTHLY*, April, 1925, Vol. VII, No. 4, p. 200.



The working class does not associate itself with the incitements of demagogues : the pretended internationalism of the Third International is merely an appeal to the narrowest nationalism. . . . The working class is against any *extension* of military operations which should have as its aim the carrying of the war into the former Spanish zone.

The Government has denied that it intends to pursue aims contrary to these : let us have confidence in it.

*Le Peuple*, May 23, 1925.

M. Jouhaux does not, therefore, oppose the war : in this he is not at one with the mass of French Trade Unionists, as the many anti-war resolutions passed by Trade Unions show.

Where, then, is the spirit of Jaurès to be found ? Not, as we have seen, among Jaurès' own Socialist and Trade Union contemporaries. To discover, eleven years after his murder, the anti-imperialist spirit of the great tribune, we must turn to the Communist Party.

The Communist fraction alone in the Chamber has stood solid against the imperialist Painlevé Government. Jacques Doriot in particular has distinguished himself : and the Berlin *Rose Fahne* very justly put up on its report of one of his speeches the proud headline—"Liebknecht Lives !" *L'Humanité*, alone among the Paris Press, has raised its voice day after day against the iniquitous war against a little people fighting valiantly for their freedom. The Communist Party alone has had over 120 of its members arrested for their courageous anti-militarist propaganda. The Communist Party alone—together with the C.G.T.U.—has taken the initiative, through the "Committee of Action," in fighting for working-class unity to end the war. The measure of its success has been visible in the recent workers' congresses in Paris and Lille, attended by hundreds of Socialists, C.G.T. Trade Unionists and non-Party workers.

The Communist Party of France has opened a new page in the history of the working-class movement. For, as a result of its efforts, we are witnessing the first organised intervention of the West European proletariat in a colonial war : the first case in which the workers of an imperialist country have, by deeds and not only by words, made common cause with one of "their" colonial peoples in revolt.

A last word on the international complications of the Riff war. Franco-Spanish co-operation is now, after the Madrid Conference, a *fait accompli*—on paper. It remains to be seen how far Madrid is really prepared to burn its fingers a third time. Italy is watching the increasing difficulties of France with scarcely concealed delight coupled with a certain alarm lest a Riff victory should have unfortunate repercussions in her own North African colonies. She is, however, at no cost prepared to submit to any such infringement of the *status quo* in Morocco as would be implied by a French invasion of the Spanish zone.

The attitude of Britain is similar. There is a singular air of smug satisfaction about the reports of French reverses in our bourgeois Press. British imperialism, in fact, is very far from sorry to see the hold of France on Morocco so seriously challenged : more especially as behind France (*i.e.*, the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas*) stands Britain's greater rival, American imperialism—represented by Standard Oil. And yet—there is another side to the picture : for the last thing Britain wants is a decisive victory for Abdel Krim, which would set the whole world of Islam aflame ; which would be a standing inspiration and encouragement to the subject peoples of Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, Irak and India to go and do likewise.

Torn between these two extremes, our masters are revealed as in the grip of a typical imperialist contradiction. To-day they send a Note to Spain firmly refusing to intervene in any way. To-morrow it is almost as likely that they will, with a sudden swing of the pendulum, assist "our French and Spanish allies" in a naval blockade. One senses their desire to clear out of Tangier and so to escape any kind of obligations in Morocco. But they dread the thought of Tangier becoming a French Gibraltar. So they stand irresolute—literally not knowing where they are. The Riff war of independence has exposed, as in a lightning flash, the rent in the veil of the imperialist temple.

# The World of Labour

		PAGES
CHINA :	A Diary of Events .. .. .	497
DENMARK :	General Lock-out .. .. .	500
GERMANY :	Communist Tactics .. .. .	502
INDIA :	N.W. Railway Strike .. .. .	504
POLAND :	"Stabilisation" and anti-T.U. Campaign .. .. .	506

## CHINA

### A Diary of Events

The following diary of recent events in China has been specially compiled for THE LABOUR MONTHLY. Its basis, as will be seen, is purely chronological.

- FEBRUARY** 9 Strike of Chinese labourers in Japanese cotton-mill at Shanghai, owing to ill-treatment by a foreman, and wage-demands.  
27 Strike settled after arrest of leaders—workers defeated.
- MAY** 9 5,000 cotton workers strike for higher pay at Shanghai.  
10 Lock-out in several mills. Crowd of workers fired on by mill-guards. Two killed and several wounded.  
17 Rioting in a mill following the dismissal of Union leaders. Several men wounded by mill-guards.  
29 Factory in the hands of strikers surrounded by troops. Two strikers killed, and many wounded. Report of similar strike in Japanese mills at Tsingtao. Two Japanese gunboats arrive.  
30 Demonstration by students at Shanghai. Ten killed and many wounded, at the Louza police station.
- JUNE** 1 Further demonstrations at the Louza station. Four strikers killed. General strike called, and martial law declared.  
2 French, American and Italian sailors landed at Shanghai. Protest by Chinese Foreign Office, and demand for release of arrested students, &c.  
3 British and Japanese troops landed. All foreign-owned mills idle, and strikes in municipal services, newspapers, &c. Reuter reports total of twenty-one killed. Demonstrations of sympathy at Peking and Canton.  
4 Police raid "Bolshevik centres" in Shanghai. Several foreign war-ships arrive. Diplomatic Corps defends the police action. Chinese Foreign Office replies.  
5 Strike at Shanghai reported to be almost complete. Troops and "volunteer forces" parading streets, &c.  
6 Fighting begins at Canton between Kuomintang and Yunnanese forces.

JUNE

- 7 Diplomatic Body to send a commission to inquire into the Shanghai events. Reports of demonstrations at Chinkiang, Hankow, Tientsin, Taiyuanfu, Kaifeng, Nanking. Russians said to have been arrested at Shanghai.
- 8 Chinese Seamen's Union joins the strike, now said to be mainly anti-British and anti-Japanese.
- 9 Feng Yu-Hsiang and Chang Tso-lin telegraph to the President in favour of a Chinese united front. Peking Government "recognises its responsibilities" towards foreigners. Trial of students arrested at Shanghai begins. Manifesto by the Professors of Peking University, supporting the movement.
- 10 Chang sends first detachment of troops to Shanghai. Great demonstration at Peking. General strike at Foochow.
- 11 Disturbance at Hankow. Nine Chinese killed by machine-gun fire of British volunteers.
- 12 Victory of Kuomintang forces at Canton. Yunnanese troops expelled. Chinese Chamber of Commerce frames thirteen demands, and threatens a boycott of British and Japanese goods.
- 13 Report of seven Chinese killed in demonstration at An-tung. Chinese attack British consulate at Kiukiang. Government protest to British Legation against Hankow massacre.
- 14 "Firm" reply by British legation. Demonstration of 25,000 at Tientsin. Reports of hardening of anti-imperialist (particularly anti-British) feeling, after the Hankow incident, even among merchant classes.
- 15 Englishman shot dead while motoring at Shanghai. Chinese and foreign delegations meet. Reported differences among the foreign legations.
- 16 "Bolshevik agitator" executed by Chinese authorities at Hankow. Chang marching on Peking with 13,000 men (at the request, it is said, of the Japanese minister, as an anti-nationalist move). "Unrest" reported from Fu-kien and An-hwei provinces. Warships despatched up the Yang-tse.
- 17 4,000 railwaymen strike at Tong-shan. Further note from Powers to Chinese Government.
- 18 Negotiations break down. "Unrest" reported at Chung-king. Processions at Peking stopped by Chang's troops. Students' strike begins at Hong-Kong.
- 19 Chinese Government orders financial help for strikers. Strike extending at Hong-Kong and Canton.
- 20 Chinese Foreign Office denies the Powers' account of the incidents, and supports the strikers.
- 21 More troops sent from Mukden to reinforce Chang. One regiment mutinies *en route*. Demonstration by Chinese in Paris.
- 22 Disturbances reported from Ho-nan and Ning-po, and from Manchuria (hitherto quiet under Chang's troops). "State of Emergency" at Hong-Kong.
- 23 Great demonstration of all classes at Shameen (Canton). French and British machine guns fire for ten minutes; thirty killed and seventy wounded (one European killed and four wounded). Demonstrations at Chinkiang, Chungking and Woochow. Mutinies in Manchuria reported to be more serious. Chang Hsueh-Liang (son of Chang

- Tso-lin) recalled from Shanghai to deal with them. Banks at Hong-Kong cease payment. New Commission of Inquiry (" Commission of Three " ) to be appointed.
- JUNE 24 Protest from Governor of Canton. Reports that " Russians in masks " began the shooting at Shameen. Indian troops arrive. Strike funds collected among Chinese in the Philippines. " Grave situation " at Amoy. Chinese Foreign Office repeats the thirteen demands.
- 25 Hostile reply by British Consul at Canton. Demonstration at Peking of 20,000 " students, merchants and workmen." Disturbances reported at Wuhu, Swatow, Hoihow, Chekiang. Volunteers mobilised in readiness for an alleged " bomb-plot." Reported discovery of evidence that the Yunnanese troops in Canton were in foreign pay. Chinese T.U. Federation invites delegates from British and Russian T.U.C.
- 26 About 70 per cent. of shops, &c., at Shanghai reopened. Boycott of Japanese and British goods. Chang leaves for Mukden owing to prevalence of mutinies. Demonstration in international settlement at Shanghai by crowds of strikers. Swatow occupied by Chen Chiung Ming. Further note by the Chinese Government to the Diplomatic Body. Chinese Minister at Washington interviews the Secretary of State.
- 28 Trade Union Federation of China issues an appeal to World Labour. Shipping strike still effective at Hong-Kong and Shanghai. Naval men used as blacklegs. Chinese members of " Commission of Three " appointed : to act with French, Italian, and American Ministers.
- 29 A Russian subject, Dossier, arrested at Shanghai. Over 100 " agitators " arrested by Chang's forces at Tientsin. Canton demands apology, &c., from British and French Consuls, and officials refuse to take part in the Commission to investigate the Canton events.
- 30 Anti-Imperialist manifesto by General Feng Yu-Hsiang (cabled to the *Workers' Weekly*) published in *Daily Herald*. Portuguese troops embark for China. Message from Chinese Railway Workers' Federation to the Trades Union Congress on the Canton events. Protest by Consuls against the " outrages " of the Canton Government.
- JULY 1 United States reported in favour of a conference on extra-territorial rights, &c.
- 2 Demonstrations at Swatow dispersed by British forces. Four Chinese wounded by British bayonets at Chungking. " Moscow documents " produced during trial of Dossier.
- 3 Postal and hospital workers, &c., join strike at Hong-Kong. Shameen is described as in a state of siege. All Chinese have left. Consultations between Chang and the Powers. " Disturbance " at Kiangsu. Chinese members of " Commission of Three " refuse to take part unless allowed to discuss the whole question.
- 4 Inauguration of the Provincial Government at Canton. Continued demonstrations against British and Japanese at Swatow.
- 6 Shanghai electric supply cut off by British. 60,000 employees in Chinese mills said to be thrown out of work. " Agitators " arrested at Shanghai—one Chinese killed. Omnibus strike at Hong-Kong broken. Demonstrations at Chungking and Kalgan. Attempt to assassinate two members of Canton Government.

- JULY
- 6 Report of Mixed Commission on Shanghai events; publication delayed by Diplomatic Body. French version appears, stating that firing "entirely unjustifiable," and demanding dismissal of British Chief of Police.
  - 7 Telegraph and dockyard workers at Hong-Kong join the strike. British military demonstration through streets. Further manifesto by Feng.
  - 9 Report that subscriptions for strikers (which have reached in all nearly \$1,000,000) are now decreasing, and support of merchants and students is being withdrawn.  
Attempt by Canton seamen to isolate Hong-Kong. A few blackleg crews only available.  
Powers in discussion at Peking. British reported to be still intransigent.
  - 10 "Disturbances" at Ho-nan. Governor of Hong-Kong states that strikers will be deported and pickets ("intimidators") flogged.

## DENMARK

### General Lock-Out

THERE has been a Labour Government in Denmark since April, 1924. This fact is of importance in relation to the great industrial movement which has just come to an end in that country. Since January, 1925, the gatherings of a great storm in Danish industry had been clearly perceptible. In most of the principal industries the collective wage agreements were expiring and negotiations were in progress. The attitude of the employers appears to have been one of caution. They wished to see how far the operation of the Dawes Plan would affect Danish industry, and to use their preliminary negotiations with the Trade Unions as a means of sounding the Union leadership. Indeed, it appeared from minutes of a session of the Employers' Federation Executive—which fell into the hands of the Communist Party—that the employers were unwilling to risk a definite fight on a wage-cutting issue.

Unfortunately, the Trade Unions did not take advantage of this favourable situation. They were content to demand the prolongation of the existing agreement—a sliding-scale agreement which, in view of the rise in the cost of living, would have involved a 3 per cent. wage increase—together with increases in the basic rates of the lowest paid grades of metal workers and general labourers. Certain employers seemed prepared, at one time, to concede these demands, though grudgingly. However, the more influential among them, taking heart from what they conceived to be the lack of fighting spirit in the Union leadership, returned a point blank refusal. The employers in the metal industry came into the open with a demand for a 10 per cent. wage cut: and on March 18 they locked-out their workers, who had refused to accept an arbitration award. On the same date a partial strike of general labourers took place, bringing the number on strike or locked-out to 42,000.

A conference of Trade Union delegates was summoned which, under the strong pressure of the leaders of the Trade Union Federation, and particularly Mr. Madsen<sup>1</sup> its Chairman, agreed to the new arbitration proposals which the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Madsen represents Denmark on the General Council of the International Federation of Trade Unions.

Executive of the Federation had worked out in conjunction with the employers. These proposals were on a ballot vote accepted by seventeen Unions and rejected by five<sup>2</sup>. The seventeen Unions, however, had a membership of only 30,000, while the five Unions—including the important General Workers' Union with its 80,000 members—numbered 110,000. Accordingly the employers decided on a general lock-out, which took effect on April 21. The number of workers out now reached 150,000, approximately half the organised workers of Denmark.

At this stage in the struggle the significance of the Labour Government manifested itself. For it became clear that the majority of the Trade Union leaders, who are of course Social-Democrats, were chiefly concerned in using arbitration or conciliation as an instrument for stopping the strike at all costs. They were unwilling to embarrass "their" government. In this policy they were strongly opposed by Mr. Lyngsie, President of the General Workers' Union, whose members were most intimately concerned in the lock-out. At a mass meeting of the Copenhagen Trade Union executives on April 22, Mr. Lyngsie criticised the policy of the Trade Union Federation, and particularly of Mr. Madsen, in the strongest terms, adding thereto a condemnation of the government organ, *Social-Demokraten*, for its anti-strike attitude. The meeting unanimously accorded Mr. Lyngsie its support.

To the continual pleas from the Government organs and the Trade Union leaders to the workers to regard the interests of the community as a whole, the resolution voted at this meeting returned this answer :—

We are asked to have regard for the community. We reply that if the community asks this of us, it should also have regard for our families and should stand beside us in the fight that our exploiters have forced on us.

By the time the Trades Union Congress met (May 5 to 7), Mr. Lyngsie seems to have retreated somewhat from his intransigent position. The Congress agreed to re-open negotiations. Meanwhile the dockers and transport workers had struck, very much against the will of the Union leaders, except Mr. Lyngsie. Danish export trade—which, consisting of agricultural produce, is chiefly with England—thus came to a dead stop. Attempts to carry on by blackleg labour (young farmers "volunteering" to load ships) broke down owing to the strict embargo on Danish ships declared here by the Transport and General Workers' Union with the assistance of the N.U.R. On June 1, the seamen came out. Negotiations for settlement had, meantime, been continuous and protracted.

The indefatigable efforts of the Government conciliation officials were at length crowned with success. Agreement was reached on June 7, and the lock-out was raised next day. Under the new agreement the sliding scale, with a half-yearly adjustment of wages to the cost of living index, was retained. This involved the 3 per cent. wage increase originally demanded and it was further stipulated that there should be an hourly minimum wage rate of 1.05 kronen (about 1s.) for general labourers. That this success is not quite the overwhelming victory that has been proclaimed in some quarters is witnessed by the fact that the Executive of the General Workers' Union only

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<sup>2</sup> These figures are also given as fifteen and seven.

accepted the new agreement by twenty-six votes to seventeen. Also, the new rates for general labourers (about 60 kronen a week) are, on the showing of the employers themselves, below the subsistence level (the subsistence figure admitted by the employers was 72 kronen a week).

Now that the dispute is over, the *Social-Demokraten* has revealed the interesting fact that the Labour Government had, in the last days, made all the necessary preparations for the introduction of a provisional compulsory arbitration law. This would have been immediately applied to the lock-out.

## GERMANY

### Communist Tactics

THE election of Field-Marshal von Hindenburg as President<sup>1</sup> has faced the German Communist Party with an entirely new situation. This situation was considered at the meeting of the Party National Council on May 9-10. The Central Committee of the Party put forward a series of criticisms of the Party's political line and activity, which may be summarised as follows:—

(1) The Party was too late in realising the monarchist danger and underestimated its importance.

(2) The Party has not succeeded in thoroughly exposing the rôle of the German Social-Democratic Party, and the other so-called "Republican" Parties as the panders of monarchism, and in winning the masses from them. In particular, it has not carried on the campaign for Trade Union unity with sufficient energy.

(3) The tactics of the Party are not sufficiently elastic; it has been too slow and awkward in adapting itself to altered situations.

(4) "Right" and extreme "left" deviations have not yet been fully overcome: nor has the theoretical clearness and uniformity, the *sine qua non* for united revolutionary practice, yet been completely attained.

(5) The Party does not yet understand how to concentrate its whole work and how to carry it through in a co-ordinated manner in all spheres.

There was a "left" minority in the National Council with 15 votes out of the total 50, which did not accept these criticisms.

The following are extracts from the resolution that was passed:—

### OUR TASKS

(1) In the forefront we must place the extra-parliamentary struggle against monarchist reaction and against the capitalist offensive . . .

(2) We must fight for the democratic rights of the working class against reaction . . . We must show that bourgeois democracy neither renders possible the peaceful transition to Socialism, nor provides a safeguard against reaction, but in comparison with an absolutist monarchical form of State it renders easier the class struggle, because it permits of class questions being raised in an open and undisguised form . . . The decisive question, however, is not the form of State but the relations of power of the classes . . . The fight against monarchist

<sup>1</sup> For the Election results, see *THE LABOUR MONTHLY*, May, 1925, Vol. VII, No. 5, pp. 311-12.



reaction can only be conducted, under the leadership of the proletariat, as the class struggle. We Communists emphasise that we are ready to lead and support this fight against monarchist reaction in every form, but without in the least giving up our principles. That is, we recognise that without the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet Republic there can be no stable republic and no guarantee against reaction and monarchy.

(3) In order to convince the masses, who are misled by the "Republican" swindle, of the correctness of these principles . . . we must:—

- (a) Propagate in connection with our demands against the Dawes Plan those immediate political demands which contain a minimum programme for defeating monarchist reaction, and for securing the most elementary democratic rights of the working class.
- (b) Declare ourselves ready from time to time to co-operate with the Social Democratic Party and the "Republican" Parties, in so far as they fulfil the most elementary minimum demands . . .

### MORE CAPACITY TO MANŒUVRE

In a situation in which our Party constitutes the factor which may turn the scale between a "Right" and a so-called "Left" Government, it is entirely permissible, and under certain conditions necessary, to follow such a parliamentary tactic that we render possible the existence of the "Left" Coalition. In so doing we must openly declare with all clearness that this is not because the revolutionary working class has anything better to expect from the Social-Democratic Party and the Republican Parties than from the open monarchists, but solely for the purpose of showing to the masses who still believe in these Parties that they are just as reactionary and hostile to the workers as the open reactionary Parties.

This resolution has been approved by the Executive Committee of the Communist International which has also censured the Minority Opposition. The resolution of the International stresses the urgency of the monarchist danger and emphasises the importance of the capacity to manœuvre against it; it states, among other things:—

Whilst not relaxing the criticism of Social-Democratic leaders . . . the German Communist Party should at the same time assume a different attitude with respect to the Social-Democratic workers, emphasising its readiness to give up much which divides the Communist Party from the Social-Democratic workers in the interests of the joint struggle against the monarchist peril . . . the main thing is closer contact with the Social-Democratic workers in the factories, and not parliamentary combinations.

An example of the sort of "republican minimum demands" referred to was contained in the open letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to the Executives of the German Federation of Trade Unions and the Social-Democratic Party, written the day after Hindenburg was elected. These demands were:—

- (1) Immediate dissolution of the monarchist *Reichswehr*: dissolution of monarchist organisations.
- (2) Immediate repeal of all measures for keeping the police in barracks, and maintaining them on a military basis.
- (3) Abolition of the *Technische Nothilfe* (Strike-breaking Corps).
- (4) Immediate confiscation of all property of the former German ruling houses, as well as the expulsion of their members from German territory.

- (5) Immediate dismissal of all monarchists from the Civil Service.
- (6) Immediate abolition of the Supreme Court at Leipzig and liberation of all working-class political prisoners.
- (7) Immediate introduction of an inviolable eight-hour day.
- (8) Abolition of all taxes that oppress the masses.

## INDIA

### North West Railway Strike

THE lock-out and strike of workers on the North West Indian Railway is the biggest strike that has taken place in India since the general exodus of the Bombay mill workers in the spring of 1924. It has involved a larger number of workers than even the protracted strike on the East Indian Railway in the early part of 1922, and is therefore the biggest railway strike that has yet occurred in India.

The immediate occasion for the strike was the dismissal of a prominent member of the North Western Railway Union, a worker at the railway sheds in Rawalpindi in the extreme north of the Punjab. An appeal to the management led to the lock-out of 1,200 men on March 28. The Railway Agent at Lahore refused to allow of any representations being made to him by the North Western Railway Union and at various places on the line workers began to come out in sympathy with the Rawalpindi men. As all offers by the Union to open negotiations with the Railway Management were repulsed orders for a general strike were issued for April 10.

An immediate response was forthcoming, but as usually happens in India owing to the absence of organisation, the strike was only partial and workers at different stations came out independently and at different times. By the end of April some 20,000 men were affected. The strike continued in varying degrees in different centres throughout the whole of May and June. Estimates of the total number of workers involved are conflicting, the Railway Union putting it at 40,000, while the Railway Management do not admit that more than 20,000 of the total staff of 100,000 were concerned.

The widespread nature of the strike and the stubbornness with which it has been maintained, in spite of the unyielding resistance of the Railway Management, is evidence of keenly-felt underlying grievances. The demands of the men centre round :—

- (1) Recognition of the Union.
- (2) An all-round 25 per cent. wage increase.
- (3) Abolition of arbitrary fines and other punishments.
- (4) Investigation of other grievances.

A complication exists in the existence of a second union which is recognised by the Management. This body, calling itself the "North Western Railway Recognised Union," apparently arose by a secession from the original union with the sympathy if not at the direct instigation of the employers, and has acted as a tool of the latter and has condemned the strike. The original union was founded several years ago largely owing to the efforts of a European worker,

Mr. Miller, who, like the President and Secretary, still retains his original position on the Executive Committee. The other union seems to be definitely a yellow union, a device more than once adopted by Indian capitalism, a notable instance being the bogus union formed in order to smash the Bombay Tramwaymen's Union two years ago.

The Railway Management and the Government has throughout categorically repulsed any attempts at mediation in the strike and has demanded nothing less than unconditional surrender. Police and soldiers have been much in evidence but there have been no violent outbreaks. Of the repressive measures adopted by the Management, one which has caused the most hardship has been the eviction of railway strikers from their quarters on the Company's property, to make way for blacklegs recruited from the agricultural population. It is interesting to note that one of the workers thus evicted was a European engine driver, and he filed a suit against the Railway Agent to restrain him from eviction and was granted a temporary injunction. In the majority of cases, however, the victims have been illiterate, low-paid Indian workers, and they have had no redress.

The Railway Union issued an appeal to the European and Anglo-Indian drivers, guards and station staff asking them to give a day's pay and to lend their support to the strike. This was countered by an appeal from the Anglo-Indian and domiciled European Association of India who asked members of that community to remain loyal and hoped that not a single one would support the strike. The Anglo-Indian Association of Lahore responded with an assurance that they were "loyal to the core." The Anglo-Indians and Europeans mostly occupy higher posts on the railway and always receive higher pay and other privileges.

Efforts at conciliation or mediation in the strike have proved fruitless, all being brusquely refused by the Railway Management. On June 1, the All India Railwaymen's Union Federation appealed to the Chief Commissioner of Railways for the appointment of a Conciliation Board, but without result. Shortly afterwards a renewed attempt was made by the All-India Trade Union Congress at a specially convened meeting of its Executive Council.

The Government of India replied with a telegram declaring that it considered intervention by the Trade Union Congress "undesirable," adding—

"You will appreciate the fact that the present strike is disowned by the recognised union with which the Railway Administration has always tried to work."

The Trade Union Executive appointed its chairman, Mr. C. F. Andrews, to make an inquiry in the Punjab and if possible to begin mediation. The Railway Administration, however, continued adamant and by the end of June the strike was called off, most of the railway workers being starved into submission. The strike thus ends in total defeat for the workers, but even during July many of the railwaymen who had gone back to their village homes did not return to apply for work.

## POLAND

## Stabilisation and Anti-Trade Union Campaign

POLAND, like other countries in Central and Eastern Europe has been passing through a period of capitalist "stabilisation." This means, to the bourgeoisie, a progressive dependence on British and American finance-capital. To the workers, as in Germany and Austria, it means severe unemployment, cut wages, and lengthened hours.

Thus within recent months the official returns of unemployed workers give a figure of over 180,000. Of these 15,000 had their unemployment benefit stopped in April last; this process has continued, so that it is estimated that soon only a quarter of the total number unemployed will receive benefit. This latter is at the rate of 30 to 50 per cent. of wages (see below).

Short time—three to five days work per week—is also very common. The eight-hour day has been attacked with such success that the ten-hour day is being worked in the Upper Silesian coalfield, and the tramwaymen are working a nine and a-half hour day. Average daily wages vary from 3 to 4 zloty (2s. 3d. to 3s.) and in the country they have even dropped under 2 zloty (1s. 6d.). The subsistence minimum is stated to be over 6½ zloty (5s.) in Warsaw and in the provinces 5 zloty (4s. 6d.).

The fierce persecution to which the class-conscious elements in the Polish working-class movement have long been subjected is notorious<sup>1</sup>: for years the Communist Party has been illegal. At the present time the need for tiding Polish capitalist industry through the economic crisis of "stabilisation" has caused this persecution to be directed with particular intensity against all left wing Trade Unions and the Minority Movement in the Trade Unions.

For instance, the Builders, Leather and Tobacco Workers, Clerical Workers, and Tailors Unions have been closed down—both their central organisation, and all their branches in Warsaw and the Provinces. Trade Union secretaries and officials are arbitrarily arrested. Trade Union offices are ransacked, and all books, papers, documents and printed matter confiscated by the police. At Bialystok, where the police closed down the local Trades Council, and nine of its affiliated Union branches, they even removed from the Council's offices the portraits of Karl Marx and the two well-known Polish poets Mickiewicz and Slowacki. The offices of suppressed Unions are simply kept under lock and key by the police.

There is also a draconic censorship of the Trade Union Press.<sup>2</sup>

The mainspring of the attack on Trade Unionism is the secret political police (the so-called *Defensive*). This organisation, akin to the Tsarist *Okhrana*, exercises entirely arbitrary powers in the suppression of Trade Unions and the persecution of Trade Unionists: and where the *Defensive* leads the Law Courts and the other State authorities obediently follow.

<sup>1</sup> See, for one of the most striking recent examples, the Lantutzky Case, THE LABOUR MONTHLY, April, 1925, Vol. VII, No. 4, Pp. 245-248.

<sup>2</sup> For a remarkable facsimile of a censored Trade Union paper, see the July number of *Trade Union Unity*.

The Central Committee of Polish Trade Unions, together with the executives of the principal Unions, have done nothing to oppose this policy of wholesale persecution and suppression. Indeed, these bodies, which are controlled by the leaders of the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.) have actually assisted the police in their work. It has been the practice of certain organs of the Socialist Press to publish "denunciations" of left-wing Trade Union organisations. These "denunciations" have their inevitable consequence in police action. This was the case with the Warsaw Leather Workers' Union, noted above.

The General Secretary of the Central Committee, M. Zulawski, who is also a member of the General Council of the International Federation of Trade Unions, replied to a delegation of the closed-down Tailors' Union that sought his assistance :—

"If I had enough power, I would close your Union myself."

It was the same M. Zulawski who, by formally dissolving the Bialystok Trades Council, and informing the authorities of his action, paved the way for the suppression of that body (see above).

There appears to be some justification for the claim that the P.P.S. Trade Union leadership is making use of the police terror in order to maintain its own domination of the Trade Union movement, more especially in view of the Third Trades Union Congress, which has now (June) taken place. Even Union amalgamations are used to further this aim of the right-wing leaders. This was the case in the amalgamation of the Paper Workers' Union with the Chemical Workers. Protests from the Warsaw district of the Paper Workers led to its expulsion from the Union. Another singular instance occurred last year with the amalgamation of two tobacco workers' unions. Though the left-wing had a clear majority in these Unions, M. Zulawski refused to accept the left-wing nominee as General Secretary. When the amalgamation had been achieved he ordered the removal of the left-wing secretary of the Poznan district of the Union.

It should be noted that the Polish Socialist and Trade Union leaders are extreme opponents of international Trade Union unity and of the policy pursued, in this matter, by the British General Council. The almost frenzied outbursts of their Press, particularly their central organ, the Warsaw *Robotnik*, provides ample evidence of this.

# BOOK REVIEW

## ITALIAN CO-OPERATION

*The Co-operative Movement in Italy.* By E. A. Lloyd, B.A. Fabian Society and Allen & Unwin. 4s. 6d.

**T**HIS book represents an endeavour to give an objective account of the various aspects of the co-operative movement in Italy. In spite of their numerical preponderance, consumers' co-operative societies are excluded from treatment on the ground that they do not, in Italy, differ in any important particular from similar organisations, in other countries.

The author's method is the characteristic Fabian one of recording facts without comment, in pursuance of the argument that by such means an unbiassed picture is presented to the reader, who can then form his own conclusions. It is almost needless to say that this aim is not achieved, for, though facts alone are submitted for our observations a selection has of necessity first been made among the multitude available; accordingly, we are told only of those things which Mr. Lloyd regards as significant. The Fabian effort to give us light instead of heat actually results in our vision being obscured by a smoke-screen which conceals the essential features of the subject under review.

The extensive development of co-operation in Italy is well-known, and the potentialities of the movement as an aid to the working class in their struggle for emancipation can scarcely be exaggerated. We say "potentialities" advisedly, for it is by no means certain that the co-operative movement in certain of its aspects is not a reactionary, rather than a revolutionary, influence. The cordial support given to the movement by the Italian bourgeois governments in the past is an indication that the enemies of the workers have had hopes of using it for their ends. Mr. Lloyd quotes an Italian government report as saying:—

The co-operative societies can guarantee tranquillity and security in the carrying out of works. They serve as an insurance against strikes.

Such words should serve as a danger signal to those friends of co-operation who cannot see it as a weapon in the class struggle. Mr. Lloyd finds one of the main weaknesses of the movement in its predilection for politics. But, in fact, unless co-operation enters the political arena definitely as a force on the side of the workers, it ceases to have any fundamental significance or *raison d'être*. If Mr. Lloyd denies that co-operation has, as its highest function, to serve as a support of the revolutionary working class and as a basis of the post-revolutionary industrial system, then he must restrict its outlook to that of a palliative organisation softening the asperities of capitalism, that is, making it more acceptable to the workers. It is perhaps as well that Mr. Lloyd has so little to offer by way of prescription for the ills of Italian co-operation, for even his diagnosis is wrong.

L. W.

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Mind of a Dictator.* A Defence of the Social System. By Ambrose Hoskins. (The Labour Publishing Co. Ltd. Cloth 5s. Paper 3s. 6d.)
- The Road to World Peace.* A Federation of Nations. By Oscar Newfang. (G. P. Putnams, 12s. 6d.)
- The English Agricultural Labourer.* 1300-1925. By Montague Fordham and T. R. Fordham. (Labour Publishing Co., 1s.)
- The Co-operative Movement in Italy.* With special reference to Agriculture, Labour, and Production, a Short Study. By E. A. Lloyd, B.A. (The Fabian Society and George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 4s. 6d.)
- The District Auditor.* An Old Menace in a New Guise. By W. A. Robson. (Fabian Society, Fabian Tract No. 214, 1d.)
- The Banks and the Workers.* By Arthur Woodburn. (Plebs League, 4d.)
- Bulgaria.* The Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party and the Labour and Socialist International. By Col. C. L. Malone. (Plebs League, 2d.)
- Government and the Ex-Service Man.* By T. H. Elstob. (Commonweal Pub. Co., 6d.)
- Reconstruction in Russia.* An address before the Forum of the Community Church of New York City. By Captain Paxton Hibben, F.R.G.S., &c. (Educational Building, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.)
- William Cobbett.* By G. D. H. Cole. (Fabian Biographical Series, 9, Fabian Soc., 3d.)
- Canada and the Next War.* By John S. Ewart, K.C., LL.D. (Independence Papers, No. 1, The Author, 400 Wilbrod Street, Ottawa.)
- Independence Papers.* Reprints principally from the *Canadian Nation* and the *Statesman*. By John S. Ewart. (The Author, 400 Wilbrod Street, Ottawa.)
- Welfare Work in Industry.* By Members of the Institute of Industrial Welfare Workers. Edited by Eleanor T. Kelly. (Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons. Cloth 5s.)





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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month      -      -      -      - Page 513

### *THE FIRST ROUND*

The Burning Question of International Unity      „      524  
*By A. A. PURCELL, M.P.*

The Capitalist Offensive and the Mining Crisis      „      530  
*By R. PAGE ARNOT*

Hatching a War with Russia      -      -      -      „      538  
*By W. N. EWER*

The Empire Labour Conference      -      -      -      „      548  
*By MAURICE SPECTOR*

Independent Working Class Education -      -      „      553  
*By A. M. ROBERTSON*

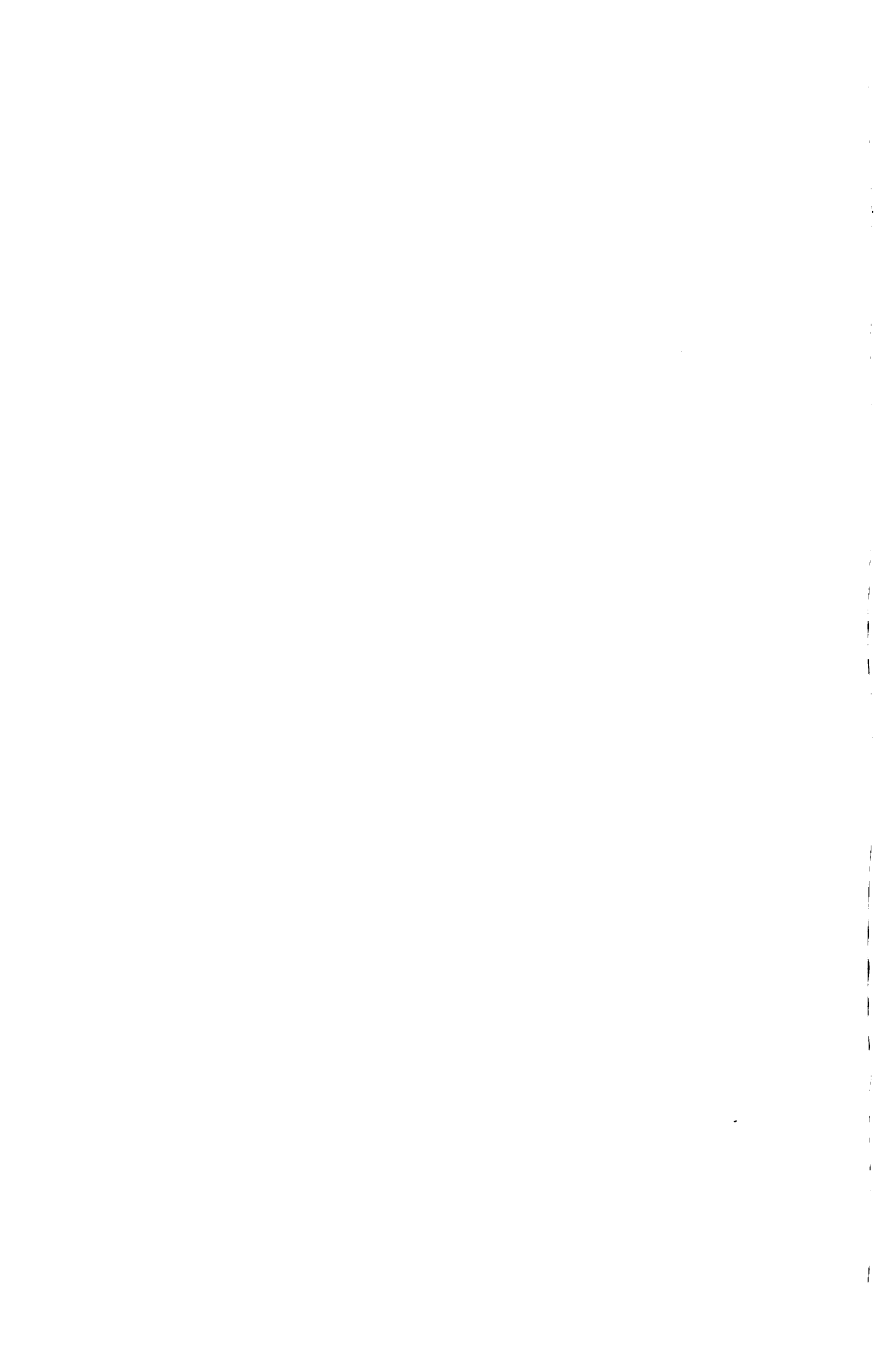
Capitalism, Labour and the Press-      -      -      „      560  
*By WILLIAM PAUL*

The World of Labour      -      -      -      -      „      570  
Bulgaria

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*The Struggle in Front—Trades Union Congress—War on the Unions—  
Trade Unions and Revolution—The Lesson of Power—1920  
and 1925—Unity for Action—Idealism and Materialism—  
MacDonald and the Trade Unions—For or Against—  
Communism and Trade Unionism—The Question  
of Force—Trade Unions and the Labour  
Party—The Immediate Future—  
United Advance—The General  
Council.*

**I**T is in the midst of critical conditions that the Trades Union Congress meets at Scarborough. The struggle in British industry is brought out in its sharpest form by the "settlement" of July 31. The tremendous and magnificent demonstration of working class solidarity has checked the capitalist offensive, but only for the moment. It has laid bare the opposing armies and the full class character of the struggle. But every issue of the fight is still in front. None of the workers' demands has yet been won; the capitalist offensive is only postponed to find more favourable ground. If ever there was a "settlement" that settled nothing, it is the Truce of July 31. That subsidies are no solution is common ground. But there is no alternative which does not involve either an attack on wages and hours or an attack on the existing capitalist ownership. The Government has made clear that it regards the present strategic retreat as only a preparation for a decisive conflict in the future, and that it still stands by the objective of a general reduction of wages (which is an inevitable part of present capitalist policy). The Royal Commission is once again, as always, only the smoke-screen for the preparation for a decisive battle. There is no escape from the future conflict.

**T**HE Trades Union Congress will have to pass in review the work of a General Council which, after all criticism is made, has undoubtedly done more than any previous executive of Trade Unionism to carry forward the whole movement. It will have to decide whether the work shall be approved, and

whether it shall go forward, and, if it is to go forward, that the necessary powers shall be voted. Urgent questions, which were still only indirectly approached or left on one side at Hull, will now be clamouring for attention ; the question of the powers of the General Council, the question of International Trade Union Unity, the question of the Empire, and the question of the Labour Party and the next Labour Government. All these need a courageous approach, if Trade Unionism is to be prepared for the next twelve months. Most important of all, the Congress will have to face the present crisis, and determine how it shall be met, not only at the eleventh hour, but this time in advance, with readiness and determination. For this reason the most important immediate task is to analyse the outcome of the recent events, and determine their bearing on the future of Trade Unionism.

**L**IKE every clash of class forces, the working class declaration of solidarity of July 30 (although never put to the test or used for more than defensive purposes) and the consequent Government withdrawal have illuminated the whole situation. It is a foretaste of the impending conflict which is inevitably approaching in Britain. But it is only a foretaste, and the big conflict is in front probably under very much more difficult conditions. This is the first fact which every trade unionist must face. The clash has led to a certain amount of plain speaking on both sides, stripped of the usual cant, about the battle in front. The Prime Minister has said quite clearly that the State has temporarily retreated a step before the present Trade Union alliance, but that next time the State will be prepared to fight a decisive battle with the whole forces of Trade Unionism. What does this mean? It means that the Prime Minister has quite openly declared war. The fight is no longer regarded even in profession as only with a minority of "extremists" or "revolutionary elements," but is openly declared to be with the organised Trade Unions, *i.e.*, with the whole organised working class. It is Class Struggle in the fullest sense, the open declaration of war of the exploiting minority, organised through their State machine, against the organised millions of the working population of the country. It is a declaration of war that every trade unionist will do well to note.

**H**ENCEFORWARD the Trade Unions, if they continue on their present path, are to be regarded by the State as revolutionary forces to be smashed. Why? In the recent past the Trade Unions were regarded as Pillars of the State, provided that they kept within their "legitimate" function of disciplining the workers and negotiating wages. What, then, has changed? Have the Trade Unions abandoned their "legitimate" function of the protection of wages? Not at all. But, just because in the present period of declining Capitalism, the capitalist class is no longer prepared or able to grant concessions, but feels itself compelled to drive down wages in order to survive; just because wage issues can in consequence no longer be carried on upon the old basis of bargaining within an accepted and relatively stable commercial framework, but are in fact inevitably revolutionary issues; so for that reason the Trade Unions, even when only endeavouring to perform their old function of protecting wages, inevitably become in fact, whether they wish it or not, revolutionary bodies. The capitalist class sees no way forward save to cut wages and smash the Unions' resistance. The Trade Unions on their side, faced with the economic decline of the industries with which they are concerned, see no way forward save to unite as a class force and wrest from the capitalists the Control of Industry. Thus the struggle of the Unions over wages is at the present stage the heart of the Class Struggle in Britain, and the heart of the battle for Socialism.

**W**HAT is the lesson of July 30? The most important lesson is undoubtedly the lesson of Power. This is so important that it overshadows every other issue of the crisis. Whatever the outcome of the negotiations, whatever the value or otherwise of the "settlement" of the following day, the fact remains. On the morning of that Thursday the Government declared that wages must come down, and refused any thought of a subsidy. In the afternoon the Trade Unions threatened common action. In the evening the Government offered a subsidy and the maintenance of wages, in order to win a truce. This fact is more eloquent than propaganda.

**I**N 1920 occurred the last demonstration of working class power. The working class through the Council of Action stopped the war on Russia. But on that occasion every attempt was made to conceal what had happened and cover up the fatal breach in the constitution of bourgeois democracy. The whole press (which had been bawling war) declared that there had never been any thought of war, and that the whole thing was a mare's nest. This time there was no concealment. The experience of 1921, four years of unemployment and a successful capitalist offensive, and the exposure of the Labour Government, have all driven in class issues much deeper. The Conservative Government of a Baldwin and a Joynson-Hicks lacks the diplomatic cunning of a Lloyd George. They declared plainly that they had, temporarily and unwillingly, yielded a step to Trade Union unity. This fact remains, and sinks in. For the first time for four years the capitalist advance has been stayed, the Government turned—by measures plain to all. Hundreds of thousands, millions of workers, whom propaganda would never have reached or convinced, will observe this, will turn it over and over in their minds, will draw their conclusions, and will begin to look to the future with a new confidence and determination, with the dawning of a new idea, the idea of their own power.

**I**T is all the more important to drive home this lesson, because the Right Wing—the parliamentary democrats—are trying in every way to fog the issue. They speak of the triumph of "Unity," of "Opinion," of "Right and Justice." All these formulas are very fine. Unity is even a revolutionary formula. But there is one thing that they omit, and that one thing is the centre of the whole issue. They do not speak of Power. "Unity"? Yes; but with an addition—Unity *for the Class Struggle*. For the past six years and more the whole Labour movement has been "united" behind the miners' demand for nationalisation, "united" behind the miners' demand for a living wage. Has this kind of "unity" made a hairsbreadth of difference to the situation? The miners' wages have steadily gone down. But for one day the Labour movement was united *to act* behind the miners. Within a few hours the whole situation was changed, the Government had

eaten its words, the capitalist advance was checked. Is not the meaning of this clear to every worker? In capitalist politics there is only one question at issue—the question of Power. There is only one weapon of the working class—the weapon of their own fighting strength.

“**O**PINION” (so the Parliamentary Labour Party resolution.) “Right and Justice” (MacDonald, Lansbury, &c.). These are very noble sounding things. But whoever applies them to the existing capitalist world is either a fool or a hypocrite. The facts of daily life from Shanghai to Shadwell speak the opposite. Capitalism is founded on the daily subjection of the workers. That subjection is based on the organised power of the capitalist class. It can only be broken by the organised power of the working class. Whoever endeavours to conceal this, and to bid the workers look to some classless ideal source for their salvation, is in practice assisting the capitalist subjection, which exists in hard fact and can only be broken in hard fact. The Parliamentary Labour Party with prudish delicacy, in its resolution congratulating the General Council, has referred to the latter’s successful mobilising of “Trade Union opinion” behind the miners. “Opinion?” A glance at the actual decisive notice of July 30—“Wagons containing coal must not be attached to any train after midnight on Friday”—would show that it was something very much more solid and material than Trade Union “opinion” that was being mobilised.

**T**HE conflict between MacDonald and the Trade Unions, which was partially revealed by the I.L.P. Summer School incident, is not accidental. The incident is worth analysing for the light that it throws on current controversies, and in particular on the central issue facing the working class, the issue of Power. MacDonald, who hates Bolshevism with a pathological hatred too violent to remember to be diplomatic, fell foul of the Government for giving way to the Trade Union threat of force, *i.e.*, for not defending bourgeois interests with sufficient vigour. The same charge was made by the Liberal, Lord Grey, and by the right wing Conservatives. So far the speech was only one of the commonplace speeches of MacDonald nowadays, which

usually follow the lines of the more reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie. But MacDonald forgot that this time he was in fact attacking the whole organised Trade Union movement, on which he still depends for his political existence. For if it was a crime for the Government to give in to the Trade Union threat of force, it was equally a crime for the Trade Unions to apply the threat of force to the Government. MacDonald had said:—

The Government has simply handed over the appearance, at any rate, of victory to the very forces that sane, well-considered, thoroughly well-examined Socialism feels to be probably its greatest enemy.

*Manchester Guardian* report, August 4, 1925.

To whom had the Government actually handed over the "appearance of victory?" To the General Council of the Trades Union Congress. When MacDonald realised his blunder the next morning he hastily sent out an apologetic "explanation" to the effect that the speech had never been intended for a wider audience, and that he had never intended to refer to the General Council and the Trade Unions, but only to the hated "Communists."

**B**UT the issue is not to be so lightly dismissed. The fact that MacDonald, in desiring to get at the Communists, found that he had got at the whole Trade Union movement, is deeply symptomatic for the future. It means that a stage has been reached at which it is no longer possible to attack the revolutionary policy without in fact attacking the organised working class movement. For, embarrassing as is the honour that MacDonald would pay to the Communists as the sole winners of the working class victory against the Government, the fact remains that the struggle was between the Government and the Trade Unions, *i.e.*, the organised working class movement as a whole, of which the Communists are only a part. MacDonald's attempt to differentiate between the Communists and the Trade Unions only makes his position worse. Either he agrees with the action of the Trade Unions in using force against the Government, in which case his whole attack on Communism for its advocacy of working class force falls to the ground. Or he disagrees with the unanimous action of the Trade Unions; in which case the sooner he ceases to plague the movement, the better. MacDonald has subsequently stated that he



is "heartily in agreement" with the action of the Trade Unions on July 30. But this endeavour to extricate himself only increases the confusion. For what was that action in fact save the "marshalling of force" by the working class? How dare he then attack the Communists for supporting the "marshalling of force" by the working class? His last position is worse than his first. His first was at any rate an honest anti-working class position, such as logically follows from his premises of bourgeois democracy. His last is simply an illogical attempt to square himself with his working class constituents—the Trade Unions. It is an attempt that is too easily seen through to be of much value to him. For the "heartily agreement" with the policy of united class action that he so easily proclaims after the particular crisis is over, was conspicuously invisible at the time when it would have been of use—before the crisis. The argument of MacDonald is worth noting. He says:—

The Communists say they are all Socialists. That is all right, but that is not their distinctive characteristic. Their distinctive characteristic is that by the marshalling of force you could conquer the world, as undoubtedly you can, but the Socialist is not out to conquer the world. He is out to recreate the world, and conquering the world and recreating the world are two totally different conceptions.

**I**F this means anything (which is always doubtful in the case of MacDonald, who has been aptly diagnosed by the classic historian of international socialism, Sombart, as a past master of the English art of Cant) it means that the speaker is opposed to the "marshalling of force" by the working class in support of their claims. But this is precisely what the General Council and the Trade Unions stand for. What else are the Trade Unions but the "marshalling of force" by the working class in support of their claims? What are all the schemes of the Workers' Alliance and the General Council but the "marshalling of force" on a greater scale to challenge more fundamental issues? Contrast the language of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Agreement with the language of MacDonald:—

There is but one power that can save mankind from being plunged into another universal catastrophe. There is but one power which can defend the workers of all countries against political and economic oppression and tyranny. There is but one power which can

bring freedom, welfare, happiness, and peace to the working class and to humanity. That power is the working class if well organised, properly disciplined, self-devoted, and determined to fight all who would oppose and prevent its complete emancipation.

“Power,” “Class,” “Fight.” This is the language of the official representatives of eleven million trade unionists, including the whole British movement. MacDonald’s quarrel is not, primarily with Communism, but with the organised working class movement.

**M**ORE than that. If we turn from theory to practice, if we turn to the actual record of MacDonald in the Labour Government, we shall find that he is not in practice opposed to the “marshalling of force” for certain purposes, *e.g.*, the building of cruisers, sending gunboats to China, bombing in Irak, his letter threatening coercion to India, shooting Indians, and the Bengal Terror Ordinances. All these constitute a very ugly record behind the spiritual bombast, because they represent the use of force, in its most fiendish forms, not to “recreate the world,” but to maintain the rule of the exploiters against unoffending populations. What then? It is not the marshalling of force that MacDonald opposes, but only when that force is marshalled *on behalf of the working class*. Here is the real difference between MacDonald and the working class movement, and it is a *class* difference. It is not a question of “Force” *versus* “No Force.” It is a question of Capitalist Class Force *versus* Working Class Force. The Trade Unions stand for Working Class Force. MacDonald stands for Capitalist Class Force. That is the real division. When it is a question of maintaining the Empire by bombs and machine guns, MacDonald comes out with “the protection of British interests,” “our Imperial heritage.” But when the working class endeavours to organise more strongly and fight as a class force, it is then MacDonald comes out with his deprecatory “Ah, my friends,” and “our spiritual aims.” In other words MacDonald is, in reality, not an idealist at all, but a very commonplace imperialist against the working class, endeavouring to keep control of the workers by the old device of a shoddy spiritual religious language. The working class movement will need to shake itself clear of this confusion in order to realise its aims.

**W**HY is the issue of MacDonal and the Trade Unions important? Because it throws a red light on the biggest questions in front of the working class movement. For MacDonal is still the Leader of the Labour Party. And the Labour Party is still supposed to hold within its sphere all "political" questions. Actual events, apart from all theories, are inevitably driving the whole movement to wider and wider struggles, to more and more fundamental issues, to the issue of Power. The central issue before the working class to-day is the issue of Power. The Trade Union movement, consciously and unconsciously, is slowly responding to the pressure of events. The Labour Party, tied to the machine of the parliamentary democrats who represent a class interest hostile to the working class, is confined to a narrow parliamentary outlook more and more separate from the struggle of the working class. Thus the whole movement is dangerously and fatally divided in its central leadership in the face of the greatest struggles in its history. There is no clear facing of the issue of Power. There is no clear facing of the future of the movement as a whole. All the minor antagonisms and cross-purposes between the Labour Party and the Trade Unions are only symptoms of this deeper political issue. It is a shallow analysis to speak of a division between the "industrial" and "political" wings. The best elements in both, all the sound working class elements, are equally conscious of the inevitable class struggle in front and desirous to play their parts in it on lines of a straightforward working class fight. But they have not yet faced central issues or come out into the open, they have still left the Trade Unions to advance only in a supposedly "industrial" sphere, and the Labour Party to rot in the parliamentary and imperialist treachery of its present leadership. They have still to raise the banner of a Class Policy alike in the Trade Unions and in the Labour Party, and to fight for it as a common force in both the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party Conference.

**W**HAT is the immediate position in front? There is clearly a struggle coming, which was only postponed by the "settlement" of July 31. The working class forces were able to unite for the defensive; they have not yet been ready to

unite to win something. This is likely to cost dear: as the capitalist forces can now retrieve their error and prepare their attack at leisure, while the most favourable strategical moment for the workers (national and international unity, critical economic situation) has been allowed to pass without yielding any positive gain. It is all the more important to prepare a stronger unity for positive action next time. The capitalists have already made clear that they contemplate a future attack. They will use the Commission to divert attention on to debating points, while they make practical preparations. They will endeavour to separate the railwaymen from the miners, and to break the international front. The parliamentary Socialists will be in their element before the Commission, scoring prodigious verbal "Socialist victories." And when the time is ripe, the Commission, which will consist of "experts"—*i.e.*, be under Government control—will make its report according to the tactical situation. Supposing that that report, while recommending some form of unification, recommends at the same time longer hours for the miners? Where will the workers be then, if they have put their trust, as the Right Wing will suggest, in the Commission ("opinion," "right and justice"), and not in the strongest preparation of united action?

**T**HE same united strength that was used to defend the miners' standards must be used to win the miners' demands. Our policy is nationalisation and a living wage for the miners. The whole movement is agreed on this. But this agreement needs to be translated into positive form. Propaganda for nationalisation and a living wage for the miners is meaningless unless it is at the same time propaganda for united working class action in support of these demands. It is necessary to see that this is at the present time the central issue of the capitalist offensive, and the test issue between the capitalist class and the working class. This much is certain. The present economic basis of the coal industry cannot continue. It can only be readjusted, either by driving down wages, or by attacking the existing capitalist ownership. That it shall not be the former is the agreed determination of the working class movement. But it is useless to endeavour only to maintain the offensive, without taking up the positive issue. To do

so is only to invite renewed attack. The issue has in fact to be decided one way or another. The decision of this issue depends, not on argument, but on relative class strength.

**F**OR this reason the most important practical question before the Congress is the question of the power of the General Council. The realisation of Trade Unionism as a class force depends on the power of its central body. Without this any alliance can only have the instability of all alliances. It is essential that the existing scheme for a Workers' Alliance (which was only advocated as an emergency combination, pending the vesting of full powers in the General Council) should be subject to the General Council, and that it should not be allowed to stand in the way of immediate decision of the question of the powers of the General Council. Only a common class body, responsible to the whole movement, can represent a common class interest. The experience of 1921 and 1925 has shown that a sectional alliance can maintain itself only so far as each section feels it to its separate interest to maintain it; but that only when a common class leadership is able to bring the sections together and compel a recognition of common class interests, only so does united action become possible. The General Council has been able to accomplish a great deal last year by moral leadership. But it would be the height of folly to face the coming year without the registration of definite power in its hands. This duty falls on the Scarborough Congress. The situation develops at lightning speed. The Congress is the supreme authority for Trade Unionism to prepare itself and carry forward the work of revival that has been begun. May Scarborough advance beyond Hull as far as Hull advanced beyond Plymouth! All that has been done so far—Anglo-Russian Unity, the approach to a Workers' Alliance, the solidarity of July 30—is only a first beginning. It is only the first round: the big encounters are in front.

R. P. D.

# THE BURNING QUESTION OF INTER- NATIONAL UNITY

By A. A. PURCELL, M.P.

**I**NTERNATIONAL Trade Union Unity is a phrase that has been on the lips of many trade unionists, in the leading circles as well as among the rank and file, for the best part of a year. So far it has been no more than a phrase. International unity, as a *fact*, does not yet exist. Thus there is, first, the International Federation of Trade Unions, with an affiliated membership of 15,000,000, of which the British Trade Unions make about one-third. Secondly, there is the Red International of Labour Unions with an affiliated membership of 8,000,000, the great majority of which is the All-Russian Trade Union Movement. Thirdly, there are numerous trade union organisations not affiliated to either of these two Internationals—in America, Norway, Czecho-Slovakia and so on. Fourthly, in the Eastern countries there is either no trade union movement at all, or, where trade unions are struggling painfully into existence they plough their lonely and arduous furrow without any support from the powerful organisations of Western Europe and America. The new trade unionism of the East has so far remained outside the international fold. This, as regards trade union unity, is nothing less than a tragedy.

It is this last point which is the most important. The capitalists are following the line of least resistance and investing their capital in those countries where labour is cheap and profits correspondingly high. Where labour is cheap—that is to say, where trade unions do not exist. May be “there ain’t no Ten Commandments” east of Suez: there certainly aren’t any trade union conditions or trade union standards. For Labour the “gorgeous” East is a morass of squalor, sordid sweating and the most unchecked and vile exploitation imaginable.

Now the trade unionist can have only one attitude towards

sweated labour. He must treat it as we treat the most dangerous of the contagious diseases—isolate it by means of a *cordon sanitaire*, and then stamp it out. Wherever capital goes to exploit unorganised labour representatives of organised labour should follow on its heels. Perhaps an illustration will make my meaning clear. Suppose for a moment that the “cotton belt” of Egypt, the Sudan, India, were to be magically transported some thousands of miles and dumped down somewhere near London. Our textile unions would hurry along to organise these workers, realising quite clearly that otherwise their hard-won standards would be destroyed. Their efforts would be spurred by the understanding that these standards were the fruit of many years of stiff fighting, in which the casualties had not been few nor the suffering slight. But to-day the capitalist can easily destroy our standards at long range, so to speak. Unorganised coolie labour abroad will force us, is now forcing us, to coolie labour at home. And we find ourselves unable to resist or check in any way this peculiarly insidious attack of the ruling classes on the achievements for which we, our fathers and our grandfathers, have striven so hardly and sacrificed so much.

So far I have referred throughout to sweated labour in the East, and for a reason. I think that the events in China and, to a lesser degree, the development of the textile dispute in India have brought home this terrible question, both to the workers of this country and to the workers in all European countries, as it has never been brought home before. And is it not clear that nothing will be gained by going cap in hand, *via* the International Labour Office, to beg capitalist Governments to enforce Factory Acts in their own Eastern colonies or “spheres of influence”? Is it not clear that, *under present circumstances*, the conditions of labour in the East cannot be improved? One way there is, and one only, by which improvements can be achieved. That is, by everywhere building up a strong trade union movement and by fighting for trade union conditions throughout the world.

By what means can we achieve this object? By the creation of a single fighting Trade Union International. This body should be international not only in word, but also in deed. It must be in the closest possible contact with the workers themselves, and it must give expression to their general interests. It must be able to carry

out a militant policy for the emancipation of the working class in all countries, without distinction of colour, race, creed, political beliefs, or what you will.

But even from a purely European point of view conditions as they are can no longer be tolerated. The long hours of the German miners are a menace to the hours of the British miners. Wages in France are of direct concern to the workers of this country. Close relations between ourselves, the workers of Britain, and the workers of the Soviet Union are of the first importance. They are important not only as a question of general solidarity but to a very great extent as a question of our daily bread. Good relations with the U.S.S.R. promise to diminish our appalling unemployment—the greatest curse for the workers and the strongest weapon against us that the ruling classes possess. At present the International Trade Union Movement is unable to deal with all these burning questions. Once again we see the need for a single fighting Trade Union International.

While speaking about the conditions in Europe and elsewhere we must not forget the lessons of 1914-1918. The war came like a thief in the night. It butchered nearly 11,000,000 workers, and the burden in war debt alone which the workers have to bear reaches the enormous total of £60,000,000,000.

The repetition of such slaughter and such destruction would mean, under present circumstances, the ruin of mankind. What is our strongest weapon, practically our only weapon, to guard against such an eventuality? The fighting unity of the International Trade Union Movement.

Now I can hear some well-meaning and amiable comrades saying, "Yes—unity is a good thing: but how are we going to get it?" On the other hand, the diplomatic enemies of unity insinuate that the British Trade Union Movement has to choose between Amsterdam and the Russian Unions. That is a plain lie. However, I think it worth while to clear up one or two misconceptions that have got about, partly as a result of these untrue insinuations. Thus it has often been asked, "Why not unity with Germany as well as with Russia?" Unity with Germany by all means. But first things first. We stand for unity with the Russian Unions first, because the British and the Russian Trade Union



Movements are the only two trade union movements of the first magnitude which enjoy full national unity. I mean by this that there are no cleavages in either of these two movements for religious, political or other reasons. Neither in Britain nor in Russia are there Christian (Catholic) Unions as there are in practically every other European country. Neither have we anything to compare with the Liberal "Hirsch-Duncker" Unions of Germany. This whole point is an important one, and too frequently overlooked.

The truth is that millions of workers affiliated to Amsterdam share our passionate desire for trade union unity. Evidence enough and to spare of this has been provided by the columns of resolutions printed every month in the journal *Trade Union Unity*, with which it is my privilege to be associated. There is simply a small bunch of Amsterdam leaders who are interested in making the International Federation of Trade Unions a mere appendix to the Second, or as it is now called, the Labour and Socialist International. In its turn, the Second International is, in some of its parts, an appendix to various continental capitalist governments. I need only instance the notorious connection between the Socialist Parties of Bulgaria, Esthonia, Poland and Hungary and their respective White Terrorist Governments. The record of the German Social-Democratic Party is well-known. So far as the subordination of the German Trade Union leaders to the Social-Democratic politicians is concerned, I can speak with authority from my experience in the chair at international meetings. The French Socialists have supported a Liberal Government to the point of sacrificing all the Socialist principles they ever had. Even now the Belgian Labour Party is forming part of a Coalition Government with Conservatives and Liberals.

It is the Second International which tolerates in its midst an Abramowitch, who represents nobody but himself, as representative of the Russian workers. It is the Secretary of the Second International, Friedrich Adler, who has perpetrated the most unscrupulous and contemptible attack yet made on the Report of the British Delegation to Russia—an attack which has received the "honour" of appreciative quotation in the *Morning Post*.

These, then, are the opponents of unity. These are the fellows

who talk nonsense about "insuperable difficulties." If we leave them aside we shall have no difficulty in seeing that the ground for unity is clear and that the way to get unity is simple. The ground for unity is the general interest of the workers in the amelioration of their conditions and consequently in the overthrow of capitalism. The general aim is the emancipation of the working class, which means, practically, the emancipation of mankind. We may sum up our immediate tasks as follows :—

- (i) The organisation of the workers of the East.
- (ii) A common *defensive* fight against the conspiracy of capitalism to worsen the conditions of the workers.
- (iii) A common *offensive* fight for the improvement of the conditions of the workers everywhere.
- (iv) A systematic campaign against the conspiracy of British and American financial capital which has found its clearest expression in the Dawes Report

These aims, I think, are simple enough. Now for the way to achieve unity, which is equally simple. What is required is a general world congress of all Trade Union organisations, with a full and adequate representation of the rank and file. Such a Congress would lay the foundations of a single fighting Trade Union International—the urgent need for which I have been hammering at right through this article.

We cannot expect a world congress to be convened to-morrow. One important step, however, on the road to international unity can be taken at once. That is the affiliation of the Russian Trade Unions to the International Federation of Trade Unions. This should and can be achieved, without more ado, by a preliminary unconditional conference of both sides. Those who are sabotaging this step are enemies of unity.

I am sure that every sincere trade unionist will agree that the most heartening and most important event in recent trade union history has been the coming together of the British and the Russian Unions. This coming together, as we all know, is at the root of the present campaign for international unity. But it is of the first importance not only from the trade union unity point of view. Are not our ruling classes openly plotting for war against the Workers' Republic? They consider, quite rightly, that its overthrow is the common cause of capitalism. By the same token its

defence is the common cause of the workers of Britain and of the whole world. It is a matter of life and death for us to maintain the closest possible contact with the workers of the Soviet Union. Behind all the diplomatic hocus-pocus of the Security Pact, &c., lurks the menace of war against Russia. This point is worked out in detail by W. N. Ewer in his article on another page, so I need say no more about it here.

Against this conspiracy of war and slaughter a strong, united Trade Union International would be a real weapon—the only weapon. No one can escape that fact, turn and twist how they will. Pending the achievement of international unity we have a temporary substitute for it in the joint committee which has been set up by our General Council in conjunction with the All-Russian Council. But a substitute, after all, is a substitute. Face to face as we are in this country to-day with an industrial crisis graver than ever before, we need the genuine article. The capitalist offensive waits for no man. At all costs, if we are to save ourselves, the fighting unity of the International Trade Union movement must be achieved.



*The above article by MR. A. A. PURCELL is now being reprinted, with a special preface, as a Penny Pamphlet. Please send in your orders early.*

# THE CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE AND THE MINING CRISIS

By R. PAGE ARNOT

**T**HE recent mining crisis is only an acute moment of a general crisis. That crisis is not limited to one industry, to one country or to a few days, a few weeks or even a few months: it is general, it is world-wide and it represents a whole epoch of post-war capitalism. That epoch may be long drawn out or it may be passed through with great rapidity. But that it is a definite epoch with clearly marked characteristics will appear from reasons given below. It is the epoch of attempted stabilisation of post-war capitalism. This attempt to stabilise is to be regarded as a new economic world situation.

How has this stage been reached? Since the end of the war capitalism has been unstable. That instability is shown, first, by the boom of 1919-1920, and then by the slump which continues in Britain long after other countries have shown a partial recovery. A very few months of the slump were sufficient to sweep away the airy prospects of 1919 and to concentrate all the energies of the bourgeoisie on attaining stability. This desire was expressed by the politicians in their speeches and reflected in the trend of political events. In 1921 President Harding's Inaugural Address expressed the desire of the American bourgeoisie for a return to what he called "Normalcy." Premier Bonar Law in 1922 declared on his part for "Tranquillity." With the ending of the Ruhr adventure and the initiation of the Dawes Committee the progress towards stability was to go on unhindered.

## *The Decline of British Capitalism*

Let us now turn to see the particular case of Britain and the British Empire: and this for three reasons. First, because in so short an article as this is to be I must limit myself to one aspect of the complex of world imperialism. Second, because British Imperialism is the one which most nearly concerns us. Third, because

actually Britain is the heart of the world problem confronting world capitalism. Month after month, year after year, as no sign of complete recovery appeared, the British bourgeoisie began to stop whistling for a wind and to set itself to a serious consideration of the perils with which it was encompassed. Two examples of the results of this serious consideration have been published within the last few weeks. The Committee on Industry and Trade (the Balfour Committee), appointed July, 1924, has just published a Survey of Overseas markets; while on July 28 the Federation of British Industries published in the *Yorkshire Post* a memorandum on the position of British trade. It is significant that many of the conclusions thus published in the summer of 1925 had been reached and published three and four years before by Trotsky and Varga in their Reports to the Congresses of the Communist International.

The Balfour Committee, which was concerned primarily with export trade, considers that the falling off in British exports is due to three main groups of causes, (i) Declining of purchasing power of the local population; (ii) Growth of local manufacture; (iii) Displacement of British imports by imports from other sources. They remark that the exports of British cotton piece goods to India declined by 57 per cent. between 1913 and 1923. A quarter of this decline, they estimate, is due to the growth of local manufacture.

The number of cotton spindles in Japan, China, India and Brazil in 1913 was about ten millions; by 1924 the number had reached nearly eighteen millions. Between 1913 and 1922 the number of cotton power looms in India and Japan rose from 120 to 200 millions. The annual production of steel just before the war in Japan, China, India and Australia was 360,000 tons; in 1922 it was 858,000 tons.

These are hard facts which official capitalist optimism cannot get past. We may leave it at that; and turn to cull an example of a different kind that illustrates equally well the decline of British capitalism.

BRITISH FOREIGN ISSUES (in millions £ sterling)\*

1913	1919	1920	1921	1922
197.5	49.9 (19.3)†	59.6 (17.3)	115.7 (58.6)	135.2 (85.1)
	1923	1924	1925 (½ year)	
	136.2 (85.9)	134.2 (80.7)	39.2	

\* Excluding British Government Loans.

† Bracketed figures are converted to 1913 values.

Now contrast with this the figures of American investment overseas:—

U.S.A. FOREIGN ISSUES, 1920-1925 <sup>1</sup>	
New capital (in millions of dollars)	
	1920 1921 1922 1923 1924 1925 ½-year
Canadian (municipal) ..	45.8 75.9 98.9 26.3 134.8 38.6
Other foreign Governments	191.0 329.2 416.3 186.8 570.9 184.6
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Total ..	236.8 405.1 515.2 213.1 705.8 223.2
Canadian private ..	107.8 106.1 40.4 29.6 97.8 69.8
Other foreign private ..	39.9 15.1 80.4 24.1 196.6 150.1
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Grand total ..	384.5 526.3 636.0 266.8 1000.2 443.1

It is enough for the purposes of this article to quote these two salient examples, the one in the decline of export of goods partly caused by the industrialisation of countries new to capitalism; the other the contrast between the British fall in overseas investments and the enormous American expansion, as symptoms of the decline of British capitalism.

#### *The Remedies of the British Bourgeoisie*

What are the remedies for this mortal sickness of capitalism? The British bourgeoisie have sought for one remedy in Empire Development. They are cheered and encouraged on this path by the fact that in ten years there has been a slight alteration in the destination of British exports and imports. There is now more trade with the Empire. The difference, however, does not amount to more than 2 per cent. in all, but in any case it is not so much with trade that they are concerned. Empire Development primarily

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<sup>1</sup> In this table I have set down more details than is required for the purpose of the argument. But readers of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* may find it useful to note how the curve has fluctuated: and to draw lessons therefrom. Thus it will be seen that in 1923 the internal boom in U.S.A. was able to absorb the surplus capital, which accordingly drops down in our table. But with the saturation of the home market, the growth of the gold hoard, and the application of Dawes Plan to make Europe safe for democracy to invest in, the figures leap right up. Further, in the early years Canada, swinging into the U.S.A. sphere of influence, is considered thoroughly safe for private investment. In the case of other countries "safety first" concentrated overseas investment in Government loans. But with the Dawes Plan loans Europe falls into strong hands, it becomes quite safe to take shares in private business, and for the first six months of 1925 private investment is at an annual rate of 440 millions, and therefore nearly 50 per cent. of total investments overseas.

means cheap coloured labour. Empire development is typified by the jute mills on the Ganges with coolie labour yielding dividends of hundreds per cent., thereby enabling the Dundee jute employers (in many cases owners also of the Ganges mills) to force down the wages of their workers at home. Along with Empire Development goes the development of such countries as China, where again cheap labour is their objective.

On the financial side their remedy has been to work steadily towards their pre-war financial supremacy—"to enable the pound to look the dollar in the face." The Debt tribute to America was a step to this end, the Dawes Plan was another step, the re-establishment of the Gold Standard was its consummation. Round the Gold Standard rally the financiers of the City, their puppet ministers, and even the lately doubting Federation of British Industries. But for the workers the Gold Standard has a sinister meaning.

In remedies such as these the British bourgeoisie see their hope of stabilisation, but even in these remedies they meet with many contradictions and difficulties.

The restoration of the Gold Standard has meant a temporary embargo on investments overseas, thus frustrating for the time being the very object of the restoration. The Dawes Plan for stabilisation, if it is to be effective, means increased German competition. And so on and so forth. Nevertheless the British bourgeoisie does not despair of cutting through all its difficulties. It sees through a vista of reduction of wages the house of stabilisation to which it shall enter in. It has a sword that will cut the Gordian knot of its difficulties. That sword is the employers' offensive to reduce wages.

The crux of the situation for the British bourgeoisie, and for the world bourgeoisie in greater or less degree, is a successful employers' offensive. *There can be no post-war stability of capital without this offensive.* Just as primitive accumulation was necessary for the development of capitalism, so the employers' offensive is necessary for post-war stability of capitalism. "The capitalist system" said Marx, "pre-supposes a complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they can realise their labour. . . . The so-called primitive accumulation, however, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer

from the means of production." In a similar way post-war stability of capitalism pre-supposes the complete subjugation of the working class under the hammer blows of an employers' offensive. This is the cardinal feature of the new economic world situation. Unless this is understood, nothing is understood, and the way is paved to shameful submissions, and defeat after defeat.

Here is where the Social Democrat and "more production" boosters mislead the workers. In Germany the cry was "Let us have stable capitalism first," "Let us set Humpty-Dumpty up again and *then* we can develop towards socialism." In this country equally, though not with such tragically obvious conclusions as in Germany, the workers have been misled. "Stabilise capitalism and evolve towards socialism" has been the parrot cry. Hence we have the Labour Government continuing the process towards stabilisation (support of the Dawes Plan) whereas they were leading the workers direct into a fools' paradise. It is a dawning realisation of this that has caused the distrust of the Trade Unions, as manifested in the recent crisis, towards any and all of the Parliamentary leaders.

Finally, as a pendant to this statement of the inevitable linking of post-war stability with the lowering of wages, let us cite the recent pamphlet by Mr. J. M. Keynes. Mr. J. M. Keynes, the *enfant terrible* of bourgeois economics, has upset all his compeers by his pamphlet on *The Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill*, in which he argues that the Gold Standard, restored at the time it was, has meant an artificial appreciation of our currency of 10 per cent., and that this has reacted unfavourably on British export trade, which must be put right by a 10 per cent. cut in money-wages. Now it need not be discussed whether he is right or wrong. The point is that Mr. Keynes is not merely an economist, but also a dramatist. He dramatises Finance Capital. He makes it speak to the Lords of the Treasury; and in this imaginative speech he expresses the soul of the bourgeoisie as follows:—

If you think that the advantages of the Gold Standard are so significant and so urgent that you are prepared to risk great unpopularity and to take stern administrative action in order to secure them, the course of events will probably be as follows:—

To begin with, there will be great depression in the export industries. This, in itself, will be helpful, since it will produce an



atmosphere favourable to the reduction of wages. The cost of living will fall somewhat. This will be helpful too, because it will give you a good argument in favour of reducing wages. Nevertheless, the cost of living will not fall sufficiently and, consequently, the export industries will not be able to reduce their prices sufficiently until wages have fallen in the sheltered industries. Now, wages will not fall in the sheltered industries merely because there is unemployment in the unsheltered industries. Therefore you will have to see to it that there is unemployment in the sheltered industries also. The way to do this will be by credit restriction. By means of the restriction of credit by the Bank of England you can deliberately intensify unemployment to any required degree, until wages *do* fall. When the process is complete the cost of living will have fallen too; and we shall then be, with luck, just where we were before we started.

We ought to warn you, though perhaps this is going a little outside our proper sphere, that it will not be safe politically to admit that you are intensifying unemployment deliberately in order to reduce wages. Thus you will have to ascribe what is happening to every conceivable cause except the true one. We estimate that about two years may elapse before it will be safe for you to utter in public one single word of truth. By that time you will either be out of office, or the adjustment, somehow or other, will have been carried through.

### *The Workers' Policy*

This then is the new situation with which we are faced. To meet it needs nothing less than a new alignment and a whole new re-organisation of the forces of trade unionism.

Let us consider it from the point of view of the class struggle. First let us take the meaning of the mining crisis and its likely sequel for the next nine months, and secondly the measures to be taken by the workers. What happened in these last days of July? A strike was threatened. It was met by the combined resistance of the Trade Union movement. The attack was repulsed. But there is every indication in the speech of the Premier in the House of Commons, in the speeches of Cabinet Ministers, in the statements of big-business men and in the chorus of the Press that the bourgeoisie regard the nine months' subsidy as a breathing space in which to collect their forces for a renewal of the offensive. And this time there are to be no mistakes. After the concession of the Sankey Commission in February, 1919, up to time of the railway strike in September, 1919, the intervening months were filled with feverish preparations, ranging from the Strike-Breaking Circular issued to the troops to the systematic enrolment of White

Guards from the ranks of professional and middle-class associations of all kinds. Nothing was said about it at the time and the facts only slowly leaked out. This time they are blatantly announcing beforehand their intentions; enrolment of Black and Tan Corps, of Citizen Guards and all the apparatus of Fascism are being called for, not only by the *Daily Mail*, but by "sober" journals like the *Observer*. The end of April, 1926, is the time fixed for the declaration of war. But if their preparations are complete enough, that date may easily be forestalled. From the side of Labour there is not a moment to be lost. Not next spring, but before the winter is ended, the employers' artillery may begin.

The actual proposals we know. A Commission of Inquiry is set up, and it is to be expected from the Prime Minister's interview with Messrs. Herbert Smith, Cook and Richardson, that it will be a packed Commission. This article is written before the names are announced, but there will be no difficulty in finding names famous in philanthropy to lend themselves for the job. The Commission will be expected to go against the Seven Hours Day, and it is to spare time to justify an attack on the wages of the transport workers and other sheltered trades.

But supposing the personnel of the Commission is not so bad as we are led to expect; suppose its deliberations assume an appearance of impartiality, it will none the less serve the purposes of the bourgeoisie by creating an illusory belief in "the power of reason" and diverting the workers from their most urgent need of preparedness. You cannot "reason" butter out of a dog's mouth. But many will be led to believe that it is possible.

It is then not a matter of nine months but possibly a matter of nine or ten weeks. What are the workers to do? Clearly every support is to be given to the building up of the Industrial Alliance which represents a great concentration of Trade Union power. But more important still is the strengthening of the General Council. The Council did its best work since it was set up during these last few days of July. It remains to add to the powers which it then showed itself to possess and make those powers binding on every Union. Without this centralisation of power there will always come a moment when the bourgeoisie will seize a weak portion of the line and hurl all their forces against it.

Lastly there is the consolidation of the organised working class. By the building up in every locality, in every workshop, of the workers' own organisation, by the strengthening of the Trades Councils, by every means that can really and truly *mobilise the workers*. But all of this machinery, though necessary and urgent, will not function unless behind it there is the will to power.

These then are the concrete measures. Can we sum them up in a few words? If so, let our words be words that have a meaning. We must not simply say "Unity, National and International." International Unity indeed is sorely needed, but Nationally we have unity. Other countries are split up into two, three, four and even more separate trade union movements: in this country we have but one. But the Unity we have is not enough. We want the concentration of Trade Union Power that we get in the Industrial Alliance; the consolidation of the working class that we get in workshop and local organisation; and the centralisation that comes from handing over directive power to the General Council. Therefore our slogan must be: "Unite internationally," and at home: "Concentrate, Consolidate, Centralise."

# HATCHING A WAR WITH RUSSIA

By W. N. EWER

**T**HE "July days" of Anglo-Soviet crisis are over. There is even a theory abroad that there never was a crisis at all: that it was all begotten of nervousness and quick suspicion: that there never was any idea in the Cabinet or the Foreign Office of breaking off relations, or even of sending a "stern" note, on the Curzonian model, to Moscow.

Now in that theory, which of course has the official blessing, there is this amount of truth—that the July crisis was not in fact premeditated by the Foreign Office, nor did it ever develop to a really dangerous stage. It was premature and, therefore, abortive. The hot-heads of the Government forced it into existence, to the considerable annoyance of the cool-headed diplomats who are playing a longer and more cautious game. The recklessness of Lord Birkenhead and the stupidity of Sir William Joynson-Hicks inflamed Tory passions. The whole pack went baying and snarling on the trail. And the huntsmen had much ado to bring them to heel before they had (let the metaphors remain mixed) completely spoiled the game.

Their outbreak has been valuable. For it has served to give the whole Labour movement a sharp warning that there is danger ahead, and that at any moment the real crisis may be upon us.

Even those who doubted before can now see plainly that Anglo-Soviet relations are suffering from an acute intermittent fever, in which crisis will inevitably follow crisis, and in which any crisis may prove fatal. The tiding over of one, of two, of three, may be necessary. But it cannot be sufficient. The danger will be there so long as the abnormal and unhealthy condition remains.

Anglo-Soviet relations remind one ominously of Anglo-German relations in the years between 1904 and 1914. Then as now crisis followed on crisis (Casablanca, Bosnia, Agadir). Then, as now, in the intervals there was a continual and ubiquitous diplomatic conflict. Then, as now, there was snarling and suspicion and

a constant Press propaganda of hatred. Then, as now, the soldiers and sailors quietly got ready for the war which the diplomats were preparing.

But Anglo-German relations in those years of preparation were never so bad as Anglo-Russian relations now. Then at least the outward decencies were preserved ; diplomatic relations were normal and courteous ; there were even attempts, though abortive attempts, to reach an understanding on some of the points of conflict.

But to-day Ministers make no effort to conceal their bitter hatred of the Soviet Republic. The firebrands hurl insults from the platform which are without parallel in the history of international relations. The Foreign Secretary himself rarely mentions Russia—if it is only in answering a Parliamentary question—without a sneer or a taunt. His tone, as Mr. Ponsonby says, “ has been always one of studied disdainful indifference and hardly concealed unfriendliness.” His whole demeanour is one of deliberate provocation.

There are difficult questions to be solved between the two countries. There is—for geographical reasons which caused trouble long before the Revolution—always risk of a clash of interest or of objective between the two great Asiatic powers. But the existence of these difficulties and of these risks is exactly the reason why diplomacy should be exerting every effort to smooth over the one and to avert the other. Precisely for this reason there should be close and cordial co-operation in seeking for ways and means of agreement, of understanding, where necessary of compromise.

The really dangerous thing is that British diplomacy is deliberately banging, barring and bolting the door on every possibility of an understanding. It is loud in complaints and accusations. But it refuses to negotiate or even to discuss its grievances. It is impossible to resist the deduction that it is deliberately keeping those grievances in being as a pretext for making trouble when the chosen moment comes.

Let one example, and the most serious, suffice—the question of propaganda. The accusations are as continual as they are vague. Ministers allege that they have ample evidence of Soviet propaganda—in breach of the Trade Agreement undertakings—in

Great Britain, in India, in China, all over the world. Mr. Chamberlain has even officially declared in the House of Commons that the Soviet Government is not keeping its pledges.

Now I suspect that in fact they have no such evidence at all—of a kind that they would dare submit to an arbitrator. They have no doubt a plentiful supply of documents which they know perfectly well to be forged. They have, perhaps, some which they optimistically think may be genuine. They may pretend that for Karakhan to sympathise with the victims of the rifles of the Shanghai police is anti-British propaganda, or that for Russia to sell aeroplanes to an independent State like Afghanistan is an infringement of British Imperial interests (while, of course, if Russians object to Britain selling arms to the Baltic States that is equally an indication of bad faith and sinister intention). But, if this is all they have it is a monstrous thing that on such flimsy grounds they should publicly accuse a supposedly friendly government of violating its treaty undertakings.

But suppose that this is not all. Suppose that they have, or honestly believe that they have, genuine evidence of the complicity of the Soviet Government in anti-British propaganda within the meaning of the provisions of the Trade Agreement. What then?

If the Government of this country believes that it, or its nationals, have ground for complaint against the Government of any other State than the Soviet Union, the diplomats at once get busy. They make friendly representations. They discuss the matter with the ambassador or minister of the other State. They make every effort to remove any misunderstanding. They jointly investigate the complaints and search for a solution of the difficulties.

The seizure of British ships by American prohibition-cruisers is an instance that comes at once to mind. There was no flinging about of hot words, no bandying of insults, no waving of the flag, no talk of ultimatums. The matter was quietly settled by amicable discussion—because there was the will to settle.

But there is no will to settle with Russia. The Government does not want to stop propaganda : it wants to use the accusation of propaganda as a political weapon.

Therefore, while it makes loud public complaint, it does not lift a little finger to get its grievances remedied.

The promise was made, after the 1923 crisis, that, if there was any further ground for complaint, it should be brought in friendly conversation to the notice of the Soviet representative, with a view to an amicable arrangement.

That promise has not been kept. Ministers swear that they have evidence of violations of the agreement. Their complaint should be made, not clamorously from the housetops, but quietly to Mr. Rakovsky. But this is not done.

This is, of course, a breach not only of the understanding of 1923 but of the spirit of the provision of the Trade Agreement which lays down that in the event of either party believing that the propaganda provisions have been infringed, "the aggrieved party shall give the other party a reasonable opportunity of furnishing an explanation."

No such opportunity is given. No definite charge is made. "I cannot think," says Mr. Chamberlain in the House, "that I am called upon to give details of particular occasions." "We never give positive proof. Why should we?" says his Under-Secretary.

It is a remarkable point of view. Here we have the two responsible Ministers deliberately and publicly making the gravest charges against a Government with which our relations are supposed to be friendly and then blandly declaring that they have not the slightest intention of producing the smallest scrap of evidence in support of their statements. One must conclude either that they are off their heads or that they are deliberately endeavouring to foment a quarrel, that the British Government does not want normal relations to be established, does not want misunderstandings to be removed, does not want grievances to be redressed. One may add that its use of passport regulations to sabotage the work of the Russian commercial organisations, and its obstinate refusal to include Russia in the scope of the Export Credits scheme, suggest that it does not want Anglo-Russian trade to develop. Mr. McNeill's speech in the House last month is a strong confirmation of this.

The whole attitude of the Government in fact makes it clear that British diplomacy is directing its energies not to improving relations between the two countries, but to preparing for an open

rupture. Grievances are being accumulated in order that they may be produced at the chosen moment in justification of some aggressive action.

But, comes the obvious question, if the Foreign Office is working for a break why did it hang back in July when the firebrands of the Cabinet were clamouring for a bag and baggage expulsion of Rakovsky and all his colleagues ?

The answer is as plain as the question was obvious. The Foreign Office hung back because—even apart from the Labour opposition at home—it did not consider the moment opportune. Action was counted premature, because the diplomatic preparations were not complete.

It is the wise tradition of British diplomacy to furnish itself with allies before embarking on open conflict with a rival. And it is now the primary—but as yet uncompleted—task of our diplomats to build up a formidable combination against Russia as an essential preliminary to a rupture. That is in this case a doubly necessary precaution. For a single-handed break with Russia would merely have the effect of transferring to Berlin or Paris, to Milan or New York a great block of Russian trade now done with London. It would damage Great Britain far more than it would damage Russia. But if all the big industrial powers broke off relations simultaneously, Russia's foreign trade would be strangled, a blockade would be automatically established, and none of our trade rivals would be able to pick up the commerce which we should be deliberately sacrificing.

Therefore the purpose of British diplomacy is, before forcing a rupture with Russia, to align against her all, or as many as possible of the Powers, to break down her friendships, to strengthen all elements hostile to her, to isolate her and expose her to an encircling attack. Given the premises, such a policy is the merest common sense.

Challenged, the Government will, of course, deny that any such policy is being pursued. But that denial will meet with polite incredulity in every Chancellery in Europe. From Rome to Reval, every diplomat, in his calculations, assumes as axiomatic that British policy in 1925 is as definitely motived and shaped by hostility to the Soviet Union as it was motived and shaped, in the



years before 1914, by rivalry with Germany. And the majority take it more or less for granted that the result will be the same.

Twice Mr. Chamberlain has made direct and rather crude attempts at securing joint action by the Allied Powers against Russia. The first was at the Rome meeting last December, the second was that pretty plan (of which its authors were singularly proud) of a joint demand for the expulsion of the Comintern headquarters from Moscow. Each broke down because of the reluctance of France and the definite opposition of Italy.

The next step was the Pact proposal, emanating from Berlin, but inspired from Downing Street.

Its ostensible purpose is to restore peace to Western Europe. Its real purpose in the eyes of Downing Street is to separate Russia from Germany, to destroy the work done at Rapallo, to isolate the Soviet Government in Europe. That, at any rate, is the view of the Quai d'Orsay, of the Wilhelmstrasse, of the Belvedere, of the Consulta, as well as of the Kuznetsky Most.

It is a view which constantly finds expression in the European Press.

"The anti-Soviet bloc of which the London Cabinet is thinking must include Germany if it is to be complete," says the *Action Française*, "that is the real meaning of the Pact, its secret and profound *raison d'être*."

"British policy," says the *Gazeta Warszawska*, "is directed by the clearly established tendency to align Germany against Russia. The struggle over the Pact is, for England, a war against the Treaty of Rapallo."

"England's plan," says the *Vossische Zeitung*, "is to cast a ring round Moscow from the Baltic to the Black Sea."

These are representative extracts, which could be duplicated over and over again. It is only in England that the British Government's professions of single-minded concern for the peace of Europe are taken seriously.

Now the Pact plan, which seemed so simple in the conception, is proving unexpectedly difficult in the working out. For Germany—as the Poles warned Mr. Chamberlain at the very beginning—wants a high price for her complaisance. And that high price, if paid at the expense of France and Poland (and the Foreign Office

is a firm believer in vicarious sacrifice), may forfeit the co-operation of those two very essential Powers. At the time at which I write M. Briand is calmly suggesting to Mr. Chamberlain that if France is to take a hand against Russia, Great Britain must accept in its entirety the French thesis on the Pact; while Mr. Chamberlain realises unasily that if he does this bang goes his hope of roping-in Germany and breaking the Rapallo understanding. Coalition building is a hard task and the Governments of Europe show a most reprehensible disinclination to subordinate their own purposes to the requirements of Great Britain's Imperial policy.

The small Powers have been as troublesome as the large. As a complement to the Big Power group, Mr. Chamberlain has worked energetically, if unimaginatively, for the re-establishment of Clemenceau's *cordon sanitaire*, for an alliance of those border states, which by closing their frontiers could, with the aid of the British fleet, shut down a *de facto* blockade on the Soviet Union, and which are the natural and, indeed, only bases from which to conduct hostile operations in Europe for the weakening of Russia in Asia.

The reluctance of Poland, for various reasons, to enter into the scheme broke it into two halves. And British diplomacy, weak at Warsaw, has been driven to conduct separate campaigns in the Balkans and in the Baltic.

Neither, so far, has been over-successful. Every attempt to bring about a Balkan entente has broken down on the Macedonian question. Both the Serbian and the Bulgarian Governments are willing enough to gain sympathy and support from Downing Street by talking enthusiastically about the fight against Communism. But neither of them is in the least prepared to shake hands with the other.

The Bulgarian Government damns the Agrarians as "tools of Belgrade" and is far more afraid of Serbian than of Soviet conspiracies. The Serbian Government says that the first step to an Entente must be the suppression of the Macedonian organisation—everybody, of course, knowing perfectly well that if the wretched Tsankoff did try to suppress Messrs. Protogueroff and Co, "the horse would blow first." The Serbo-Greek squabble over Salonica, Rumano-Bulgar troubles over the Dobrudja, the hatred of the

Rumanian royal family for the Greek Republic, all add to the complexities of a situation in which Mr. Chamberlain's diplomatists flounder rather helplessly.

Therefore it is that, rather despairing of the Balkans, where even the Sofia Cathedral outrage failed to secure the desired solidarity—most Bulgarians obstinately regarding it still as inspired not from Moscow but from Belgrade—Downing Street has tended of late to concentrate its attention rather on the Baltic.

Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Here was an excellent opportunity for an able diplomacy.

With Esthonia and Latvia the game was comparatively simple. Financially they are already under British influence. Psychologically their Governments are conscious of instability, intensely afraid of their powerful neighbour. If England would guarantee their frontiers against invasion and their institutions against revolution, if she would be lenient in the matter of their debts, obliging in the matter of new loans, if she would furnish them with plenty of munitions, if she would spend money lavishly on a new naval base at the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, why then the Esthonian and Latvian Governments were prepared to be Mr. Chamberlain's obedient servants.

So far so good. But the Baltic plan needs more than Esthonia and Latvia. Alone they would be no asset but a big liability. For a Baltic bloc to be adequately troublesome to Russia it must include at least Lithuania and Finland—with, if possible, the Scandinavian countries in reserve behind Finland.

Now the luring of the Scandinavian countries has proved more difficult than was foreseen. Finland will take no risks unless assured of complete and effective support from Sweden. And Lithuania, considerably to the annoyance of the Foreign Office, is definitely unwilling to take her place in the ranks of an anti-Soviet combination. At an adequate price she might do so. But the price would be Vilna. And that—given the relationship of Britain to France and of France to Poland—is wildly out of the question. The naïve idea—emanating either from Downing Street or from the British Embassy in Berlin—that Poland might cede the Danzig corridor to Germany and Vilna to Lithuania in exchange for Memel has been laughed out of court.

Therefore—as M. Meirowicz, making a virtue of necessity, has hastened to assure the Warsaw press—an Esthonian-Latvian-Lithuanian combination is out of the question for the moment. The hope that by dropping Lithuania Poland may be brought into the combination is a faint one. Mr. Chamberlain is left with Esthonia, Latvia and a dubious Finland.

That, and a Pact negotiation whose issue is still on the laps of the gods is, so far, the net result of nine months' diplomatic intrigue in Europe. Not, on the whole, a creditable performance, even when one takes full account of the difficulties..

Simultaneously with the European policy, the Asiatic policy of the British Government has, of course, been directed to the same end. China is far too big a subject to be discussed here and now : but the anti-Soviet inspiration in our policy is obvious at every turn. In Persia there has been considerable success. The Government and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company between them have secured an ascendancy at Teheran which is very notable. To achieve that ascendancy we have ruthlessly sacrificed our "faithful ally" the Sheikh of Muhammarah, who has lost his power and is likely at any moment to lose his life. In Afghanistan we have been far less successful. The Amir has not forgotten 1919. As to Iraq and the Mosul problem, it would be foolish to attempt to foretell the issue of this month's intriguing at Geneva. But one may note that the British claim for a military foothold in the Hakkiri mountains is motived by strategic considerations which are concerned with the probabilities not of a Turkish but of a Russian war. It is the old problem of North Western India—the search for a "scientific frontier," not against the immediate neighbour, but against the Great Power whose borders are only a hundred miles or so to the north.

Search British policy where you will—in China or in Mesopotamia, in the Balkans or on the Rhine—its guiding motive is the same, preparation for a struggle with Soviet Russia. The diplomats seek to isolate the enemy and to build coalitions against her. The soldiers prepare "scientific frontiers." The sailors look for naval bases—the Aaland Islands or Oesel in the Baltic, Constanza or Mangalia in the Black Sea. (The new cruisers are of the precise tonnage—10,000 tons—allowed in the Black Sea under the

Straits Convention.) The politicians keep up an incessant propaganda of hate.

The portents are plain to read, as plain as—*mutatis mutandis*—they were in the days of Agadir or the Bosnian crisis. Imperialist Britain is getting ready for a fight to the death with Soviet Russia. That fight will come, maybe next year, maybe the year after, maybe the year after that, but quite certainly and inevitably, unless in the meantime Imperialist Britain becomes Workers' Britain.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## *Our Reprints*

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*We remind our readers of the pamphlets that we issue from time to time as reprints from our pages. These include "The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald," by U.D.C. (Threepence), "Problems of the Labour Movement," by P. BRAUN (Twopence), "The Burning Question of International Unity," by A. A. PURCELL (One Penny), and "Face-Pidgin: the Chinese Struggle," by TIEN SEN SHIAO.*

# THE EMPIRE LABOUR CONFERENCE

By MAURICE SPECTOR

**T**HEY called it the " Commonwealth " Labour Conference on the principle of the clever ostrich which sticks its head into the sand and believes its pursuers outwitted. But an Empire, five-sixths of whose inhabitants are subject to capitalist exploitation, and which is maintained by sheer military coercion, does not become a " commonwealth " by a little sleight of hand. This initial camouflage was bound to set its imprint of insincerity on everything that followed, atmosphere, agenda and proceedings. Invitations to participate in the Conference had only been sent to the " kosher " Labour parties of the Empire, of course. But in case some black left-wing sheep should manage to be on the delegations nevertheless, due measures were taken to prevent any unpleasant publicity. It was decided that only the Chairman's address, from day to day, would be made public; the rest of the proceedings were shrouded in diplomatic secrecy. At the end of each session a sterilised official report covering about two foolscap pages was issued, containing nothing that could hurt the feelings, say, of the Royal Family. Finally it was decided that no resolutions should be passed.

The Conference was a hang-over from the days of the Labour Government and its policy of Continuity. It was conceived to demonstrate to the British bourgeoisie that Labour was quite as safely imperialistic (and " fit to govern ") as the Tories, only more so—and to mobilise Labour opinion in the Dominions for the imperial, foreign, and war-policies of the Labour Government. Provincials far-removed from the metropolis and Real-Politik are notoriously backward and it would be embarrassing for the Ramsay MacDonalds to have Labour in the Dominions take their professions of " pacifism " seriously. In his key-note speech welcoming the delegates, MacDonald made all this quite clear. " There seems to be an assumption in this country," he declared, " that the Tory Party, the party of Reaction, is the only party that cares anything

about the Empire. This was so much fudge and humbug," a declaration that was warmly received in the Tory Press. He sedulously avoided any reference to the imperial record of the Labour Government, but as more than one delegate remembered his threat that he would stand no nonsense from an Indian Revolution, his treatment of Zaglul's demands for Egypt, and his Mr. Leach's activities as Minister for the bombing of Irak, MacDonald's statement was hardly news.

The agenda drawn up for the Conference could just as comfortably and suitably find its place at a Liberal Summer-School. Inter-Commonwealth Relations (where there is no "Commonwealth"), the Geneva Protocol, International Labour Legislation, inter-Dominion trade relations, these are the items of an agenda that accepts the Empire, the "League of Nations" and the Treaty of Versailles as a *status quo*, within which "constructive" work must be done. There is little or nothing that distinguishes this agenda as of Labour or Socialism. Small wonder that one Colonial delegate, not a Communist but a somewhat old-fashioned Socialist, after listening to Arthur Henderson's apologetic for the Geneva Protocol, lost his patience and crudely asked what all this business of capitalist Protocol versus capitalist Security Pact had to do with the workers and Socialism anyway. By way of reply Henderson pointed out that nothing had put the brake on Socialist ideas more than the war (*i.e.*, the betrayal of Socialism by the Second International). Therefore apparently one had to go on putting the brake on! The usual "League of Nations" stuff was gone through solemnly. There was regret that the important industrial powers had not ratified the Conventions of the International Labour Bureau and the hope expressed that in the future it would be otherwise. A conference was suggested between the representatives of the South African Labour movement and the Indian Trades Union Congress to discuss the question of Indian immigration, but there was no clear cut demand for the free immigration of workers in the Empire irrespective of colour bars. The Palestinian delegates attempted to obtain the blessing of the Conference for the British mandate but were disappointed by the opposition that developed. As to inter-Dominion trade relations, MacDonald glibly proposed wholesale purchases by committees (under capitalist auspices, presumably).

The resolution in favour of Indian self-determination at first sight looks like the exception to the prevailing futility of the Conference from the workers' point of view. The Conference went on record in favour of self-determination for India. But the sting in the tail of self-determination is its precise definition as self-determination to the point of secession and independence. And the Conference did not go out of its way to define it. A Labour Government in the future is no more committed to a policy of Indian emancipation than Ramsay MacDonald was, who used the phrase of self-determination long before the war. The Tory imperialists will not be very much disturbed by this resolution.

The composition of the Conference reflected all the elements of contradiction, antagonism, and uncertainty that prevail in the British Empire. The extreme Right was consciously working for an imperialist policy that would stick at nothing to maintain the Empire. There is another group that through sheer muddle-headedness and inability to grasp the implications of Empire are trying to balance themselves with a foot in each camp. Lansbury talking about the possibility of transforming the Empire into a "Socialist Commonwealth" is a crass example. It has also found expression in the Empire leanings and imperial preference votes of Kirkwood and Wheatley. But there was a third group represented that must make up its mind to take more than a merely casual part in a Conference of this kind—that was the Swales-Purcell element which struck the only genuine proletarian note throughout the whole proceedings.

"Imperialism," said Swales, the Chairman of the Trades Union Congress, "marks the last stage in the development of capitalism." These are golden words. In this stage of reduced living standards for the workers at home, intense exploitation of the cheap labour of the Colonies, imperialist antagonisms leading to war and colonial uprisings as in China and Morocco, it is of vital importance for British Labour to understand the politics and economics of Imperialism and to draw the proper conclusions. The position of the British Empire in particular reveals all the contradictions and antagonisms of an Empire in dissolution. At home, industrial decline ; abroad, the competition of the American Empire with its financial supremacy ; in the Dominions industrialisation leading



to independence ; in India, Egypt and Irak ferment and smothered revolt ; open revolt in China, and finally the shadow of the Soviet Union with its living demonstration of Workers' Rule and national self-determination.

The policy the workers should pursue to combat the disastrous consequences of Capitalist-Imperialism was clearly indicated by Purcell. That policy is not more Imperialism but the organised power of the working-class to wage the class-struggle against Imperialism. To have called an Empire Conference with the end in view of strengthening the Labour Movement in the different parts of what Purcell called " the world's biggest slave plantation " would have been a memorable contribution to the cause of the workers. But the authors of the Conference were not actuated by Socialist or internationalist motives. When German capitalism was in a parlous state after the military collapse, the German Social Democracy worked with might and main for its restoration. Now that the foundations of the British Empire are crumbling, and the Tory imperialists themselves, as shown at one Imperial Conference after another, are helpless, the British Social-Democrats have gallantly come to the rescue. As was abundantly clear from the questionnaire passed round at the Conference, the problems that agitate MacDonald are a unified Empire foreign policy, Dominion support of British armament " requirements," and imperial solidarity in the next British war emergency.

Of course MacDonald's Labour Imperialism is no more able to bridge the deep-rooted antagonisms undermining the structure of Empire than Tory Imperialism. But in the effort, he can work irreparable harm to Labour itself. He can bewilder the workers and set them off on false scents. He can poison the atmosphere. Once committed to MacDonald's policy, Labour in the metropolis might find itself fighting to suppress colonial peoples in revolt for freedom. It is an ugly prospect but, as Morocco can demonstrate, not novel. The attitude of MacDonald in no whit differs from that of Renaudel or Jouhaux in France.

The Empire Labour Conference would have been a moral force if it had faced issues clearly and called a spade a spade ; if the record of the Labour Government in Imperial and foreign affairs had been passed in pitiless review ; if Swales' clear definition of Imperialism

and Purcell's clear call for working-class internationalism and international trade union unity had been its key notes, instead of its perfunctory tail-end ; if it had resolved to develop the working-class movement in the different parts of the Empire and link it up with the revolt of the Colonial peoples under the banner of self-determination to the point of secession ; if it had exposed the swindle of the International Labour Bureau and opposed the *status quo* of the Treaty of Versailles ; if it had resolved to combat the menace of imperialist war through international trade union unity and alliance with the Soviet Union. As it was, the Conference has merely enabled Mr. MacDonald to claim at the next elections that he is a better "Imperial statesman" than anyone in the Tory fold.

# INDEPENDENT WORKING-CLASS EDUCATION

By A. M. ROBERTSON

*Acting Principal of the Labour College*

**M**UCH has been written and said about independent education for the working class. At the present juncture when, on the one hand, this same independent educational movement is facing a new phase in the problem of extension, and, on the other, the industrial movement is facing the problems of centralisation and of extended solidarity, it may not be amiss to emphasise once more some of the salient features in educational independence.

Now what is the meaning of I.W.C.E. ? And if it is independent can it be scientific, and if it is scientific can it be biased ? These are all closely related points in our philosophy of education, and we ought to be clear and definite about them because they are constantly cropping up.

The view of our opponents, and sometimes of our would-be friends, is that education cannot have a bias and be scientific, and, therefore, that there is no urgent need for independent working-class education; that something of a neutral type is what is wanted; something purely disinterested.

Now we must get rid of the idea that we must be biased because the working class gets a rough time. That is true, but of itself it does not make a science. We may resent the poverty and misery, but our resentment must be more than impulsive to be justified as scientific. Our bias is neither sentimental nor ethical in the last analysis, the ethical situation being dependent on the scientific and arising out of it. We must therefore discover the scientific law underlying bias.

When the wood is viewed apart from the trees an examination of past educational systems reveals two outstanding features. The

first of these is that all these systems have been, *when definitely worked out*, in the interests of the governing class, with the double purpose of (a) the maintenance of the existing political domination, and (b) the enjoyment and culture of the privileged class. The second, that *changes* in the educational system, in form and content, have been the result of changes in the nature of social organisation, arising from the advent of a new class in economic life, involving new needs in the economic sphere, in law and order, and in culture.

History further shows that new systems are at first heretical, being opposed to the current political order; then liberal, endeavouring to extend their following for a larger attack; then governmental and static when power has been won; then in the decline of power, self-satisfied, dilettante, futile and reactionary, opposing all movement to any further advance which might mean a diminution of their prestige and privileges.

If these two propositions are true, namely, that education, like the economic system, is a class affair and that each new class must work out a new educational advance, then it surely follows that Labour, as a new economic class, must be independent as to the type of education that is necessary for its self-expansion, for its new needs industrially and politically, and for its inevitable attack on the dominating political system.

That, it seems to me, is the scientific law guiding educational progress in class society; and it is here that the meaning of bias as a necessary historical factor in education appears. Bias does not mean getting angry; it does not mean falsification; it does not mean prejudice or perversity; but it does mean punch and enthusiasm, the enthusiasm and punch that come of being on the side of progress, with all the forces of social evolution to fall back upon and to build from, and the more so as class-consciousness develops and we have the whole field of history to clarify our vision and direct our strategy.

It would take too long to cover the whole ground and prove the above statements here, but one or two instances may be cited in illustration. For example, an orthodox historian says of Chinese education: "The most important result to notice is that Chinese education accomplishes its great purpose in that it secures the stability of society, the perpetuity of the empire, the conservation

of the past." Another says: "It is the consensus of opinion that Confucius did not teach morals for the sake of the individual, but to secure the peace and stability of the empire." Still another, that "the disciplinary education of England based upon classical literature was, and is yet, favoured in an aristocratic form of society where the forces of social stability find greater emphasis than those of social progress."

The same ideas run through Greek education, and here can be seen the change in education from the older type, running from 900 B.C. to 450 B.C., when bravery and the service of the community were the supreme virtues, to the newer type, coming in about 450 B.C. This latter was the result of the rise of trade and commerce followed by "social, moral, literary and philosophical changes."

"The growth of democracy had been the triumph of the trading and commercial classes, who were now possessed of the rights of citizenship, with the result of opening up a great variety of new opportunities for individual advance." Greater emphasis was now laid on personal interests as against those of the State, and we have a period of semi-individualism; and in the organised institutions "education becomes more distinctly a school process looking toward intellectual and practical, that is, individual ends."

This again hardens into a more exclusive and reactionary form under Plato, and then Aristotle, who says: "Of all things which I have mentioned that which contributes most to the permanence of constitutions is the adaptation of education to the form of government."

There is not space to describe an almost similar development in Roman education up to the period of the decline of the Roman Empire when "such education as flourished was for the satisfaction or the adornment of this class of society alone"—that is, the imperialistic aristocrats. "This education is now to be judged not as the practical training of a whole people, but as an adornment to a hollow, superficial, usually corrupt, society; not as the expression of the highest aims in life, but as a dilettante interest, more often still as an affectation; not as a stage of development possible for an entire people, or at least for individuals of any rank, but as an attainment or badge of distinction of a favoured class."

So on through the centuries till we come, in the eleventh, to the scholastic period, when the orthodox practitioners had to meet the disruptive tendencies of the heretical movements "by argument as well as by force." The purpose of education now was to persuade the world that faith had a basis in reason, but all knowledge nevertheless had to be sanctioned by the Church.

Again in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the rising middle class in England set out to create an education of their own under the control of the guilds or the burgh councils and free from ecclesiastical influence. The reaction against the clergy and the landlords had been under way for some time for various reasons, but educationally it now took the form of the introduction of subjects more useful to a commercial class than Latin.

The great controversies of the Reformation period, when each side was out for the control of the young mind, again give us a very clear picture of the impossibility of finding neutral ground in controversial subjects. Where mass interests are concerned no neutral ground exists nor can exist. That is just how the human mind works. The interests of the group or class must be preserved and the group will see to that. Individuals may leave their own class or resist it, but no class has ever yet abdicated from its supposed right to be right. All that is left for us is to decide which class is, in its own period, progressive, which class is working in line with evolution. That class, within its own historical limits, places the correct interpretation upon events, and must be right.

If then a scientific analysis of history shows us that the next class ahead is the working class, that class must organise its own education, because the aims, educational and other, of the capitalist class are in direct opposition and will never produce the new society.

As far as modern State education is concerned the position is the same. One might say that modern education in England was the result of two ideas held by the upper and middle classes. Children, if educated, would become more intelligent workers and, if their education was properly handled, more docile and subservient. Not all held these views. Others, instinctively or otherwise, saw danger ahead, and when, in 1807, Whitbread introduced his Parish Schools Bill, one of the diehards said:

“ Learning will point out to the poor enjoyments which Providence hath wisely and tenderly concealed.” Rather a subtle form of tenderness.

But the general aim throughout the nineteenth century and even up to the present day, so far as social subjects are concerned, was to imbue the working class with a capitalist outlook while increasing efficiency for the extraction of profit. What is the subject of civics for but the inculcation of the idea that capitalist society is a fit and proper thing for the adoration of the worker—that it is an organic whole where each and all have similar chances of success. No doubt the teaching is often overlaid and rationalised, but atmosphere and suggestion work their deadly effect.

An L.C.C. school inspector, F. H. Hayward, D.Litt., describing the Celebration Movement, put forward in the *Torchbearer* for June, 1924, some suggestions for service celebrations. “ A service celebration,” he says, “ which ends with a sort of collective vow or dedication, stands very close to a religious service.” Of service celebrations already given he names the following: Home; City; England; League of Nations; Animals; Temperance; Work and Thrift; Courtesy. Of those in preparation the following: Empire; Education; Childhood; Youth; Age. Not bad that, making a religious service out of the Empire and the League of Nations.

I refer to this article for two reasons. In the first place the magazine claims to be a very advanced educational one, and in the second these ideas correspond to the type of thought current amongst our capitalist politicians. Mr. Baldwin was reported to say the other day, “ I am convinced that if the time should come when the *community* has to protect itself, with the full strength of the Government behind it, the community will do so, and the response of the community will astonish the forces of anarchy throughout the world.” Now all Marxists know that society to-day is far from being a community, for we are just as clearly divided as consumers as we are when producers; but when this sort of stuff is worked up in school it is easy for the politician to come along and reap the harvest.

Let us realise, then, that we must be independent, radically independent; that independence means bias, because the capitalist interpretation of events is not the progressive one but the reactionary

one; and that our bias being the result of seeing things progressively must be not only right but scientific. There is no neutral ground—and there can be no compromise. Our education is not primarily for the cultural development of the individual but for the next great change in social organisation. All education is useless apart from its application to life. This is where older systems run to seed—new needs arise, and the groups with those new needs must see to it that the new needs are satisfied, for the older groups will not. The workers must in fact develop their own education on the lines of historic and economic necessity.

Now it is in its application to the current industrial and economic conditions that I.W.C.E. will and must be tested. If it does not analyse these, and, to a certain extent, forecast the trend and supply the necessary strategy for the class struggle, then it is woefully lacking somewhere. There is undoubtedly a tendency, at the present time, to minimise this fundamental aspect of Marxist education and perhaps to rest on the oars of past successes; but to me the trial time is ahead and not behind. As we approach, through capitalist disruption, to the social revolution that so many are now discussing, there will arise sections that will hope to slow the process down or side-track it into more pleasant and flowery paths by a display of verbal gymnastics or glib scholastic theorising. Though this cannot prevent the iron march of events it can do a great deal of damage and must at all costs be fought.

The most striking and the most heartening event that the present generation has witnessed has been the recent united action of the Trade Union Movement in face, not merely of the employers, but of the employers' State itself. What better practical demonstration of the class struggle and of the correctness of Marxist theory could anyone wish than this—that in a period of industrial depression the most important section of the working class should stand together, united and with a single front, in face of the final enemy, the capitalist State. What else won the victory—temporary though it be—but working-class solidarity? Now it is just here that Marxist education comes in. Being a Marxist, I do not, of course, claim that Marxist education has been altogether responsible for this—the general economic situation, with the initiation of a widespread capitalist attack, combined also with the recent



experience of the Trade Union Movement, were largely responsible. But can we be certain that this unity in action will be continued and developed? It is the duty of the Marxist to see that it is, by providing the intellectual grounds for it, not only on the industrial field but on the political as well—for a mass industrial fight is a political fight. What else is it that separates individuals and splits the movement in a crisis but the divergent political views held by the various participants? There ought to be no room for conflicting political theories when an industrial crisis is upon us. The repeated failures of the Chartist and other mass movements show that class education is needed to get the class point of view, the class solidarity and the class strategy. The point is that it is fairly easy to agree as to a political or industrial programme—divergent politicians can easily draw up a series of demands, but the difficulty arises when these demands run the risk of being turned down and require to be backed up by drastic action. Out come the political theories and the argument begins over the method to be adopted, if any at all, till time passes and it is too late to do anything. A scientific view of history and economics would make this either impossible or sheer treachery.

Once safe as to fundamental theory we are likely to be safe in industrial and political practice.

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# CAPITALISM, LABOUR AND THE PRESS

By WILLIAM PAUL

**T**HE modern propertied interests control the most efficient instruments for maintaining economic and political power ever devised by any ruling class in history. They have organised their organs of attack and defence in every strand in the social fabric. Inside every institution and group—from the most innocent religious Bethel up to the armed forces of the State—they have their sleepless defenders.

They even penetrate and undermine, with some degree of success, the very organisations set up by the Labour Movement. The more moderate or Right-wing these organisations are, the more easily do the capitalist agents carry on their work of transforming them into bulwarks to defend the propertied interests.

Judging by their public pronouncements, there are many leaders in the Labour Movement who, by their open support of the capitalist press, do not understand the line of causation that links up and binds the peaceful propaganda of capitalist ideas and theories to open violence. These leaders do not seem to comprehend the nature and function of capitalism in its historic struggle to stave off defeat at the hands of the workers. It is thus no accident that the first step made by Mussolini away from the Labour Movement was that of writing attacks upon the Left-wing of the Movement in the capitalist press. Having taken this step it was easy for him to take the further two steps that made him the incarnation of capitalist violence against the masses.

The policy adopted by any Labour leader towards the capitalist press is a real test which predetermines what his attitude will be towards the workers during any period of social conflict. (There are many leaders, of course, who must use the capitalist press as a medium of ordinary publicity.) But the particular type we have in mind is that well-known specimen that uses the millionaire press-combine and receives subsidies from it to attack the fighting

wing of the Labour Movement. It may even happen in this country that certain propertied interests will provide them with a "Labour" paper to enable them to carry on this work.

It is, therefore, very necessary for us, in Britain, to watch most carefully those moderate leaders who receive subsidies from the millionaire press-combines for writing open attacks upon Labour's Left-wing. And we must view with suspicion those financial interests who are exerting themselves to provide the Right-wing with a Sunday newspaper to be run upon "sane and moderate lines."

Besides, many serious and honest members of the Labour Movement view the capitalist press as an instrument for conducting a *peaceful* opposition against Labour. In practice, it is the press that provokes and directs *violence* against the masses. It is, therefore, in England that the press has become one of the sharpest weapons in that conflict.

One of the revolutionary slogans of the bourgeoisie against their class enemies was that of a "free press." In the great struggle between the bourgeoisie and the reactionary monarchists news-sheets and political pamphlets made their appearance. Having broken the power of the Crown and the Church over the control of printing, the capitalist class have always contended that they won the right of a "free press." *It is necessary to remember, however, that a free press is only "free" to a propertied class which has the economic means to expend wealth in subsidising and maintaining printing establishments.*

But even the historical claim that capitalism has made a free press possible will not bear serious examination.

During every period of acute social crisis under capitalism the ruling class have always found ways and means of preventing their opponents from freely using the press. When the French Revolution encouraged ardent and discontented elements in England to engage in a bold agitation, the press was immediately muzzled.

Similar tactics were pursued from time to time during the last century. So long as Chartist, Labour and Trade Union papers were strictly "constitutional," and were not backed by any organised power that threatened to endanger capitalism, so long these progressive and reform elements were permitted to enjoy the fruits

of a "free press." The moment, however, they ceased to be "constitutional," and had some organised power behind them that seemed a menace to the ruling class, their presses were immediately smashed on some pretext or other.

During the period that British Capitalism was able to send its products into the world's market and successfully compete with the then rising industrial nations, like Germany and America, and when the industrial and political situation was running smoothly, it was possible for the ruling class to adopt a policy of paternal benevolence towards the workers. But when imperialist capitalism began its fierce internecine struggle over markets, zones of influence, sources of raw materials and trade routes, the attitude of the British employers towards the workers was increasingly sharpened.

Side by side with this intensification of the class conflict the capitalists conducted a strenuous campaign to popularise their views and ideas among the workers. It was at this point that the all-importance of their control over the press made itself felt. From that moment the press has been one of the most aggressive weapons in the interests of capital against labour.

This is the real explanation why such a change has taken place in the development of the press during the last thirty years. With the advent of the modern Labour Movement the organisation and method of ownership of the press has been revolutionised. Thirty years ago newspapers were in the hands of editorial proprietors, who each endeavoured to give an individual tone to their paper. The ideas of the paper were those of the editor. While there was infinite variety, there was little or no cohesion of thought in the press. At that time the London Stock Exchange did not contain one single newspaper corporation. To-day there are several large companies and their capital runs into many millions. This reveals that not only has the press been enlarged and extended, as a weapon against the workers, but it has become one of the richest fields of capitalist investment. Journalism has ceased to be a profession. It has become an engine of commerce for digging up dividends.

The position of the press as a machine for turning out profits must be examined for a moment. To gain profits a newspaper must get readers by the million. Newspapers, by their nature, spread

broadcast certain ideas. The modern press, being such an important asset for making profits, must of necessity defend modern capitalism. This means, in short, that the modern press must spread those ideas, which, in action, are opposed to the Labour Movement. We see here the explanation why capitalist newspapers denounce those Labour leaders who are leading the workers to make an attack upon profits, and conversely, why they praise those leaders who plead for an industrial truce and who advocate that the interests of capital and labour are identical. In a word, the capitalist press must defend the propertied interests for the simple reason that the capitalist press in recent years has become, itself, one of the greatest of the modern propertied interests.

It is necessary to explain, at the outset, that it is not always easy to give the real owners of the modern press, because many financiers work and operate their control through nominee companies or nominal shareholders. This was most dramatically illustrated in March, 1920, in the case of "Rhondda versus the *Western Mail*," where it was revealed how industrial magnates held newspaper shares in the name of nominal agents. It was also shown in this case why Lord Rhondda, a South Wales coal owner, did not desire it to be publicly known that he was part owner of the *Western Mail*. This journal was a Conservative organ and Lord Rhondda was a Liberal. As it was the most important paper in South Wales it was necessary to have some control over it in order to direct its attacks against the proposals of the Miners for the nationalisation of the mines. All this was admitted during the hearing of the case.

One of the biggest newspaper combines in the world is that headed by the three brothers Berry. In their struggle to obtain control of the press the above group recently took over a series of provincial papers, particularly on the Clyde, the Tyne and in Lancashire, where the great mass of the workers are directly engaged in the coal, iron, steel, shipbuilding and textile industries. When the *Manchester Daily Dispatch* or *Evening Chronicle*, the *Glasgow Daily Record* or *Evening News*, or the *Newcastle Chronicle* are stating the case during any industrial dispute we can depend upon it that it will not be the workers' case that will be put forward. And when these organs are making rhetorical appeals to the workers not to

injure "society" or the "community" and to accept the judgment of "public opinion" we know what these bogeys are and what they represent.

The Berry Group, Allied Newspapers, Ltd., showed a profit of over a million pounds last year. Their chairman declared that their 1924-5 earnings were equal to nearly 22 per cent. after discharging a full year's interest on loan and preference capital. This group not only earns big profits from their papers, but they use some of their journals, like the Weldon publications, to stimulate their interests in the textile industry. We have here an illustration that the press is part and parcel of the profit-making machine.

This becomes obvious when we know that well-known industrial and financial interests appear on the directors' boards and in the shareholders' lists of all the important capitalist journals. Not only do individual captains of industry figure there but large blocks of shares in many newspapers are held by important insurance companies and banks.

The big press combines earn enormous profits. During 1924-5, as we have seen, the Berry Group realised a profit of over one million pounds. The Amalgamated Press, Ltd. (controlled by the Harmsworth Group) show a record of high profits on its paid up capital of £1,065,000. The lowest dividend from 1901-2 to 1920-21 was in 1903-4 when thirty-five per cent. was paid. In nine years (1913-1921) profits amounting to £4,142,190 were paid, or almost four times the amount of the original capital. Another of the Harmsworths' undertakings paid sixty per cent. for five years. One can easily understand why when the Berry Group floated the Allied Northern Newspaper, Ltd., and wanted £2,300,000 that the issue was over-subscribed in a few hours.

There is no escape from the facts, all of which prove that profit-making and the perpetuation of capitalism is the first and main objective of the modern press. It is true that the big newspapers attack each other from time to time. But if these internecine quarrels are carefully studied, particularly with an eye on the nature of the specialised economic interests behind the journals involved, it will be found that the dispute has arisen over a difference in methods of profit-making. The industrialists will attack the financiers and vice-versa.

Beneath all these domestic tiffs there is absolute harmony regarding the need for a steady and united attack upon the demands of the workers and the militant leaders in the Labour Movement.

In the early days of capitalism it was possible, by stupendous efforts of thrift, to open out in business in a small way. At this period the capitalist class—by destroying the restrictions of the Guilds and the monopoly control of the Crown over certain undertakings—had some reasons for declaring that it had established freedom in trade. It also boasted that it had made the press free. But, as we have seen, during any political crisis which set up any rebellious ferment among the masses, the offending press was always destroyed in the interests of the ruling class under the plea that the “safety of the realm was endangered.” This means, in practice, that capitalism, and its much vaunted democratic freedom of the press, places no restrictions in the way of any newspaper or publication that loyally abides by the economic and political code established by the propertied interests. The moment any journal, however, gets sufficient revolutionary backing to make it a political danger to capitalism, it is promptly suppressed.

In case anyone thinks this is mere theoretical conjecture, let me relate my own experiences as an editor during the war. From 1915 to the end of the war I edited a virile anti-militarist monthly journal that had a good circulation in the engineering industry on the Clyde and amongst the South Wales miners. The policy of the paper was not the negative one of making a gesture of sentimental pacifist despair, regarding the war. It adopted a positive attitude and gave direct encouragement to every grievance of the workers that could be utilised against the Government. Time after time attempts were made to suppress the paper and the firms who printed it were sometimes closed down by the police. My trouble did not end when a printer was found who was bold enough to stand up against the terrorist tactics of the police. The real problem was to find paper to send to the printers.

The experience of the war, like any period of social upheaval under capitalism, proved most conclusively that the claim of modern democracy that the press is free is sheer hypocritical cant.

This becomes even more apparent when one turns from the political to the financial aspect of the modern press. The law of the

concentration and centralisation of capital into ever fewer hands, is true not only of general industrial development—it is one of the main facts of the press to-day. Not a month passes but one or other of the Press Trusts takes over some paper. This means that the greatest instrument of political publicity is passing into the control of those who, because of their economic interests, must necessarily oppose the most elementary demands of the working class. •

As a result of the finance poured into the modern press by the propertied interests, the technical equipment of a first-class paper has become such that the late Kennedy Jones, one of the founders of the *Daily Mail*, had serious doubts whether £500,000 would establish a good daily journal. This purely economic fact alone proves how shameless is the modern claim regarding the freedom of the press.

A daily paper that would cost £500,000 could not be maintained by depending alone upon the money received from its buyers. The most important newspapers to-day depend, financially, upon advertisement revenue. This, in reality, is a subsidy given by the propertied interests to one of their own organs. The greater the subsidy drawn from advertisement sources the more attractive and popular can such a newspaper become. This, in turn, increases its power to extract an ever greater subsidy in the shape of higher advertisement charges. The *Daily Mail*, for example, can collect £436,800 per annum from one page in advertisement revenue.

The importance of advertisement revenue for a newspaper only serves to show how hollow is the modern claim regarding the free press. For, everyone in the Labour Movement knows that the old militant Left-wing *Daily Herald*, of pre-war days, seldom got any of the really important advertisements that are so readily given to the ordinary capitalist newspapers. Even the modern *Daily Herald*, with all its undeniable claims to be a respectable and moderate journal, cannot overcome the advertisement boycott, and languishes, in consequence, from insufficient financial support.

The advertisers are the financial mainstay of the modern capitalist newspapers and they know it and call the tune accordingly. Thus it is an unwritten law in the editorial department that important advertisers must never be offended. Here we find, in another way, the power wielded by the propertied interests, and how much



the freedom of the press is really worth when brought to a practical test.

The tremendous power wielded by capitalism through its press, shows how hollow are the claims of those who rant about the political equality of modern democracy. At the present moment, when the Labour Movement is not conscious of its latent power, the propertied interests have, in their control of the press, a political weapon much superior to anything possessed by the workers. The political pressure that the propertied interests can exert, through their domination of educational and other organs for moulding the ideas of great masses, is such that one brilliant student of the problem maintains :—

If reactionists are allowed to hold these intellectual and moral fortresses, they can afford to snap their fingers at the working class movement in industry and politics.—J. A. Hobson in *Democracy After the War*.

This is the reply to those foolish persons in the Labour Movement who tell the workers that all they have to do is to vote at the ballot box. Right-wingers are distinguished by their virtue for begging the question. The problem is : How can the masses vote for their class when the greatest idea-creating machine in the world, the press, predisposes them to vote for capitalism ?

The capitalist press by its united action can stampede any uncritical mass at a given moment during any parliamentary election. Let anyone read the speeches of Right-wing leaders made on the Sunday that the press campaign was turned on the Zinoviev letter. By a simple trick the capitalist class reduced the leaders of the Parliamentary Labour Party to a condition of amazing and contradictory incoherence. And these were trained and experienced politicians who were supposed to know all the tricks in the game.

Not only can a skilfully prepared press campaign accomplish such things : it can be utilised, when the necessity arises, to provoke the most reactionary elements in society to violently attack the militant section of the working class. Long before Mussolini had any ideas regarding the capitalist policy of blood-letting as a legitimate method of political warfare, Lord Birkenhead had made statements on the subject that would make the most vicious Fascist appear like a pious Quaker. During the intense Labour agitation of

1919 the *Glasgow Evening Times* made sinister references to the "irresistible logic inherent in the bayonet and the bullet," and hoped that strikers would "realise the futility of arguing with a machine gun." And in the *Aeroplane* during 1918, the editor reminded revolutionary workers that the Royal Air Force could be used most effectively. These illustrations show what political weapons the propertied interests wield, through their control of the press, in the struggle against Labour.

With the increasing chaos of capitalism and the growing need of the masses to fight to obtain the barest necessities of life, the enemy press will be forced to become even more hysterical in the denunciations of the workers' demands. The very conditions of the class struggle, and the fact that capitalism has no policy to help the workers, will force the millionaire press to reveal itself as the enemy of the workers. This fact is already recognised by the propertied interests who know that their newspapers are rapidly losing their influence. One of the founders of the *Daily Mail*, the late Mr. Kennedy Jones, frankly admitted as much (*vide his Fleet Street and Downing Street*, pp. 324-5), and said this explained the amazing popularity of the pictorial press.

The Labour press must then concentrate its attention upon the immediate and *concrete* demands of the masses. While it is a simple thing to mislead people on purely *abstract* political principles—such as Conservatism, Liberalism or Parliamentary Socialism—it is almost impossible to wheedle workers over the *concrete* things they are struggling to obtain in the factory, mine, mill, railroad, or in the dole queue.

A workers' press cannot and should not make any pretence to compete with capitalist newspapers. The attractive features of these are costly and seldom deal with things that are of direct importance to the masses. The old pre-war *Daily Herald* when it was a fighting Left-wing sheet was a much better working-class paper than it is to-day. The old paper had its own peculiar features that marked it out as "the limit"; to-day it attempts to emulate the millionaire press and fails.

The relation of the immediate needs of the workers to the Labour press is being solved in a rather novel manner. One of the most important signs of the time is the recent development of the

factory newspaper. The growth of this idea has made even the Tory Government sit up and take notice. It is true we are only at the beginning of this new movement and that some of the papers, judged from the angle of Fleet Street, are poor and crude. But the idea is splendid and appeals to the workers who make their own copy, set it up, and distribute it among themselves. These papers know every little detail that happens in and about the factory and emphasise points that seem to have no meaning to outsiders. During a strike, they supply a form of news which the most alert press correspondent cannot get. And, above all, these factory papers breed a distrust of the capitalist press among the workers who support their own little paper which they make with their own hands.

The need for these factory papers, even if only made by the stencil and copying process, will be apparent very shortly. As the Labour Movement is driven forward to big struggles the workers' press will be attacked and in all probability suppressed. But the struggle in Italy, Germany, and elsewhere has shown that it is almost impossible to suppress the small factory and workshop papers. While, therefore, it is our first duty to support the Labour press, each according to his taste—nothing but the papers issued and printed by the Labour Movement, from the *Herald* to the more militant organs—it is highly necessary to pay every attention to the encouragement of the factory paper.

The cunning ruling class of Britain are watching all the moves that the workers are making to build up a press. By methods of silence and the boycott, two things the *Sunday Worker* had to combat, they try to undermine and weaken our papers. But they have several moves which they can make. They can, as they are contemplating, subsidise newspapers and place these, nominally, in the hands of Right-wing Labour leaders whose policy is not to fight capitalism but to make ever-increasing attacks upon the militant Trade Union leaders, the Labour Party's Left-wing, and the Communists.

In preparing the Trade Unions for their historic task of taking over industry and holding it against all the attacks of the propertied class, we must show the printing trade workers that, by transforming the boss press from a weapon of capitalism to a weapon of revolution, they will perform a tremendous task.

# The World of Labour

BULGARIA : The Social Democratic Attitude . . . . . PAGE  
570

## BULGARIA

### The Social Democratic Attitude

THE atrocities perpetrated by the Tsankoff Government in its suppression of the opposition in Bulgaria after the bomb explosion in Sofia Cathedral on April 16, are a matter of common knowledge. Sufficient witness has been borne, for instance, by the Labour Delegation under Colonel Wedgwood, and even by the ordinary Press reports.

Thus, the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* in Sofia, wrote:—

Of the countless prisoners who have been sentenced to death, not only in Sofia, but also in the provincial towns of Bulgaria, not one, as far as can be ascertained, has had anything to do with the crime.—*Manchester Guardian*, May 28, 1925.

It is the deliberate policy of the Tsankoff Government to exterminate the "illegal opposition." It would be tragic enough if this opposition were no more than a small clique, but as it is a great movement with a mass following the terror is awful beyond description and there is no limit to the number of its victims.—*Manchester Guardian*, June 2, 1925.

It is clear that we are here faced with a campaign of merciless repression comparable to the Gallifet terror after the Commune in 1871. It is strange, therefore, to find the following editorial comment in the *Labour Magazine* (May, 1925):—

The Tsankoff Government is certainly not in a position to pose as the guardian of political righteousness and constitutional order. But nothing is to be gained, on the other hand, by pretending that the Communists are the victims of savage persecution and White Terror.

A report was submitted by the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party to the Labour and Socialist International. The tone of this document may be judged from the following phrases:—

Bulgarian Social Democracy . . . called the Government's attention to its duties, begged it not to neglect the needs of the masses of the people, so that it might rid itself of the destructive force of a United Front of the Communists and the Agrarians . . . Various inquiries conducted by the competent authorities go to show that the attempt on the cathedral . . . constitutes but a dreadful act in the appalling tragedy whose authors are affected by the destructive wave of criminality emanating from Moscow . . .

The moral responsibility for this abominable crime should be laid at the door of the Bolshevik doctrines and their adherents, who for years have

recommended, supported and approved of acts of terror with unscrupulous recklessness . . . The Social Democratic parliamentary fraction admonishes the Government not to lose its dignity and its presence of mind, and to take the measures necessary to prevent irresponsible elements rousing the passions of the masses and endangering the security guaranteed by law, and the individual liberty of the Bulgarians.

It was decided by the Executive meeting of the L.S.I. in Paris, on May 9-10, to convene a second conference of Balkan Socialist Parties,<sup>1</sup> and a Commission consisting of Messrs. Vandervelde, Tom Shaw, and Friedrich Adler was appointed to attend this conference. The conference met in Prague on June 12-14, and delegates from the Bulgarian, Greek and Yugo-Slavian Social Democratic Parties were present.

One of the Bulgarian delegates, M. Pastouhoff, had already publicly attacked the report, issued by Colonel Wedgwood and his colleagues. Thus, writing in the Bulgarian Socialist paper *Epoha* (May 12), he said:—

This report . . . essentially differs from the explanations which I gave to the English guests at the meeting I had with them on Bulgarian affairs . . . I observe with great grief that they are extremely erroneous in their appreciations as well as in facts of common knowledge.

He continues by stating that:—

The truth is that the banditism, murders, outrages, and generally the illegal Bolshevik manifestations, have not their main cause in the present Government's policy. Still less is their aim simply to overthrow the Tsankoff Government. . . . The Agrarian-Communist "United Front" is not on the defensive, but on the offensive. Not in self-defence and to answer force with force are the monstrous murders and outrages, unknown to the West European mind, planned. The conspiracy aims at destruction and anarchy. It is not a result of reaction, it nourishes reaction. Should the conspirators' nests and nuclei not be destroyed the Bulgarian danger is inevitable, civil war will be in full swing, democracy will perish, etc.

M. Pastouhoff even goes so far as to condone the death sentence passed on the three men accused of direct complicity in the cathedral explosion, and executed by public hanging—an atrocious judicial murder which horrified even the bourgeois Press in this country. Thus, in an interview in the *Epoha* (May 13), he stated that:—

The sentence for the cathedral outrage, though passed by a military court, not only satisfies indignant public opinion, but is also in accord with the public conscience of equity. In its general terms such a sentence could have been equally passed by a purely civil court. I hope it will be understood abroad that the judicial authorities in Bulgaria are a solid guarantee for an impartial administration of justice.

He had previously remarked (*Epoha*, May 12) that:—

The Sofia Cathedral outrage, a satanic plan, is a deed of Bolshevik madness, as has been admitted by one of the principal Communist organisers, Marko Friedmann.

Against this may be set this quotation:—

The public execution of Marko Friedmann, Colonel Koeff, and the sacristan Zadgorsky is a particularly horrible deed. The sacristan alone was

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<sup>1</sup> The first conference of Balkan Socialist Parties was reported in THE LABOUR MONTHLY, May, 1924, Vol. 6, No. 5, pp. 310-311.

proved to have been an accomplice in the outrage. . . . Koeff maintained his own innocence to the last, and his fate remains deeply tragic. Friedmann was an active Communist, and it is for this that he was hanged, for this and nothing else. He condemned the cathedral outrage, and the court-martial was not able to prove his complicity in it. He faced the trial and died with great courage, a martyr to the Communist cause.—*Manchester Guardian*, June 2, 1925.

The Commission of the L.S.I., which received and discussed reports from extraneous bodies such as the International Red Aid and Bulgarian agrarian groups, reported that:—

The Commission is not in a position to deal in detail with the accusations made against the extremist parties and the Tsankoff Government. There is, however, no doubt at all that Bulgaria is now the victim of a twofold plague. On one side there are the acts of the violent Communist and Agrarian elements which are responsible for repeated murder and robbery, on the other side there is the fact that the Government of Tsankoff has established the White Terror. In the present conditions of affairs, in which different witnesses are very contradictory, it does not seem to be possible to fix individual responsibilities with certainty.

We must content ourselves by stating the growth of the evil and the energetic will of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party to continue the combat against both the criminal parties of violence between which they are placed.

It further claimed that the Bulgarian Social Democrats had acted in the "spirit" of the declarations they made at the conference in 1924, for General and Local Elections, amnesty, liberty of Press and meetings, etc. Still, "there remains much to be done," and a programme amplifying the points of the 1924 declarations was drawn up. One point was "immediate cessation of executions *without trial*." The realisation of this programme depended on the restoration of "normal conditions" :—

The Bulgarian Socialists believe that the power to realise this normal condition of affairs can only be found in the grouping of all the forces which are really democratic.

For this task the Commission bespeaks the support of other Socialist parties, and urges that attention should be paid to the Bulgarian problem :—

It is not enough, however, merely to draw attention to misdeeds.

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Anglo-Russian Report: a Criticism of the Report of the British Trades Union Delegation to Russia from the point of view of International Socialism.* By Friedrich Adler. (P. S. King & Son. Paper, 1s.)
- The Triumph of Christian Civilisation.* By R. F. Pettigrew.
- Social Insurance and the Worker.* By Joseph L. Cohen. (I.L.P. Information Committee. 2d.)
- Now! A Short Study of the Present Industrial Situation and a few Suggestions to the Trade Union World.* (Blackfriars Press. No price.)
- American Labour Press Directory.* (Rand School of Social Science, New York. Cloth, \$1.)
- Value, Price and Profit: Addressed to Working Men.* By Karl Marx. (George Allen & Unwin. Paper, 1s.)
- The Psychology of the Servant Problem.* By Violet M. Firth. (C. W. Daniel, Cloth 3s. 6d.)
- The Errors of Trotskyism: a Symposium.* (Communist Party of Great Britain. Paper, 3s.)
- British Agriculture versus Foreign Tributes.* By Joseph Burgess. Incorporating, by kind permission of Robert Blatchford, selected chapters from "Merrie England." (Francis Johnson. Paper, 2s. 6d.)
- The Case Against Capital Punishment.* By N. D. Deuchar. (The Author, 122 Wilbury Road, Letchworth, 2d.)





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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month	- - -	Page 577
<i>THE LABOUR PARTY CHOICE</i>		
Problems of Trade Unionism	- - -	„ 586
<i>By WILLIAM DOBBIE</i>		
The Twenty-one Points of the Second International	- - - - -	„ 591
<i>By G. VALETZKI</i>		
The Scarborough Conference	- - -	„ 601
<i>By HARRY POLLITT</i>		
The Industrial Crisis and the Co-operators	-	„ 606
<i>By J. HARRISON</i>		
The Far Eastern Tangle	- - - - -	„ 617
<i>By R. PAGE ARNOT</i>		
Language and the Labour Movement	- -	„ 622
<i>By HUNTLY CARTER</i>		
In the Light of Marxism. II.	- - -	„ 628
<i>By STUDENT</i>		
The World of Labour	- - - - -	„ 633
Poland—France		

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*Liverpool and Scarborough—The Issue in Front—A Political Issue—  
The Labour Party's Rôle—The Real Division—Whose  
Programme? — Capitalism the Alternative — The  
Second International and the Labour Party—  
Breaking the Chains—The Labour  
Party and the Class Struggle.*

*Many of our good comrades who in the days gone by taught us to believe there was no remedy other than the abolition of capitalism seem afraid now that the system is collapsing, and appeal for a united effort to patch up the system with the aid of the present possessing class.—  
Chairman's Address, Scarborough Trades Union Congress,  
September 7, 1925.*

**T**HE Labour Party Conference is face to face with the issue of the Class Struggle. The Class Struggle is confronting the British working class to-day in a form which no leader can escape. All the forces in the situation are driving to sharper and sharper conflicts of the organised strength of Capital and the workers in the near future. This is admitted and recognised on every side, alike by the capitalists and by the working-class representatives, both Right wing and Left wing. The Government is visibly making preparations. The capitalist class is openly staking everything on a future decisive struggle. All their expressions and actions indicate that they intend a struggle which will stick at nothing. The workers on their side are beginning to awaken to the inevitable issues in front. How fast events are moving is indicated by some of the resolutions passed at the Scarborough Trades Union Congress. That the Trades Union Congress should, in the face of Right wing opposition, pass resolutions in favour of the establishment of factory committees and for the dissolution of the capitalist empire, indicates a tremendous advance in working-class feeling and outlook. This advance, responding to the urgent and rapidly developing situation, demands to be expressed and organised for the coming crisis. The Scarborough Congress did approach some of the issues, though putting off the most urgent decisions with dangerous delay. But

the Labour Party Conference, as the political body of the workers, has the supreme duty of giving political expression to the whole situation and the approaching struggle. Severe as was the test for the Trades Union Congress, it is still more severe for the Labour Party Conference.

IT is still sometimes spoken as if the question in front were simply a question of next May, when an exceptionally severe industrial struggle might be expected, of concern to the Trade Unions. This is certainly incorrect. A glance at the language of the Government representatives would show that the issues in front are very much more serious. The following is the statement of the Government view, according to *The Times* political correspondent :—

The majority of the Cabinet agreed . . . that if it is inevitable (which they doubt) that sooner or later the forces of law and order must come into conflict with the executives of the Trade Unions, such a contest would inevitably be bitter and prolonged. If such an issue should ever have to be brought to a head, public opinion would have to be educated into a state of preparedness to accept the consequences.—  
*The Times*, August 6, 1925.

The following is the statement of the Prime Minister :—

We were confronted by a great alliance of Trade Unions, who had the power and the will to inflict enormous and irreparable damage on their country. . . . That is a grave menace. . . . It is a very sad climax to the evolution of popular government that there should be men who have a great deal to gain, whatever they think, by progressive democracy, if they allow themselves to take a course right against everything for which democracy stands. I do not know if the policy which I describe is endorsed in all its implications by the whole of the Labour Party; but if that be so I do not see how constitutional government can live. . . . If the time should come when the community has to protect itself, with the full strength of the government behind it, the community will do so, and the response of the community will astonish the forces of anarchy throughout the world.—  
House of Commons, August 6, 1925 : *The Times* report, August 7, 1925.

The following is the statement of the Home Secretary :—

He said to them, coming straight from the Cabinet Councils, the thing was not finished. The danger was not over. Sooner or later this

question had got to be fought out by the people of the land. Was England to be governed by Parliament and by the Cabinet or by a handful of Trade Union leaders? If a Soviet were established here . . . a grave position would arise. On the other hand, if people were prepared to support the Government . . . then he said quite frankly, quite seriously, there would be for a time grave trouble in the land, but if the heart of the people were sound, they could stand it.—Speech at Northampton: *The Times*, August 3, 1925.

The following is the statement of Mr. Churchill:—

In the event of a struggle, whatever its character might be, however ugly the episodes which marked it, he had no doubt that the national State would emerge victorious in spite of all the rough and awkward corners that it might have to turn. But if they were going to embark on a struggle of this kind, let them be quite sure that decisive public opinion was behind them. As the struggle widened and it became, as it must, a test whether the country was to be ruled by Parliament or by some sort of other organisation not responsible by our elective processes to the country as a whole—as that emerged, more and more and with every increase in the gravity of the issue, new resources of strength would have come to the State, and all sorts of action, which we now consider quite impossible, would, just as in the time of the war, have been taken with general assent as a matter of course.—House of Commons, August 6, 1925: *The Times* report, August 7, 1925.

These are all statements of responsible Government spokesmen (to leave out of account the open propaganda of the inflammatory press). Their meaning is perfectly clear and definite. They mean that the repetition of such a stand as the Trade Unions made last July, with the approval of the entire united working-class movement, will be regarded as war on the community and will be met by measures “just as in time of war.” No working-class representative worth his salt can shirk this issue.

**I**T is not a question simply of next May. It is not a question simply of maintaining wage standards. When an economic issue reaches the scale of involving the whole class forces on either side, it is evident to all that it has become a political issue. It is equally evident that the sheer enlargement and intensification of current industrial struggles, rendered inevitable by the worsening economic situation, inevitably leads to this issue, whatever the

tactics or negotiations of one or another particular crisis. The action of the Government marks the political character of the issue. The mineowners are in the background ; the direct protagonist is the Government, representing the whole capitalist class ; just as the direct protagonist on the other side is the General Council, representing the whole working class. It is further clear that the question of wages can no longer be settled along the old lines of bargaining, but that in the present decline of capitalist industry in Britain the ownership of industry, and therefore class power, is inevitably involved. The question in front, therefore, is not simply a question of maintaining wage standards next spring. It is in the fullest sense a political issue—the struggle of classes for power. This issue, it is becoming clear to all, will have to be faced : and it is raising problems, and revealing needs, for which the working class in this country has not hitherto been prepared.

**I**F the Labour Party is a workers' party, it must lead. There is no longer any possibility of evading the immediate struggle of the workers on the plea that it is not of direct concern to the Labour Party as a political party. On the contrary the immediate struggle of the workers is to-day the centre of the political situation. The Labour Party is, therefore, bound to take its position and to assume the responsibilities of that position. How shall the workers meet the plans which the capitalists are preparing? Responsible leaders of the Labour Party have spoken of those plans. The Labour Party has not yet shown how to meet them or given any lead to the workers. To do this demands immediate leadership, and not simple references to possible Labour Governments or elections five years off. This is the real task confronting the Labour Party Conference. If the existing Labour Party leadership deny this task, and regard themselves, not as leaders of the workers' struggle, but as lookers on or impartial mediators, they cut themselves off from the working class. By so doing they seek to make the Labour Party, not the party of the workers, but a party like the capitalist parties—a part of the apparatus of Capitalism. If this conception is held, the sooner it is clearly brought out, the better, in order that this issue may be fought out. It is the future of the Labour Party that is being brought to the test.

**T**HIS, and nothing else, is the reality of the so-called divergence between the Trade Unions and the Labour Party. The reality is nothing other than the issue of the Class Struggle. Between the mass of the Trade Unions and the mass of the Labour Party there can be no divergence, because the Trade Unions are the Labour Party. But between a leadership that accepts the class struggle, and a leadership that repudiates the class struggle, there is and inevitably must be difference on every working-class issue, and therefore every political issue, that arises. It is a political difference ; it has nothing to do with friction between rival wings of organisations. This was shown over the Dawes Plan, over the China issue and over the question of the Empire. There are open supporters of the class struggle in the ranks of the Parliamentary Labour Party. There are open enemies of the class struggle among the Trade Union leaders. To talk of a division between " Industrials " and " Politicals " is to fog the issue. To plead for co-operation between " Industrials " and " Politicals " is deliberately to shirk the real issue. Of course, there must be co-operation of the whole united movement. But that co-operation can only be on the basis of the class struggle. The attempt to introduce any other basis splits the movement. There are to-day two leaderships in the working-class movement, one that accepts the class struggle, and one that, both openly and covertly, opposes the class struggle. So long as this is so, the movement cannot be united ; it is paralysed and divided in the face of struggle. This division must be overcome ; the issue of the class struggle must be settled, both in the Labour Party and in the Trade Unions. If this is done, there will be no more question of so-called divergence of the Trade Unions and the Labour Party.

**I**T is at this point that the existing Labour Party Executive has brought out its new " co-ordinated policy of National Reconstruction and Reform." This is a very definite tactical move on the part of the opponents of the class struggle, who are at the moment dominant on the Labour Party Executive ; and it raises the whole issue in the most challenging and provocative way. The old programme of 1918, which did at any rate contain the germ of Socialism, is thrown overboard in practice (that is to say,

it is henceforward accepted only "in principle"—so Henderson's explanation to the *New Leader*), and is replaced by a new programme built on the existing order—*i.e.*, omitting socialisation, supporting the Empire, &c. Why this move, at the very moment when the class struggle is reaching its most intense point, and the fundamental issues of Socialism are beginning to be raised? It certainly does not reflect any movement of working-class feeling and opinion; on the contrary the new programme came like a bolt from the blue, mysteriously and inexplicably introduced from above to the movement; and the agenda, with the host of amendments from every side (as well as such significant signs as the hundred resolutions on the Communists) shows that the Executive is going in direct antagonism to the whole of the movement. It bears no relation to the great advance in working-class consciousness and confidence which has been reflected in "Red Friday" and the Scarborough Trades Union Congress. On the contrary it goes in direct opposition and challenge to the whole current movement of the working class. What then does it mean? Why has it arisen? It is a challenge that the whole working-class movement will need to take up.

**T**HE significance of the new Executive programme is that it is a conscious answer of the Right wing, a deliberate alternative to the whole present trend of the working-class movement. The new programme is not the expression of the movement, but of the small group which at present dominates the Labour Party Executive and is hostile to the class struggle. This group, because it is hostile to the class struggle, is inevitably hostile to every expression of the working-class movement save as an electoral machine, and is in consequence continually brought into opposition to the movement. This is shown in every strike; it was shown over the Dawes Report, which was opposed by every important Trade Union; it has been shown again in the question of the exclusion of the Communists, where all the Executive's attempts to put it into operation have been defeated by the movement. The new programme is the latest expression of this issue. The group in question refuses to build upon the working class. But there is in practice only one alternative upon which to build, and that is Capitalism.



The new programme is the expression of this. Hence the omission of socialisation, the acceptance of the Empire, and the rest. The new programme is the attempt to build a programme on the basis of Capitalism (while not, of course, forgetting the ultimate ideal of Socialism).

**B**UT the action of this group is only part of a larger action—the whole action of the Second International in the present situation. The group in question on the Labour Party Executive is very closely allied with the Second International. MacDonald, Henderson, Thomas, and their ex-Liberal associates, are nearer in reality to Vandervelde, Blum, Renaudel, Oudegeest, Scheidemann, and the rest than to the British working-class movement. This international group of leaders plays a very significant rôle in the post-war world as agents of their respective governments in relation to the Versailles Treaty, Reparations, &c., as well as in opposition to the militant working-class movement. They are actively opposed to any form of united working-class struggle, and responsible for the policy of splits on the Continent (unsuccessfully attempted by their representatives here); and they are fanatical enemies of Soviet Russia. We have already come across the activities of this group in relation to International Trade Union Unity; and more recently we have some across another specimen of it in relation to Soviet Russia at the Marseilles Congress, where they have actually been discussing the possibility of successful armed intervention or other form of pressure from the “civilised” world upon the Soviet Government. The policy of the Second International is in fact the policy of the Reconstruction of Capitalism. This follows inevitably from their turning back on the class struggle, from their acceptance of the task of maintaining the existing social system in order to achieve a gradual transformation. They do not see that Capitalism is in fact in the epoch of collapse; economically breaking down; on the verge of renewed wars; the workers rising against it; colonies in revolt. Consequently, when they endeavour to maintain “order” and a “flourishing economic system” to inherit by gradual transformation, they are compelled in practice to give all their endeavours to rebuilding the shaken

capitalist order, striving to patch up the quarrels of the imperialist powers, re-establish (capitalist) production, persuade the workers to work quietly, suppress the risings of the workers, and shoot down the colonial rebels with bombs and machine guns. It is in this way that "Peaceful" "Democratic" Socialism inevitably becomes in practice the Reconstruction of Capitalism and the support of Imperialism. The new programme submitted to the Labour Party is simply a further expression of this policy. It is the culmination of the attempt to fasten the policy of the Second International, as revealed on the Continent, upon the Labour Party, and to turn the Labour Party into a Social Democratic Party of the Continental type. The logical counterpart of this policy means to turn away increasingly from the Trade Unions, and to endeavour to build upon individual membership.

**N**OW the British working-class movement is just shaking itself free from this type of policy and leadership, and from the quagmire into which it has brought the working class of Western and Central Europe. The British working class is leading the way forward along the path of Unity, Solidarity, and the Class Struggle in the face of a venomous campaign of hatred and calumny from the leaders of the Second International. And it is at this point that the representatives of the Second International leadership bring forward a policy of precisely this type for the adoption of the Labour Party—a policy of the reconstruction of capitalism, the abandonment of all immediate claims of socialisation, the repudiation of the class struggle, and the acceptance of all the shackles of the League of Nations, Protocol, Dawes Report, Empire, &c. At the moment when the workers are awakening to the need of fundamental attacks upon Capitalism, when the whole struggle is driving forward, this attempt is introduced to make the Labour Party safe for Capitalism and paralyse the advance of the workers. The national and international meaning of these tactics is too plain to be misunderstood. The advance of the working class is not so easily to be put off. This capitalist programme needs to be squarely challenged and met with an emphatic reassertion of working-class interests within the Labour Party.

**A** PLAIN duty awaits the delegates to the Labour Party Conference ; to win back the Labour Party for the working class and for the working-class struggle. The task which has been begun in the Trade Unions needs to be carried through in the Labour Party, if the movement is to be prepared and united for the struggles in front. This demands a greater effort than in the Trade Unions, and the defeating of more subtle and dangerous enemies ; but the composition of the two bodies is so similar that it can and must be done. For this reason the assumption of full political responsibility by the Trade Union representatives in the Labour Party Conference and on the Labour Party Executive is of urgent importance. It is useless to attack the Empire in one conference and acclaim it in another. It is incongruous to proclaim national and international unity on one side, and at the same time to maintain the exclusion of a working-class party from the common front. The British working-class movement, which is giving a lead to the international movement in other respects, can also give it in respect of Unity and the overcoming of splits—an example which would have a profound effect. The Labour Party must achieve a leadership which is capable of interpreting and expressing the feelings of the masses, that is to say, which recognises the class struggle and builds its whole agitation and policy upon its needs. In this way, and in this way alone, can the existing divisions be overcome, and the whole movement go forward as a united force.

R. P. D.

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*An article on "Workshop Committees" will appear next month:*

# PROBLEMS OF TRADE UNIONISM

By W. DOBBIE

**T**HE Editor of *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* has asked me to give my views on the question of Unity in the Trade Union Movement, and for my opinions as to the best policy to adopt with a view to obtaining a real combination of Trade Union forces.

I suppose it is quite unnecessary for me to say that, in my opinion, the present state of chaos in the organisation of the workers is absurd, and that the spectacle of competing Unions quarrelling for the right to organise and negotiate for different classes of men and women is an unedifying one and is making our movement ridiculous in the eyes of the employers. That opinion is held by the rank and file all over the country and it is well known that all the leading figures in the movement pay lip service to the idea of greater unity. At meetings up and down the country great masses of workers enthusiastically welcome speeches condemning the lack of Unity prevailing and calling for greater cohesion between the sections. "Workers of the World, Unite" has been the slogan of the working classes ever since the phrase was coined, but to-day—whilst we have millions of workers in Trade Unions—we are still disorganised, an unwieldy army of discordant units.

This being obviously so, it is necessary to give some consideration to the underlying causes which are operating to prevent unity even in industries where our daily experience in fighting the employers is providing glaring examples of our failure to function on behalf of our members. Readers of *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* will not need to be reminded that since 1921 the workers have been "on the run." They will not need to be reminded of the hundred and one cases where the employers have played off one Union against another and one leader against the other to break the solidarity of the workers and to undermine the fighting spirit of men driven to desperation. They will know that the tactics employed are the same on each occasion—an offer of a specious

concession to a section at a critical moment, an interview with a sectional leader in order to breed suspicion when unanimity is most essential, the poisonous paragraphs in the Press hinting at dissensions in the ranks of the workers and their officials, and the news from "Our Labour Correspondent" so deadly and effective in its apparent friendliness. These tactics defeat each of the leaders in their turn, and each section of the workers suffers disaster from the same causes with monotonous regularity. The lesson is not learned and our pathetic faith in the old methods would be humorous if it did not involve such dire consequences.

To students of this problem it has become an axiom that the rank and file ultimately determine the policy of an organisation. However powerful a leader may be in the counsels of his Union—or however eloquent and persuasive he may be—it is the ordinary worker "on the job" who decides the road to be followed. To blame or abuse leaders is attacking the problem at the wrong end, and, as a matter of fact, is defeating its own object, having the effect of rallying the workers around a respected leader and strengthening his influence with his section. In saying that, however, I am not under-estimating the power of the leaders who use their influence to perpetuate the present unsatisfactory position. But the real causes go deeper than that, and it seems to me to be very unwise to ignore, or to fail to appreciate and give full credit for, the motives which sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously actuate sectional bodies, consisting of masses of men, to ardently cling to, and often to bitterly fight for, their old established organisation.

One factor I find most difficult to overcome, and one that appears to be more generally prevalent than is appreciated, is the belief in the superiority and the importance of particular grades and crafts over their fellow workers in an industry. How that belief can still be held by any body of workers in view of the developments in industry since the war and the vicious reductions that have been imposed on "skilled" and "unskilled" workers alike, I am at a loss to understand. The development of Capitalism will, of course, continue to destroy that belief and the straits into which even the "Aristocracy of the Workers" will be put in a dying capitalism will bring home to all grades their right to no title but that of Wage Slave. In the meantime the combating of this relic

of Victorian days should not be overlooked in our propaganda for Unity.

Another obstacle is the reverential respect some workers have for their Society, its history and traditions and its pioneers. The atmosphere surrounding their relationship with their Union is an almost "religious" one, and the ideas of the past generation, their ritual and their outlook, are being perpetuated without regard to the changed conditions of a continually evolving world. I yield second place to no one in my admiration for the pioneers of the Trade Union movement. I appreciate to the full the tremendous battle they fought to lay the foundations of our present organisations. But the rebel and the fighter to-day is the prototype of those pioneers and they would be the first to recognise the need for changing tactics in a changing situation. They did recognise the need for changes and the best service their followers can render to their memory is to take the same stand necessitated by the changed situation.

Another body of opinion the propagandist for Industrial Unionism has to meet is that which advocates a Federation of existing Unions, by which it is contended that the advantages of Unity in the movement will be obtained scientifically, without the disadvantages which result from the centralisation of authority and the sacrifice of the autonomy of clearly defined grades. Taking things as we find them to-day, there is a certain amount of plausibility in the arguments put forward, but the experience we have had of Federations is not encouraging. The disadvantages of centralised authority are obvious when illustrated by comparisons with bureaucratic bodies such as Capitalist Government Departments, but a scientifically constructed democratic Union would be controlled from the base. Every safeguard would be provided for the legitimate aspirations for autonomy of groups, and the unifying influence engineered by belonging to one body can be placed against the inevitable tendency there would be to sectional thought and action even inside a Federation.

In view of the foregoing, therefore, my reply to the question asked by the Editor is that I am of the opinion that propaganda must be accentuated amongst the rank and file before any further concrete step can be successfully taken to weld the number of

sectional unions into scientific Industrial Unions. My experience in a large railway centre proves that the old craft and sectional ideas are still very strongly held not only amongst the inert mass, but amongst the most active spirits and best fighters in the local movements. I find that members of craft Unions are prepared to strike and are prepared to sacrifice their livelihood to force individuals who believe in Industrial Unionism to join their craft Unions. A competitive and an embittered spirit exists which militates against the idea of Unity, and this, if allowed to continue, has all the elements which tend to a fratricidal struggle.

In these circumstances, it seems to me that to hammer out details of an ideal constitution for the ideal Industrial Unions is rather premature. The interests of the working classes are one. The weaknesses inherent in the present position are fatal. The results are disastrous to each and every worker and the moral to be drawn is obvious. Let us then renew our efforts to persuade every worker that his interests are the interests of the "other fellow" and that his identity of interest should be reflected in his organisation. Whilst it is obvious that the views we have to change are held because the majority of workers do not understand the historic function of the working-class movement, yet at the same time, from a tactical standpoint, their ostensible reasons must be concentrated upon.

I am also asked for my view of the proposed Industrial Alliance. This, of course, has been generated by the Mining Crisis, and as the support it is receiving is evidence of the growing realisation of the dependence of one Union upon another, and the necessity for combined action to defeat the machinations of the employers, it is all to the good. The constitution appears to have been drafted with the idea of avoiding the tragedy of Black Friday and, of course, the idea of scientific combination has not been considered. If a combination based on the idea of big battalions to assist in a wage crisis is necessary, why not bring in all the Unions, so that they could be used at will to defeat the moves of the employers? And if that is wise, why not alter the constitution of the Trades Union Congress and give the General Council the powers proposed to be given to the Executive Committee of the Alliance? It is obvious that many more Unions are anxious to join the Alliance, and

probably the time is ripe for developing the Trades Union Congress along these lines, but it must be remembered that there is a vast difference between developing an alliance for the purpose of defending the workers' position under Capitalism and bringing help to a sorely tried section, and the ideal of Industrial Unionism. Working together and fighting together, however, is bound to generate an atmosphere of solidarity and, therefore, the proposed alliance and the success of the stand taken by the Transport Unions on behalf of the Miners are episodes which illustrate the way in which the employers are forcing our class together and making them fight together.

We are out to take industry from Capitalism. Our ideal is the World for the Workers. In this country we are, after all, only a sector in the great battle front which stretches all over the world and it is our duty to consolidate our army and to make it efficient for the purpose we have in view. The end is certain and the conditions we see around us—the poverty of the common people and the ever-recurring crises adding to the millions of unemployed—are evidence that the present system based on the exploitation of the workers can no longer function and provide even the minimum standard of existence. Forces are operating to bring about conditions which will drive home to every worker the necessity for the utmost solidarity, and if we can create the will to Unity, the form of organisation will follow. Recent events emphasise the urgent need for the Trade Union movement to concentrate on the problem, so that not only shall we not be unprepared but that our machinery shall be capable of dealing with any eventuality.



# THE TWENTY-ONE POINTS of the SECOND INTERNATIONAL

By G. VALETZKI

*In the following article, which is conceived upon the basis of the statutes, the resolutions and the discussions at the Foundation Congress of the Labour and Socialist International in Hamburg, as well as on the basis of the resolutions and discussions which have taken place in the course of the years 1923 to 1925, I desire to give a complete picture of that mental and political capital which the leaders of the Second International are exhibiting at the Marseilles Congress.—G. V.*

(1) In the Labour and Socialist International (L.S.I.) Socialist Labour Parties are united, which see the aim of the emancipation of the working class in the substitution of the capitalist system of production by the socialist system of production. In view, however, of the fact that the opinions of the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. regarding what is the capitalist and what is the socialist system of production are very sharply divergent, and also in view of the fact that every attempt to alter the existing system of production would cause fresh disturbances of production, which has already without this been brought into disorder by the consequences of the war and by the revolutionary excesses, it is the highest duty of all Socialist parties to support in every possible manner, every effort in the interest of the reconstruction of capitalist production. In this the Socialist parties must never forget for a minute that, in promoting the reconstruction of capitalism, they have only in view the interests of the working class, of the widows and orphans, and that the approaching socialist order must inherit from its predecessor not blood-soaked ruins, but flourishing economic life.

(2) The class war serves as a means for the emancipation of the working class. The class war is a sociological theory, a scientific hypothesis, which seeks to explain the past and the present by the conflict between the constituent parts of human society. In the civilised countries the class struggle assumes the form of periodically occurring parliamentary elections.

(3) The employment of force in the social and political struggle is emphatically condemned. Force is still employed now and again by the bourgeoisie, who, unfortunately, are too often moved to do so by excesses on the part of irresponsible elements. In acting in this manner the bourgeoisie only compromises itself in the eyes of the whole civilised world. The working class, as the bearer of the great ideals of the future, must not soil its hands by acts of violence. Its best weapon in the struggle against the acts of violence of its bourgeois opponents is moral indignation. (In exceptional cases the social democracy can be compelled to appeal to force in order to avert a greater evil, as, for example, for the purpose of suppressing mutinies of criminal Left elements, who could provoke the bourgeoisie to cruel reprisals.)

(4) Democracy is the best form of State. Universal suffrage, with the secret ballot, and the various election campaigns—in which every party endeavours to convince, with the help of arguments and reasons, the non-party masses of electors of the correctness of its election programme—leads to the election of a representative body of the people which faithfully reflects the thoughts, feelings and the will of the electors. The education of every inhabitant of every country to such a democracy is the task of the parties affiliated to the L.S.I.

(5) A difficult problem is the question of the participation of Socialists in coalition governments. This question is difficult because, on the one hand, old prejudices against such participation still make themselves felt, while on the other hand the experiences of the last few years have, apparently, not shown those brilliant results which might have been expected from the self-sacrificing activity of Socialist ministers.

The L.S.I. therefore declares the problem of ministerialism to be an open problem.

In accordance therewith the L.S.I., as the central organisation, would, in the event of the social democracy in this or that country being offered the possibility of participating in a coalition government, adopt a neutral attitude to the matter, and tolerate it. It only demands that nobody should act in the capacity of a minister and at the same time in the capacity of a member of the Executive of the L.S.I., and that a Party which allies itself with a bourgeois

Government by sending a portion of its leaders into the Government, should remain connected with the Executive of the L.S.I. by sending other leaders into the Executive. It must be declared with all emphasis, however, that this decision can in no way be regarded as an anticipation of the solution of the coalition problem, but only constitutes a practical measure, by means of which the Executive Committee defines the limits of the problem of ministerialism.

(6) Another complicated and difficult problem is the problem of the defence of native country. This is likewise declared to be an open problem for the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. The Social-Democratic parties are called upon to study carefully the rich and many-sided experiences of the last world war, so that it will be possible, in the future, to discuss these experiences at one of the international congresses. Should, in the meantime, one or the other parties be faced with the dilemma whether it should or should not defend its fatherland, then it will, on its own responsibility and danger, have to arrive at a decision without involving the whole International in the affair, which in this manner enriches itself by a new experience regarding the solution of this delicate question.

(7) The decisions of the L.S.I. in international questions are binding upon all affiliated parties. This means a voluntary limitation of the independence of the individual parties. Should it transpire, however, that one or the other of the international questions which stand upon the agenda is so complicated and full of contradictions, that the L.S.I. has little prospect of carrying through an unambiguous decision by all the interested parties, then it is expedient to postpone the drawing up of decisions, for the purpose of an extended study of the material, or to formulate the decision in such a cautious and elastic manner that one cannot violate it, even with the best will in the world. In extreme cases, those parties which are compelled by circumstances to actions which are diametrically opposed to the decisions already arrived at by the L.S.I. can be allowed to withdraw temporarily from the L.S.I. in order not to place the L.S.I. in an embarrassing situation.

(8) The L.S.I. is an instrument not only for the tasks of peace, but in a like measure is also an instrument during every war. In view of the fact, however, that in every war at least two

native countries are engaged in conflict with one another, and that the problem of the defence of native country could not yet be solved, the final solution of the question as to how the L.S.I. shall be employed as an instrument in war time, will only relate to wars which arise after the solution of this problem.

(9) Wars in general are to be avoided. War means the employment of force which, both in home as well as in foreign policy, cannot result in any good, and is therefore to be condemned. The L.S.I. must unceasingly remind the whole of humanity, but in particular the interested governments and the financial groups standing behind them, that it is much more practical by means of conferences to arrive at an understanding regarding every kind of disputed question, than to conduct wars. It is the task of the L.S.I., and the parties affiliated to it, to act as disinterested and self-sacrificing mediators between the hostile parties, to prepare every sort of agreement between them, even if it involves temporary damage to the interests of the working classes of both States or groups of States. There is nothing worse than war. The sacred hate against war is so strong in the L.S.I. that from time to time it assumes the form of plans for a general strike in the event of a declaration of war, whereby it must not be forgotten that such a strike, desirable as it may be, is impossible.

(10) There can be several parties in one State who are affiliated to the L.S.I. They can carry on the most bitter political struggle against each other, under the sole condition that they carry out the general political line of the L.S.I. Should it happen that one of these parties takes part in the government of its country, and passes penal laws against another party which is also affiliated to the L.S.I., then it is the duty of the Executive Committee of the L.S.I. to send a commission to this country in order to study all details of the problem on the spot, and so far as it is possible to endeavour to bring both parties to adopt a compromise resolution.

(11) For the mutual information of the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. the Executive Committee will issue a weekly bulletin, containing material which in principle is intended for the organs of the affiliated parties. Nevertheless the various party editors are justified in publishing some facts in an abbreviated or altered form, or in suppressing them altogether, if an action or a publication

would be inconvenient from the point of view of the interests of the party or of the country concerned, or if the prestige and the inner unity of the L.S.I. as a central organisation would suffer by their publication.

(12) Although the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. must, in the interest of their own country, attentively follow what is proceeding in other States of the world, they must devote special attention to that State known as the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The Social-Democratic parties, on the ground of the general principle of non-intervention in foreign affairs, repudiate every interference on the part of their Governments, particularly the very expensive and futile armed intervention, in the inner affairs of this State. On the contrary, they will demand the recognition by their Governments of the Soviet Union, not only *de facto* but also *de jure*, as this, in general, is the best means of defending the interests of their fellow citizens who are residing in that State, and also opens up the way for a peaceful civilising influence upon this country. The peaceful policy of the Social-Democratic parties towards the Soviet Union is based upon the thesis that this State is governed by a handful of adventurers, who have robbed the workers and peasants of all human rights; that it is an Imperialist State which desires to conquer by force all the free nations of the world; that for this purpose it has set up the bloodthirsty Red Army, the chief hindrance to general disarmament; that this State obstinately refuses to enter into the League of Nations, which, although in an imperfect form, embodies the principle of the equality and fraternity of the peoples; that, finally, it regards it as its highest aim to weaken the Labour Movement in all countries of the world in order to further the reconstruction and the strengthening of capitalism. In view of this it is the sacred duty of the L.S.I., and all parties affiliated to it, to support morally and financially those Russian Parties which are striving with all means to overthrow the Government of that country and after its overthrow to set up the Empire of sound, flourishing, and, for the time being, still capitalist democracy. The question whether armed revolt is the most expedient means for achieving this aim remains an open one, although, while at the same time maintaining the deepest repugnance towards the employment of force in general, it would

be absurd to reject the armed revolt in principle, in so far as it should prove unavoidable. The question of the expediency of the defeat of the Soviet Power in a foreign war as a means for the overthrow of this Power also remains open. The choice between this or that form of indirect furtherance of a change of regime in the Soviet Union (while at the same time fully maintaining the principle of non-intervention) will be rendered by each of the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. dependent upon which policy best corresponds to the interests of its own native country at the given moment.

(13) There is another country to which the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. must give special attention, *i.e.*, to Georgia. This country, which in an embittered struggle against all the Imperialist Powers of the world, had gained its complete independence, and had defended this independence under the protection of the most democratic and noble Great Britain, was conquered by force by the northern barbarians and forced to bow beneath a yoke more horrible than any known in history. The liberation of this country from the Bolshevik yoke constitutes one of the chief aims of the L.S.I. Every true social-democrat has two native countries: his own and Georgia.

(14) The Communists must be combated with all available means. The L.S.I. will only be capable of coping with those historical tasks, for the fulfilment of which it has been established, to the extent to which it succeeds in promoting the destruction of Communism. It is necessary to abandon the illusion that Communism can be overcome by mental means, as it is not in the least rooted in the masses, but only constitutes a product of the activity of millions of agents, who are well paid by a foreign Great Power. The Communists are endeavouring to set up a cruel dictatorship in the place of the wonderful achievements of democracy, in the place of the empire of liberty, fraternity and equality. Communism scorns the right of self-determination of the proletariat, it treads underfoot the will of the working masses, in order to bend them beneath the yoke of a handful of leaders who are greedy for power.

(15) The united front with the Communists must not be permitted in any circumstances. The parties affiliated to the L.S.I. are allowed to form a united front with all bourgeois parties

of their country in order to preserve the interests of the nation as a whole, particularly against the foreign enemy, or with some of the bourgeois parties, in order to defend democracy or the republic. The common front of all classes of the nation is also necessary in the struggle for increasing the economic power of the country by means of increased output on the part of Labour, &c. The united front with the Communists is inadmissible firstly because this presupposes participation either in an inopportune struggle, or in an opportune struggle, but conducted with dangerous and undesirable means, secondly, because the alliance of social-democratic workers with Communists involves great danger of infection, in the same way as does all illicit sexual intercourse; thirdly, because the Communists are professional splitters of the working class and enemies of the solidarity of Labour. The tactics of the united front on the part of the Communists is, according to their own declarations, only a manœuvre for the purpose of exposing and annihilating the Social-Democratic leaders. The leaders of the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. must neither be exposed nor annihilated.

(16) The L.S.I. perceives in the unity of the Trade Union Movement represented in the I.F.T.U. (Amsterdam) the necessary condition for the successful carrying out of the class struggle. In order to preserve this unity, it is necessary, systematically, to expel all those elements from the trade unions whom the leaders of the Trade Union Movement regard as dangerous elements which threaten unity. The splitting of the trade unions is a more useful means of achieving unity than unity with the doubtful advocates of unity. In particular, the idea of an amalgamation of the I.F.T.U. with the R.I.L.U.—the greatest danger which ever threatened the working class of all countries—must be repudiated with all energy for the reasons quoted in Point 15 (on the united front) and in Point 12 (on the Soviet Union).

(17) The Versailles Treaty must be improved, extended, and developed. Like everything fashioned by human hands, the Treaty of Versailles has its light and dark sides. It is the task of the L.S.I. to strengthen the light sides and to weaken the dark sides, but in no circumstances must the Treaty itself be abolished, as it is far easier to destroy than to create. The best extension of the Versailles

Treaty would be a "protocol," which recognises all the national frontiers laid down by this Treaty, and which would morally and legally bind all the States to submit to courts of arbitration and to disarm. In view of the fact, however, that some States are not inclined to do this, and already reject the Geneva Protocol, a number of guarantee treaties must be concluded, each of which must, where possible, be based upon the principle of justice, and shall under no circumstances threaten peace. The greatest danger to peace would arise when any Power (for example, the Soviet Union) should endeavour to persuade the Powers bound by the Guarantee Pact on the basis of the Versailles Treaty, that this Guarantee Pact is directed against it: they would finally be able to believe this.

The League of Nations is imperfect. It does not constitute the realisation of the old slogan, "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" but it is without doubt a serious step in this direction. The League of Nations, just as its foundation, the Versailles Treaty, must still be improved in the spirit of democracy and justice. Among others, those Powers who are still opposing it: disarmed Germany and the Soviet Union, which is doomed to decay, must be brought into it; should the last-named Power not be inclined to this, then it must itself bear the responsibility for the consequences. The L.S.I. regards itself as a social-democratic fraction within the League of Nations, in which it will work with the same means of persuasion with which the social-democratic fractions work in the parliaments and coalition governments to influence the State apparatus of their countries.

(18) The L.S.I. loudly declares before the whole world that the German people is bound to pay reparations, and that the Dawes Plan adopted in 1924, in spite of its shortcomings, which accompany every work which has not been fashioned by God, possesses great advantages. It is the task of the L.S.I. to reduce, where possible, the shortcomings and to strengthen the advantages.

(19) The colonial peoples are neither to be exploited nor suppressed by the metropolises. On the contrary, it is the duty of the civilised governments of the metropolises gradually to educate these people who stand upon a lower cultural level and in part are still perfectly savage peoples, so that in time they will



become ripe for self-government. The parties affiliated to the L.S.I. must, on their part, gradually educate their governments in this spirit. The attempts, forcibly to drive the representatives of civilisation and of culture out of the colonies and out of the Asiatic and semi-colonial countries by means of strike boycotts, armed conspiracies, revolts, &c., constitute a great misfortune for the international working class, who, while sincerely sympathising with the awakening of the savages, are fearful of the terrible consequences of fresh upheavals and wars. To incite the inexperienced colonial masses to such acts is a crime. The L.S.I., whose activity is based on the idea of international solidarity and which opposes every nationalism except that which defends itself, is pledged to combat with special energy the Asiatic and African nationalism of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples.

(20) The women's question is a difficult question. It is necessary to study this question honestly from all sides and to place this question upon the agenda of one of the next congresses, as about the half of the population of the earth consists of women. As a proof of the complexity of the women's question can be mentioned the necessity, with which some of the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. (as, for examples, the Belgian and French Parties) saw themselves confronted, of opposing the enfranchisement of women, but which, however, must in no way be regarded as a precedent which in any way runs counter to the 'unshakable principle of the equality of women.

(21) A general amnesty is declared. It is strictly forbidden to rake up details from the past of the parties at present affiliated to the L.S.I., and in particular of their various leaders. It is forbidden to make use of the words. "Scheidemann," "Noske" or "Vandervelde" as terms of abuse. It is forbidden to use expressions towards the Second International—which arose after the war, and which, in Hamburg, concluded a perfectly legal marriage with the Second and a-half International—such expressions as "a lady with a past," as happened at a Labour Conference in England, at the time of the World Congress in Hamburg. It is likewise strictly forbidden to remind people of the fact that only recently the leaders of the Second and a-half International, imitating the Communists, made use of the most abusive expressions regarding

the heroic leaders of the Second International. The past is passed. An amnesty is granted to the Barmat social-democrats in Germany; the Hungarian social-democrats, who indiscreetly signed a pact with Horthy, although such a pact should only be concluded by word of mouth; the Bulgarian social-democrats, who supported Zankov much too openly; the Polish social-democrats, who are far too clumsy in concealing their direct connections with the secret police, and all other social-democratic parties who have made difficulties for the L.S.I.

In order to assure the correct development of the new L.S.I., similar amnesty decrees will also be issued periodically in the future.

# THE SCARBOROUGH CONFERENCE

By HARRY POLLITT

**T**HERE can be no further doubt but that the Scarborough Congress has been the most important and momentous in the history of the British Trade Union Movement. For months prior to the Congress there had been a carefully prepared Press campaign which indicated how important to the capitalist class was this Congress likely to be. The essence of the capitalist comments prior to the Congress was that no doubt the "sane and moderate leaders" would again regain their control of Congress and prevent any further deviations to the Left such as had characterised the Movement during the last twelve months.

Not only have their hopes been dashed to the ground, but the whole proceedings at Scarborough have proved that there is now definitely in existence a growing revolutionary opinion which no intrigues or appeals to constitutional procedure could stifle.

The decisions reached at Scarborough must be judged in the light of the existing situation; a steady rise in unemployment and an acknowledgment on all sides that this is a period of truce, only the prelude to terrific conflicts ahead, with the Government making every preparation for the fight next May, when the findings of the Coal Commission will only be the screen used for an all-round attack upon the wages and conditions of the whole Movement.

In view of this situation, it is all the more regrettable that the Congress did not take a decision in favour of the affiliation of the Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, the local Trades Councils, and the giving of complete powers to the General Council. The discussions on these questions proved how strong the desire for craft and sectional autonomy still is; despite past experiences, no general agreement on the need for a single centralised leadership capable of mobilising all the forces of the Movement in a common struggle against the exploiters. Yet, underlying the discussion, it was quite clear that the sense of the Congress as a whole was favourable to the new Council exploring every avenue in order

that preparations for the coming fight could be made; and if the Left wing on the General Council had boldly come out and asked Congress for complete power, giving the urgent reasons for this step being taken, it would have been a complete counter-offensive to the Right wing, who sought to get a retreat on this question by taking refuge in constitutional procedure and sectional autonomy. The Left could have smashed at one blow this superficial view of the situation.

For the next day, by an overwhelming majority, Congress went on record in favour of a resolution dealing with Trade Union aims, the three fundamental points of which were:—

- (1) The necessity of the trade unions definitely organising in conjunction with the party of the workers for the overthrow of capitalism.
- (2) A declaration against co-partnership schemes and class-collaboration.
- (3) The setting up of Factory Committees as the best means of securing the unity of the workers in every struggle.

This fact alone demonstrates that the majority of the delegates fully realised the new tasks that they are confronted with.

The speeches of Comrades Brown, Tomski, and Bramley indicated the importance of Britain to the International Working-Class Movement, and showed that, outside Russia, the British Movement is the real International leader. This is a position of great responsibility, but it was clearly recognised when the Congress unanimously and with a mighty roar of approval endorsed all that the General Council had done during the last twelve months, both in regard to Soviet Russia, and in the fight for International Trade Union Unity. The final decision of Congress that the new General Council must go ahead in its task of building up an "all in" inclusive International, is a tremendous step forward.

It can only mean that the new Council will approach the whole question from the point of view of the unification of all the forces both inside Amsterdam, the R.I.L.U., and the trade union centres outside either International, under a single International leadership. This is definitely a challenge, not merely to the reactionaries of Amsterdam, but to the whole Second International, which has

been the bitterest opponent of the policy of our General Council, the most venomous critic of Trades Union Congress leaders in their unity campaign, the most treacherous and secret inspirer of intrigues against International Trade Union Unity and a rallying of all the working class. Objectively (and I dare say, in the case of many of its leading figures, *subjectively* as well) the Second International has been a great help to the capitalists and a bitter foe, for all its fine speeches, of the workers in their struggle. See the editorials in the *The Times*, &c., and the way they praise and rely upon "Labour and Socialist International."

The decision of the Congress on the Dawes Plan and Imperialism confront the Labour Party leaders with very pressing and grave problems. When the Congress decided to repudiate both the Dawes Plan and the whole basis of Imperialism and what it means to the subject nations, it did not do it because it desires to have separation from the Labour Party, or in order to pursue new policies as distinct from the Labour Party, but because of the disgust of the workers with the whole politics of MacDonaldisim, and the desire and determination to give an entirely new outlook to the whole of the foreign policy of the Labour Party.

The attempt to use these decisions as indicating a split between the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party is only a misrepresentation of the position, for the strength and basis of the Labour Party are the trade unions, but there is now a growing recognition in the unions that it is not enough to grumble and grouse at the policy pursued by Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Thomas and then leave them to carry on as usual. The experience of the Labour Government has made the unions realise that they must fight on these issues and then force the leaders to carry out the policy that has been decided upon by the whole Movement, and where this is not done, it simply means that such leaders must be swept aside.

The decisions registered at Scarborough in relation to China and the sending of delegations to India, Egypt, &c., mean the recognition of our responsibility to all colonial workers. The post-war period has demonstrated the complete breakdown of the monopoly of British capitalism, and with the intensification of Imperialist policy more and more are the workers of this country

finding that the slave conditions of the colonial workers are the chief weapons responsible for the worsening of conditions here at home. For this reason Congress has decided that an inquiry shall be made into the conditions of our colonial comrades. This, in itself, is a tremendous step forward, when one considers the past insularity and isolation of the British movement.

These decisions mean that the new General Council has now positive tasks to carry out in regard to colonial work. They must insist upon the complete freedom of the working class in every subject country for economic and political organisation; delegations of inquiry, and also organisers, must be sent out to the various countries to help in the task of building up an effective working-class movement, especially should the General Council call upon its affiliated organisations who, from time to time, have members going out to such countries as India, Egypt, China, and the Crown Colonies, to insist that such members do not go out to these countries carrying with them the same point of view as the representatives of the bourgeoisie, but that they should use their special position in the various factories and undertakings where they go to work, for the purposes of assisting and aiding their colonial comrades to build up fighting organisations.

The above indicate the positive results of the Scarborough Congress, but it, of course, had its weak side, and in this connection three chief weaknesses were as follows:—

- (1) The failure of Congress to give an organised lead in regard to fighting the Government on unemployment.
- (2) Its failure to deal with the seamen's strike, which is recognised on all hands as constituting a break in the united front of the unions against any further wage reductions, and the absence of support to the strikers from the Trades Union Congress simply means an encouragement to the capitalist in other industries.
- (3) The reluctance of the Left Wing of the General Council to come out openly and fight the Right Wing on every possible occasion, for there could be no doubt that the Right wing leaders, as represented by Messrs. Thomas, Clynes, and Cramp, had very effectively marshalled their

forces and were organised to take up the battle whenever an opportunity presented itself, and they could have been completely crushed from the first day of Congress to the last if the Left Wing on the Council had seized their opportunity, because one had only to sit in Congress to sense the feeling amongst the delegates, to realise that there was a new feeling permeating the whole Congress which only wanted well organising.

Two incidents during the chairman's speech support the above statement. One was where he said "Let the employers who think the organised working class can be driven still further back, take warning from this. This Movement of ours has learned many lessons during these years of reaction engineered by the employers, and one of the lessons is that a militant and progressive policy consistently and steadily pursued is the only policy that will unite, consolidate, and inspire our rank and file." And again, when he said, "Many of our good comrades who in the days gone by taught us to believe there was no remedy other than the abolition of capitalism seem afraid now that the system is collapsing, and appeal for a united effort to patch up the system with the aid of the present possessing class." The roar of approval that greeted these sentiments indicated the rising temper of the workers.

To sum up it is clear that experience and the whole economic situation is slowing revolutionising the masses of this country, and despite every form of intrigue and appeal to constitutional fetishism the Right wing leaders are unable to stifle this revolutionary growth. There is now the greatest opportunity in our history for those leaders claiming to be Left-wingers to come out boldly and take a prominent place in the revolutionary movement—they must do this, or they, too, will be forced to take up a position no different from that of the Right Wing, for the Scarborough Congress has demonstrated as clear as daylight that the revolutionary workers now organised under the leadership of the National Minority Movement are a force that can no longer be stemmed by intrigue or slander, they constitute the only organised opposition working within the existing union movement, and their first successes at Scarborough are merely the prelude to greater victories later on.

# THE INDUSTRIAL CRISIS AND THE CO-OPERATORS

By J. HARRISON

**V**ARIOUS estimates and opinions are current of the industrial crisis through which we are living. In our opinion it is only one of the stages in the development of capitalism and of the social revolution which we are now witnessing and in which we participate. Other people think differently; but in any case no political groups or parties dispute the fact that we are passing through a long period of intense social struggle, of a savage capitalist offensive and definite class warfare. At such a time as the present it is absolutely necessary to count up our numbers, to mobilise the whole strength of the working class, to unite the efforts of all Labour organisations. We must achieve co-ordination of effort such that every section of the working-class movement, every workers' organisation, strengthens its class position and falls into line, using all the means at its disposal to further the workers' cause.

When we consider the international working-class movement and the position of affairs in Great Britain is it possible to say that, although we have big working-class organisations eager to fight, they are all prepared to defend efficiently and vigorously their own section of the front? To this question we must reply very definitely in the negative. A case in point is the workers' Co-operative Movement, which in 1923 comprised, in the more important countries, 20,000,000 workers; that is, with their families, at least 50,000,000.

The Consumers' Co-operatives, whose membership is mostly working class, comprise more than 40,000 local societies; they have their own special banking machinery, a wide-spreading network of educational institutions, federal organisations, a large number of technical experts, their own Press, and so on.



These facts show quite clearly what extensive support the Co-operatives could lend the workers, if only they would march side by side with them in their struggle; and on the other hand, what a danger this powerful system might be if it consciously or unconsciously helped their enemies or failed to work shoulder to shoulder with the Labour Movement.

This question is not a new one: it has a long history. The fact remains that up to now the revolutionary section of the working-class movement has paid little attention to the Co-operatives. The reason for this is partly that the significance of the co-operative movement has never been made clear, and partly that the more immediate problems of the day-to-day struggle pushed this movement into the background.

Thus the most compromising and reactionary elements of the Labour Movement did not forget to make use of the Co-operatives and to strengthen their positions in them. At present, when we have before us an epoch of decisive class conflict, the isolation of the Co-operatives from the revolutionary workers, and the fact that the Co-operatives have been left in the hands of the Liberals and the *petite bourgeoisie* is a serious threat to the Labour Movement. It would be an unpardonable mistake on the part of the revolutionary elements in the Labour Movement if they failed to emphasise or examine closely this vital question of the Co-operatives.

Present-day Co-operative leaders are fond of pointing out that the Co-operatives carry on their own business, cater for all classes in society and are neutral in politics. Therefore, they argue, the best thing to do is to leave them alone, free to solve their own specific non-class problems in their own way. Here is a striking case of self-deception. Usually it is simply a screen for carrying on a definitely petit-bourgeois and often definitely anti-Labour policy.

There is no need to refer to such well-known facts as the Co-operative Movement's support of the imperialist war, and its official attacks on Communism, with which the *Co-operative News* has familiarised us in Britain. Let us consider the aims put forward both by Co-operative leaders in this country and in the International Alliance.

The International Co-operative Congress at Basle adopted as part of Article 1 of its revised (1921) Rules the following:—

“The International Co-operative Alliance, in continuance of the work of the Rochdale Pioneers, seeks, in complete independence, and by its own methods, to substitute for the present competitive régime of private enterprise a co-operative system organised in the interests of the whole community and based upon mutual self-help.”

The sense of this amendment is not, of course, simply a naïve declaration of mutual self-help, but, speaking as it does of working in complete independence and by its own methods, means the complete isolation of the Co-operatives from other Labour organisations and from the class struggle.

Further, the report of the Committee of the Central Executive of the Co-operative Alliance to the Ghent Congress in 1923 shows that the Alliance between 1921 and 1924 dealt with the following questions:—

- (1) *Disarmament*.—Cordial greetings were sent to the Washington Congress on Disarmament.
- (2) *The Stabilisation of Exchange*.—National organisations were invited to demand from their Governments the calling of an international conference.
- (3) *The Abolition of Passport Regulations*.—All Governments and Parliaments should be urged to abolish passports.
- (4) *Present World Economic Situation*.—It was resolved that the calling of a “universal economic conference, to be attended by representatives of Co-operation, was desirable,” and that the International Co-operative Alliance should seek representation on the League of Nations.
- (5) *The Geneva Conference*.—The I.C.A. claimed direct representation at Geneva, and urged that credits be granted to States suffering economically from the results of the War.
- (6) *The Position in the Near East*.—The Executive Council expressed the hope, in the form of a resolution communicated to the League of Nations, that the whole of the matters under dispute (October, 1922) would be referred to the League.

- (7) A manifesto to the League of Nations issued by the International Committee to "Promote Universal Free Trade" was supported by the Alliance.
- (8) Representatives were sent to the *World Peace Conference* at the Hague in December, 1922.

Can these activities be reconciled with the declared policy of political neutrality? Of course not. The statements of the Co-operative leaders regarding political neutrality are instances of their usual Liberal-bourgeois policy of sweet words, masking a complete rejection of working-class aims, and resulting in isolation from the realities of working-class politics. Neither in the report of the Executive Council of the Alliance nor at the Congress could the pulse of the bitter struggle of the workers be felt. It was as though the workers were not at that time carrying on their hard fight, nor withstanding terribly bitter attacks. The Congress limited itself to pacific phrases, to the question of passports, &c.; while at the same time it refused to listen to an anti-war speech from a Russian delegate, supported the German representatives on the question of expulsion of Communists from the Co-operatives and refrained from taking decisive action with regard to the destruction of the Italian Co-operatives by the Fascisti.

The political hero on this occasion was Albert Thomas, renegade of the Labour Movement, bourgeois leader of the League of Nations and ideologist on questions of Labour at the Congress.

The only recent attempts to link up with other working-class organisations consist in a series of negotiations with the Amsterdam International; while all the efforts made by the International Peasants' Union and the Profintern to establish contact with the Alliance have met with failure.

To every person who thinks objectively it is obvious that such "neutrality" merely provides the bourgeoisie with an additional weapon in its struggle against the revolutionary forces in the Labour Movement.

It should be remembered that the International Co-operative Alliance includes Consumers' Co-operative Societies containing not only workers but also peasants; it comprises forty-six organisations in thirty countries, and 75,000 autonomous societies, in which are organised about 50,000,000 co-operators. Naturally,

the leadership of such a colossal organisation by men pursuing petit-bourgeois and solidarist aims is a great danger to the Labour Movement. This danger would be minimised if the International Co-operative Alliance and its leaders, with the extension of the movement, were seen to be leading gradually towards the Left and beginning to make common cause with the Labour Movement. Unfortunately the reverse process is taking place. In 1904-10 the Alliance did give some faint indications of a desire to ally itself with the Labour Movement. The beginning of the post-war period, however, marks the definite separation of the Alliance from all other sections of the working-class movement. We find the leaders of the Alliance, and under their leadership the Alliance itself, moving further and further in the direction of complete compromise with the bourgeoisie, and opposing all attempts to harmonise the activities of the Co-operative and Labour Movements.

We have examined the policy of the International Co-operative Alliance in some detail because the existence of severe crises in all the main branches of industry, and notably the coal crisis, throws into relief the need for international unity of the most practical kind if the struggle of the workers is to be successful. In the particular case of the Co-operative Alliance it is necessary to pursue the following aims:—

(1) The systematic exposure of the policy of "neutrality" as a petit-bourgeois device.

(2) The freeing of the Alliance from the influence of petit-bourgeois and bourgeois leaders.

(3) A closer connection between the Co-operative Alliance and the International Trade Union Movement.

(4) The prevention of the Alliance's participation in international bourgeois organisations (League of Nations and the like).

(5) Formation of closer economic and organisational connections between the Co-operatives of the various countries and those of the Soviet Republics.

(6) A definite offensive movement on the part of the Alliance to meet the bourgeois attacks on Co-operatives, and particularly the Fascist destruction of them in Italy.

(7) Simultaneous action by the International Co-operative Alliance and the various trade union internationals against preparations for wars.

(8) The organisation of a struggle against the high cost of living, against food trusts, cartels, and so on.

(9) Organisation of Co-operative support for the more important economic and political actions of the working class, which are of an international character.

(10) Participation of the Co-operatives in the fight for a united international Labour Movement.

To turn to the question of Great Britain, it should be pointed out that the leaders of the British Co-operatives are the most influential part of the Alliance, and all that has been said regarding the general policy of the Alliance refers in the main to the policy of the British leaders.

The Co-operatives of Great Britain, which are the oldest and most powerful in Western Europe, were definitely class-conscious in their origin; they comprise over four and a-half million members organised in 1,314 societies, and have a trade of more than £165,000,000, apart from that, the trade for the year ending 1923 amounted to £83,417,394. The capital of the various co-operative organisations amounts to not less than £100,000,000. Most of their members are industrial workers.

The English Co-operative Movement undertakes educational work and employs organisers and lecturers. The C.W.S. Bank is of good financial standing and has considerable resources, partly consisting of the deposits of those workers who are members of the Society, and partly of the funds belonging to trade unions and other Labour organisations, for which it acts as bankers. The question arises, does the working class of Great Britain receive adequate assistance from this organisation in its bitter struggle for existence?

The coal crisis, the state of affairs in the textile industry, the energetic attacks of capital on the working class generally, the preparations by the workers for a decisive battle, for strikes which could and would develop into a general strike—all this points to the need for joint mass action by the Co-operatives and the trade unions. Now, after partial defeat, the bourgeoisie is mustering its

forces to inflict a deadly blow on the British working class. Can it be said that the Co-operatives have done and are doing all they can to help the workers to ward off the attack? This question must be answered in the negative. Nobody can count as serious practical help the short article in the *Co-operative News* about the coal crisis, the humanitarian declarations of the Co-operative leaders about the miserable plight of the miners and the promises to give substantial help to them—out of the miners' own funds! At such a critical moment it might have been expected that the Co-operative Movement would mobilise all its material and organisational resources. Decisive action is indicated not only in view of the general needs and position of the working class, but also in the immediate and urgent interests of the Co-operatives as an economic organisation whose basis is seriously threatened by the repeated attacks of capital on wages.

The colossal growth in the numbers of the unemployed, and of the organised unemployed, and as a result of this the strengthening of the whole working-class movement, demonstrations in the streets and in Parliament—all this calls for the keenest and most active support from all Labour organisations. Yet from the Co-operatives we have only a resolution about the unemployed at the yearly Congress.

Take only one example of the working of Co-operative policy. The well-known pacifist resolution of the Southport Congress and the repetitions of the general demand for the control of foreign policy by Parliament were seen to bear not the slightest practical significance at the moment when a breakdown of relations with Soviet Russia was threatened, and all the other Labour organisations in the land intervened. This example is absolutely typical of the conspicuous absence of the Co-operatives in the most critical moments for the Labour Movement. The scope of this article does not permit of further illustration; but there is not a doubt that not only the political, but all the economic and organisational actions of the Co-operatives demand definite re-examination from the point of view of their maximum adaptation to the principles of a democratic mass working-class Co-operative Movement.

Here we again come up against the famous question of political

neutrality, and it is easier in the British than in the Continental Movement to expose all the false meaningless declarations of the present Co-operative leaders, who still cling to the idea of "neutrality."

It is sufficient merely to turn to the reports and resolutions of the Central Executive Committee at the Annual Co-operative Congresses to prove that the Co-operatives are definitely concerned with political questions. The official Southport Congress report includes in its agenda the attitude to the Labour Government, to the Labour Government's foreign policy, to its housing scheme, the organisation of political schools, and other such questions of a purely political and economic nature. Even more to the point is the programme of the Co-operative Party, which has the whole-hearted support of the present-day Co-operative leaders. Included amongst its aims, as set forth in the programme, are the political expression of the English Co-operatives, the organisation of a Co-operative republic, inclusion of all countries in the League of Nations, institution of free international trade and exchange, many typical Liberal measures in the sphere of financial politics, nationalisation of land, democratisation of the Civil Service, health questions, education, unemployment, and so on. After this list of the problems before the Co-operative Party to speak of the political neutrality and abstention from political action of the British Co-operatives is beside the point; at the same time it must be stated categorically that we have here only the usual hazy bourgeois Liberal programme in which the needs of the working-class struggle find no expression.

Further, it is very difficult to accept as political "neutrality" the continuous campaign which the Co-operative Liberals carry on against the Communists and the Minority Movement, by closing the pages of their Press, by refusing national recognition to Communist parliamentary candidates chosen in the localities, and by labelling as insolent the attempts of the Communists to criticise their actions.

We suggest that the working class can demand from the Co-operatives:—

(1) That they organise their economic activities in full accordance with the needs of the working-class struggle.

(2) That in times of crisis the organised economic and financial strength of the Co-operatives be put at the disposal of the workers, to whom they can render assistance in many special ways.

(3) That they take an active part in Labour politics generally, working in close touch with the trade unions and political organisations of the working class.

We must once more emphasise the fact that their participation is particularly necessary at present, that to talk of political neutrality is futile, that actually the Co-operatives do take part in politics, and that their leaders pursue a petit-bourgeois policy. Accordingly the revolutionary workers of this country should bear in mind the following points:—

(1) All revolutionary workers, all trade unionists, must go into the Co-operatives and take an active part in their work.

(2) It is necessary to get revolutionary workers into positions of power on the committees of management and other organs of administration.

(3) The petit-bourgeois policy of the Co-operative and Co-operative Party leaders must be relentlessly exposed.

(4) The Co-operative Movement of this country must be freed from the leadership of reformist anti-Labour elements.

(5) All societies, federations, guilds, which demand high entrance fees and contributions, and in which only a limited number of members have a decisive vote, must be urged to lower their contributions and abolish the purchasing qualification for working-class members.

(6) A campaign should be carried on for the democratisation of Co-operative administration, and the right of the minority to state their views freely should be safeguarded.

(7) The Co-operatives should take the lead in the fight against high prices, the food trusts, &c. ; as far as possible all Co-operators should lend their support to this campaign and, with the help of the trade unions, transform it into a mass movement.

(8) Shop committees of working-class co-operators should be organised, working together with the trade union representatives.

(9) Every effort should be made to draw the women workers into the Co-operatives.



(10) All the most important questions of the proletarian economic and political struggle should be considered by the general meetings of the Co-operative societies. The discussion of these questions would arouse the interest of the rank and file of the membership, and lead to the organisation of joint Co-operative and trade union mass action.

(11) It is particularly important to bring forward at Co-operative meetings the question of the present industrial crisis. Joint schemes must be prepared so that the Co-operatives may be ready to assist the workers in the various branches of industry and the localities where the most intense struggles take place. Arrangements must be made for the supply of food and fuel, for the giving of credits and financial aid for propaganda schemes, Press campaigns, and so on.

In the sphere of mutual relations between the trade unions and the Co-operatives, the following steps are indicated:—

(1) Creation of joint committees of Co-operators and trade unionists, both nationally and locally, to co-ordinate general policy and aims, and to decide on the special steps necessary for the assistance of the workers in their immediate fight against the attacks of capital.

(2) Local trade union branches and the Minority Movement should take the initiative in the formation of these committees.

(3) The Co-operative organisation ought also actively to support the unemployed and their demands.

(4) The trade unions and the Co-operatives should make an organised protest against the high cost of living, and should work together on local or national food committees and other government or municipal bodies.

(5) The educational work of the Co-operatives and trade unions ought to be co-ordinated along the lines of independent working-class education for all, whether trade unionists or Co-operators. They should draw up joint programmes of work and co-operate in the running of clubs, &c.

(6) The best possible conditions of labour must be guaranteed in all agreements between the Co-operatives and their employees, who must all be trade unionists.

(7) The activities of the Co-operative Bureau of the Minority

Movement Executive Committee must be widened and strengthened.

We have spoken only of the most important and pressing problems of Labour policy in the Co-operatives at the present time. More detailed consideration of the problems involved is necessary. The fundamental premises for the fulfilment of the programme outlined above are the growth of the collective consciousness of working-class Co-operators and Co-operative employees; and an energetic organisation of groups inside the Co-operatives for the carrying out of this policy and the preparation of new corps of revolutionary proletarian Co-operators.

# THE FAR EASTERN TANGLE

## SUNDRY NOTES

**W**HY do I choose this title? Not simply because Far Eastern politics are always made to appear in a tangle by the Capitalist Press of Europe and America, but because, from a Marxist standpoint, the *present* situation in China and the Pacific is very complicated and hard to analyse. The factors in the situation are many, and most of them variable. The purpose of these notes is only to sort the factors as a preliminary to a fuller analysis, which should be carried on by Marxists in every working-class journal.

### *The Imperialist Powers*

*Great Britain.* The first robber Power, British Imperialism has a bigger share of Chinese trade than any other. Hated by the Chinese workers and awakening nationalists, jealously watched by the other Imperialists, Britain dare not take any open steps. To outward appearance, Britain, sitting there at the receipt of custom, in Hongkong down the river from Canton, is like Giant Pope in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, who had gone stiff in the joints and used to bite his nails at his enemies and curse. Well, Britain has done enough of cursing and being foul-mouthed about the Bolsheviks, and she appears too stiff in the joints to repair her position. But behind the scenes Britain prepares "Jameson raids" on Canton, and by bribery, by supplies of munitions of war, by pitting military chiefs and officials against one another, can do the utmost to prevent the Chinese becoming strong enough to throw off the British incubus.

It is all Britain can do. Look at the situation. Any overt step such as threatening the Chinese central authorities with diplomatic notes and gunboats would be challenged by the U.S.A., which looks on complacently at the present plight of the British Imperialists. France, too, smiles: her withers are unwrung. Again, Britain cannot make an agreement with the separate Chinese

Government in Canton, for it is "not recognised." Lastly, a renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is out of the question. It would throw Canada and Australia into the arms of America. Japan knows this: and any local Anglo-Japanese negotiations will come to nothing.

Two things destroy Britain. First the industrialisation of China: the growth of a capitalist class, a proletariat, and all that this growth implies. Secondly, Britain's world rivals are stronger every day, while compared to them, she is weakening steadily: the effect of this is seen also in China.

*Japan.* Japanese Imperialism, hated by its own working class and peasantry, hated by the nationalists of Corea that she has seized, hated by the inhabitants of her spheres of influence in China, has a difficult problem to maintain these conquests in face of the enmity of the U.S.A. and the attitude of the other Powers. What is her prospect? And to whom shall she turn in the future Americano-Japanese war? Not to British Imperialism, which counts at best to remain neutral in such a war, at worst to come in on the American side. But Japan must have a rear to her armies, navies, and civilian population. China is not that rear but Japan's hinterland of exploitation. That rear she will look to find in Soviet Russia and Germany, the one for raw materials and food, the other for manufactures. So on these counts Japan dare not quarrel openly with Soviet Russia; even though relations remain uncordial between the bloody Imperialists of the Japanese Empire and the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union. Lastly, Japan must get over the effect of the earthquake of 1923 which made her a second-rate Power. So Japanese Imperialism will probably try to smooth things over with the Chinese (quite apart from Britain), and for years to come will want everything to be as quiet as possible in the Far East.

*America.*—The U.S.A. have a simple policy. They call it "The Open Door"—by which is meant equality of opportunity for every Imperialist Power to trade with China and invest in Chinese industry. But the other Powers have got a long way ahead in that race. America would like to start the race all over again. "Let's start again," they say, "with a fair field and no favour." Therefore the rise of a strong China (*i.e.*, a centralised

bourgeois State) pushing the Japanese and the British out will be quite acceptable to America. Nor is the U.S.A. likely to be perturbed by the British propaganda that Bolshevism is spreading in China. America is the strongest immediate bar to British expansion and British rule in China. In the British Press this is not mentioned and the Bolsheviks are blamed. The Americans do not mind this, but they refuse to be frightened by it; indeed, for the moment their policy of the "Open Door" has a somewhat similar effect to the Soviet policy of "Self-determination for the Chinese." Opposed to Britain, America is still more opposed to Japan. Against both of them France, who has a very small stake in China, is prepared to be on the side of the U.S.A.

#### *The Forces against Imperialism*

*U.S.S.R.*—This Government of Workers and Peasants stands opposed to all the Imperialist robbers. The Soviet Union has, within the space of two years, reached a very strong position in China. First she has renounced all the privileges to which the other Great Powers still cling. Secondly, she is friendly to China and in favour of the present movement among the Chinese masses. Thirdly, by her mere existence as an anti-Imperialist Power which has thrown off the yoke of the other imperialisms, Soviet Russia is a perpetual reminder to the Chinese that they may, perhaps by means of a Socialist republic, perhaps by means of a revolutionary Nationalist republic, in turn throw off their oppressors.

What are the immediate relations (fundamentally hostile) between U.S.S.R. and other Powers? America has no economic enmity with Soviet Russia; her quarrel is with Japan. Japan dare not quarrel with Soviet Russia; their immediate policies may differ as the structure of their Governments is completely antagonistic, but Japan is playing a long suit. With France Soviet Russia is on as good terms as with any Capitalist Government at the moment.

Soviet Russia naturally has the biggest influence in the north of China, and the whole breadth of China separates her from British interests centred in the south. So the influence of the Soviet State is bound to increase steadily in the north where the Japanese dare not quarrel, and the Americans with a similar

policy to that of the Soviets have no immediate cause of quarrel. In the south, on the other hand, though the policy of the U.S.S.R. aiming at strengthening China is at the opposite pole from the policy of Britain which is to weaken China, the Soviet State can have but little influence. But the industrialisation of the south, geography apart, will link it up with Soviet Russia.

*Summary of the Foregoing*

The rival Imperialist Powers have thus, it will be seen, every interest in keeping quiet. They either dare not or will not move towards any "vigorous action" in China. This is likely to be the position for some years to come, in spite of all the fire and slaughter slogans of the British Press and the pitiful appeals to the British Cabinet to take a strong line.

This being so, we must turn now to a factor which is least calculable, that is the development of the Chinese revolution. That the present "disturbances" are not temporary, but are part of a definite process, is already clear. How that process will go on is very hard to say. If things develop towards a strong bourgeois Government, then China, backed by U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. (each for very different reasons) will be able to edge out both the British and the Japanese. This seems one possible line of development, but how incalculable even this line of development is can be seen at once by taking into account the effect on the British Empire. If Britain is being steadily driven back in China the effect of this on the Near and Middle East may be very great. The loss of British prestige may suddenly nerve the British Imperialists to seize a favourable moment (when, say, tension between Japan and U.S.A. neutralises both) and may try to recover by the strong hand the ground they will steadily have been losing.

Another possible line of development is that—more rapidly than we imagine—the workers and peasants of China may win their emancipation, with obvious effects on the Japanese proletariat, the subject races of Corea, the French colonies, &c., &c. Whether this comes to pass or not, it is clear that beneath the contending Imperialisms with their rival policies and counter-checking activities, there is a much more powerful factor than any. That is the process towards world revolution. The factors in that process (apart from

Imperialist rivalries) are the masses of China, the peasants and workers of Japan, the subject workers of the colonies, and the victorious workers and peasants of Soviet Russia. Along with these factors, too, we have been able so far to count in the trade unionists of England. If the process develops rapidly will British trade unionists continue to support Chinese workers? Or will they follow those who will want them to help maintain Imperialist rule?

All these things that I have set down are some preliminaries to the deep analysis of the Far Eastern question that is urgently wanted. Such an analysis would need to take into consideration the class structure of China, of Japan, and would need to examine the correlation of forces more closely than I have been able to do.

In the past few months there has been in certain quarters an expectancy that the Chinese question would soon be settled by concerted action of the Powers. There was even some foggy notion that the delay in such concerted action was due to "inevitable delays in Eastern diplomacy." That notion is to be dispelled. On the other hand, it is true that some raid or other form of attack on China may be carried out by the British Imperialists, and in that case it is clear that the British Imperialists will do it at their own peril. This does not mean that there is no need for the working-class agitation against intervention in China. It does mean that if and when Capitalist Imperialism dares a big attack in the Far East, its actions there may bring it crashing down here, in the West—and all over the world.

R. PAGE ARNOT.

# LANGUAGE AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

By HUNTLY CARTER

**T**HE main point of this article is the great importance of language to the present stage of the Labour Movement. To-day language is all-powerful. Indeed, the power of verbal expression of a class determines its moral and material condition. This power, with regard to the control of politics and economics, is for all practical purposes in the hands of the capitalists. Labour's demand for a full share in government and the control of the economic machinery of the country cannot be satisfied till they, too, possess a like power.

To-day words are owned and controlled by the ruling rich. They are made to express just what their owners want. They are made to take any form required: highly intellectual and controversial for the comfortable and educated, plain and pictorial for the pinched toilers. They are the most prolific source of capitalistic propaganda and destruction. Their effect is devastating. They sweep flat all resistance to the power of the plutocrats. Every hour, every minute of the day they are given new meanings and fresh values, and they are so cunningly manipulated that unwary users, especially Labour leaders, may be, and constantly are, unconsciously committed to unexpected and compromising practical results. Watch how frequently Labour M.P.'s fall into verbal traps set by more subtle minds on the opposite benches. Take down Hansard and turn to the debates arising out of the dropped Campbell case and you shall find scores of examples. Or note the important part played by the word "definitive" in the railway dispute of September, 1919, when it was made to replace "definite" by Sir A. Geddes. In the latter's opinion it was the precise word to be used. Mr. J. H. Thomas put "definite offer," the Government put "definitive [final] offer." Another unfortunate phrase was "datum line" (*see* Press, October, 1920).

Probably the best examples of the control and misuse of words by the capitalist class for the purpose of propaganda are to be



found in the rapid and subtle changes which the four present great keywords, or springs of thought and action, are undergoing. Socialism, capitalism, revolution, and economics are swiftly losing their identity and vital significance, and disappearing beneath a lumber of utterly false meaning. Proof of this is not far off. It appears in the fact that more than one radical writer of repute is busy with a definition of one or the other. For example, there is Mr. Bernard Shaw's promised tract on Socialism. True, it is meant to explain socialism to elderly middle-class ladies, and may be no more than an attempt by Mr. Shaw to clear his own mind on the subject. That his mind is very foggy is proved by his recent interpretation or misinterpretation of "Russian Revolution," "Anarchism," "Syndicalism," and the vituperative word "Bolshevist." But isolated definitions are not of much use. What is needed is a united effort on the part of the workers to fix the true and permanent meaning and value of each word in their own minds and that of the people in general. Or failing this, to invent new words containing the fundamental meanings of the slaughtered ones.

It would be of general interest fully to classify and exemplify the many and varied emotional and intellectual means used by the capitalist Press to give full effect to words. But it would take up too much space. The principal weapons in the word war may, however, be given. These are, on the amicable side, *capitalistic friendship*, *co-patriotism*, and *benevolent interest*. On the malignant side, *vituperation*, *ridicule*, *diabolical wit*, *fierce denunciation*, *distortion*, *confusion*, *exaggeration*, *acid abuse*, and *downright lying*. The latter form the weapons in the campaign of falsification and injustice. Of course, it is a campaign in which the interest is made to sell. The two main objects of this campaign are to frighten and to laugh people out of the use of words that threaten to destroy capitalism and to educate them in the use of others that support it. The two main methods are (1) plain English and the handling of words to mean capitalism, and (2) the widest appeal to the common man.

Here are examples of methods. When the miners won their recent memorable victory over the Government out came one million-circulation capitalistic newspaper with two words in great

block capitals. These words printed on the front page were "Blackmail Friday." It was a perfect example of a condensed figure of invective, picturing a black criminal act, and calculated to tear the full value of the victory from the minds of millions of curious people. What was Labour's headline? Merely "Good Friday," a phrase that pictured pancakes and hot cross buns. Probably the best examples of the verbal sabotage of Labour are to be found in attacks, not on their revolutionary deeds, but on their revolutionary words. By Labour's revolutionary words I mean those composing the new language which has come out of the Russian revolution, but which is not allowed to take root in this country owing partly to the powerful opposition of capitalism and partly to the inertia of the workers. These words include in particular the ever-present ones, revolutionists, Reds, communists, bolshevists, comrades, proletariat, and class-consciousness. We cannot pick up a capitalistic paper without finding one or the other being slaughtered or changed beyond recognition by means of injurious comments, false innuendoes, suggestive analyses, and destructive laughter. The word "revolution" is undergoing change owing to its constant misapplication by the capitalistic Press to the utterances of scientists, art and crafts men, business men and so on, and its subtle confusion with evolution. A fair example occurs in the headline "Medical Research Revolution" printed in block letters to catch the eye. Discovery is meant. Revolution is an abrupt overturning, a sudden change of direction. It is different from evolution, or continuous unfolding in the past, present and future. Lenin believed in revolution; Mr. J. H. Thomas believes in evolution. The capitalists believe in evolution and as it is a safe word they use it as a subtle weapon with which to fight the word revolution. Bolshevism, Communism, Reds, and Red Flag are being used as bogies to terrify people. For example, we read of the "foulness of communism," "communism gets at the minds that are ignorant or in a state to receive the Gospel of Hate," "communist murder gangs" and so on. "Comrade" is being laughed out of existence. Says one stately Tory journal, "Comrades Ruth Fischer and Masloff fought out their differences with Comrades Scholem, Katz and Rosenberg." Whereupon, no doubt, the stately Tory readers roared with laughter, while the

unstately Pinks tittered and called each other "mister." Economy, which is the basis of the workers' new world, is being made unpopular by having its meaning confined to finance. Neither the history nor meaning of these words entitle them to bear the interpretation put upon them by the Capitalistic Press. For instance, "communism" contains the idea of a communal society for workers. "Economy" is a splendid word derived from the Greeks, and originally meant housekeeping. To-day it is associated by advanced minds with body and brain keeping. The new economic state will be one in which the workers will invest their energy, mental and physical, and receive the fullest return for their investments.

Our language is saturated with capitalistic and intellectual middle-class words, phrases and idioms. In an age of revolution, when the world is pregnant with the spirit of change, and indeed waiting to be delivered by the aid of the wizard of words, this modern lord of liberalism is kept chained by the anti-revolutionary classes. What is the Labour Press doing about it? What are they doing to encourage the workers to talk with their own tongues and think with their own thoughts? Practically nothing. With the exception of one or two theoretic, penetrating and brilliant extreme Left periodicals, there is not a single sheet on the workers' side making war on the enemy language. Not one helping to form a true working-class revolutionary language. Apparently they are blind alike to history and present need. They do not see the example of the lawyer-made French Revolution: the refusal of the intellectual leaders of the revolt to let the current language stand; the energy of university professors in polishing up words to mean revolution and battle to the common folk; the literature and language of revolt that sprang from the need of the moment and came flaming down succeeding years to fire the aspiration of restless men in all countries.

They pay no heed to these and like lessons. For the most part they borrow the civil words of the Capitalistic Press. They look up the dictionary for "bourgeoisie," "capitalist," "gentleman," "snob," "profiteer," "fat man," "bosses," and then try to hang the enemy with them. In vain. "Gentleman" is too

strongly tied to a moral significance. "Capitalist" is flattery to the slave-owners. "Bourgeoisie" has a proud descent. "Bosses" belongs to the common language of industrial and political events. "Snob" is at bottom "journeyman." Such is the stock-in-trade of angry Labour sheets. But the worst form of copying by the latter is the changing, defiling and destroying of words. What is the poor worker to do in building up an individual language while editors and sub-editors of his mouthpieces are degenerating into word-corrupters? The *Sunday Worker* has, for instance, set out to thrust a defiled "Slogan" down his throat. "Slogan" originally meant a Scottish war-cry. Then the shopkeepers took it for advertisement purposes, and a slogan king arose and made thousands of pounds per slogan, and it became a capitalistic cry. Now the *Sunday Worker* has got it for a gambler's cry, and is making it a grave menace to the development of a workers' healthy language. For all the seekers after slogan money prizes will go searching through capitalistic papers, posters and dictionaries for the winning slogan. The harm does not stop there. From Slogan has issued the meaningless monsters "Sloganites" and "Slogania." An editor who so deliberately defiles language ought to be boiled.

There are innumerable examples of the habit of Labour sheets to adopt the coinages, matter and manner of the capitalistic sheets. The *Daily Herald* continues the Liberal illustrated Political Primer by F. B., once a feature of the defunct London *Tribune*. The same paper recently started a serial by a "working-man dramatist" named J. R. Gregson. Here is some of Gregson. The story begins: "I am Ernest Oxley, bachelor, of independent means, aged thirty-three." . . . "I will briefly narrate the events immediately preceding the catastrophe from which I at present suffer." Evidently Ernest's complaint is a preference for the pompous lick-spittle language of educated illiterates. "She gave herself an air of bedragglements" is a sample. At the other extreme is the amusing attempt of interpreters on the Labour papers to get their ideas and opinions understood by playing down to a presumed unintelligent audience, until they become unintelligent themselves. An illustration occurs in Winifred Horrabin's amazing signed contributions to the *Sunday Worker*. In some people the assumption that workers are common folk who use cattle jargon is almost a

mania. If the workers were encouraged to interpret themselves they would show some of the over-zealous deputy interpreters how working-class interpretation ought to be done. Though inarticulate in a sense, they yet contain a wonderful quality of vividness and strength of speech of their own which appears spontaneously in writings of uneducated men unaccustomed to the pen and not inspired by the capitalistic press and public library. Their words have life and revolutionary blood in them. Such writers and words, if sought and taken care of, would materially aid to carve out a language for the Labour Movement.



*Another Article on this Subject will appear next month.*

# IN THE LIGHT OF MARXISM

By "STUDENT"

## *Finance Capital*

*It does not so much matter to the Moneyed Interest if home production falls off. . . . They have all the world to invest in, and are for the most part naturally quite indifferent where or in what they invest, being simply guided by the consideration of the return. And the Money Interest is peculiarly strong in England, largely as a result of our Free Trade policy. . . . The banking world will fight for Free Trade as long as it can, just as it fights for "Sound Money," and may prevail. In that case the ultimate destiny of this country is to become predominantly a money-owning and money-lending country, the mortgagor of a great part of the rest of the world.*

MILNER, "An Economic Notebook," *The Times*, July 29, 1925.

**H**ERE is a well-trained Imperialist statesman endeavouring to grapple all by himself in his private notebooks with the process of finance capital.

The result is illuminating; all the more so as the statesman in question was more thoroughly trained, both theoretically and in administration, than most English politicians, to observe and analyse facts.

Milner is able to see the external social process taking place—as who that is honest can fail to see?—the process of Imperialism and Parasitism. He can see 10 per cent. inevitably beating 5 per cent., the decay of British home industry, British workers thrown on the scrapheap, and England becoming a pleasure park of moneylenders with their retinue of servants and vulgar luxuries.

But he is unable to see that this is the simple working out of Capitalism in its advanced stage. For explanation he can only turn to bogeys such as "Free Trade" and "the Money Interest," the latter of which he opposes to "Productive Industry," meaning home industry.

Free Trade was only the reflection of British industrial monopoly in the nineteenth century. It was no more the cause of that monopoly, and of the consequent tremendous accumulation of capital, which led to the era of finance capital, than the moon is the cause of the sun's light. On the contrary, that monopoly had developed half a century before it was strong enough to adopt Free Trade as the instrument of its further development. The subsequent industrial countries were necessarily Protectionist, but have developed no less inevitably, in proportion to their amount of accumulation, into the era of finance capital. France and Germany before the war held each about fifteen hundred millions' worth of capital invested abroad, against the British three thousand millions' worth. Protectionist America is to-day becoming a great creditor State, with similar problems of conflict between world interests and home industry.

It is equally incorrect and superficial to speak of a separate sinister "Money Interest" which is distinct from Capitalism as a whole. On the contrary,

finance capital represents the highest fusion of every form of capital, both banking and industrial; although the process of this fusion necessarily places increasing concentration of power in the most concentrated and centralised form of capital, the banks and great investment trusts. Finance capital is simply the outcome and more advanced stage of "Productive Industry" under Capitalism. A little further examination of the facts would show that in the huge expansion of British capitalist production and investment abroad not the least part is being taken by all the big industrial firms in Britain, which are deliberately building up profitable enterprises overseas at the expense of the British workers.

Finally, the policy of expansion of finance capital, which Milner laments for its disastrous effects on home productive interests, is precisely the policy of Imperialism of which Milner was so passionate a disciple. This complete practical contradiction in the outcome of his whole career was simply the expression in hard fact of the sentimental confusion which was his only starting point, and which he betrayed in his "Credo," where he appears to confuse Imperialism with "national" patriotism (a grim thought for the slave 360 millions). This sentimental confusion, which will be found in practice to be the invariable mental basis of the bourgeois ideologue, made him the ready tool in the real world of finance capital. There is no completer example of the process of finance capital in its most shameless and parasitic form than Milner's administration of Egypt as the bondholder's agent.

Last of all, Milner was unable to see that this "ultimate destiny" which he foresees for England as the moneylenders' country, is not and in the nature of Capitalism cannot be an "ultimate destiny" at all, but only a very rapidly passing stage; that British financial supremacy is already threatened and bowing down to the American advance, and that herein is developing the inevitable and culminating contradiction of Capitalism, which will in its turn lead to the extension of the world revolution.

#### *Education and Propaganda*

*The educational work done by foreigners in China looks like charity, but is in reality a form of colonisation. . . . If we investigate the content of their work we will find that most foreigners who are doing educational work in China usually have as their purpose either religious propaganda or political aggression. Education is simply a supplementary matter to them.*

Manifesto of the National Federation of Provincial Educational Associations of China, 1924.

The Chinese Federation of Educational Associations have been making some discoveries about "pure" bourgeois education. .

Like the working class in England from their point of view, so the Chinese in China from theirs, are discovering that bourgeois education is soaked through with a certain point of view that they neither share nor want. The Chinese, being so simple and ingenuous-minded as to describe things as they see them, call bourgeois education "propaganda." The British working class is beginning to do the same.

That bourgeois educational work in China is simply a "form of colonisation" is extremely clear to all, because the whole process is, as it were, isolated and clarified by the absence of many confusing social factors

But that bourgeois educational work in England, down to the most modest and "literary" Extension lecture, is also nothing but a "form of colonisation," that it is in fact either "religious propaganda" (inculcation of idealism, which colours all bourgeois education, throwing a fog over clear social relations and scientific thinking) or "political aggression" (inculcation of democratic shibboleths, industrial harmony, &c.)—this the British working class is on'y beginning to see; and the sooner it does see it completely, the better.

#### *The Labour Party and Religion*

*I do not know what the future may bring. If we do the duty in the right way that lies at our feet we can leave the issue to God Himself. We need not press. We need not rush.*

Right Hon. J. R. MACDONALD after the Pilgrims' Dinner. *Daily Herald* report, May 5, 1925.

That the British Labour Movement is built upon religion is a common statement. Although many individual comrades are "agnostics" and atheists, it is customary to leave the Right wing free to carry on its wholesale religious propaganda and closely organised links with the bourgeois religious movement. It is argued that the question is only of "private" concern, and that religion may be a useful adjunct in bringing people to Socialism.

Marxism cannot accept this view. A religious outlook is incompatible with a scientific outlook, which analyses religion equally with other social phenomena. A scientific outlook is indispensable to the working class if they are to grapple successfully with the existing complex of social and economic issues, both before and after the conquest of power. Marxism is built upon the naturalist scientific outlook, *i.e.*, the recognition of the reign of law equally in natural and social phenomena, and the realisation that we must understand these laws, and that only by understanding them (and not by expecting the world to conform to our own feeble subjective desires without relation to objective reality) can mankind advance by its own intelligence and strength alone, learning from mistakes and facing facts.

All bourgeois religious outlooks, whether in the churches or in the "refined" forms of idealism, theism, creative evolution, &c., encourage the workers to look to another world—heaven, their own hearts, the contemplation of the universe, the future perfection of mankind—to compensate them for their hard fate in this; and further, to look to some form of outside help—God, progress, &c.—to help them through. Marxism alone teaches the workers to look to themselves alone. Thus all the bourgeois religious outlooks, from the simple form of the orthodox priest to the creative evolutionary confusionism of Bernard Shaw, are in fact socially obscurantist and props of the bourgeoisie.

It is a significant fact that, while the bourgeoisie in its early revolutionary days made ventures into materialism and atheism, to-day the trend of all fashionable bourgeois intellectual thought in the period of bourgeois decay is increasingly religious. The young bourgeoisie is beginning to go to church, or to play with mysticism, or to turn desperately to the most reactionary forms of religion, High Church and Catholic. The working class is shedding religion. This is a notable indication of the approaching reversal of class roles.



No clearer example of the reactionary character of the religious outlook could be found than the above quotation from the leader of the Labour Party, which is a gross and glaring expression of the religious disease.

In the society of rich British and American capitalists, fêting the new American Ambassador, with the shadow of Anglo-American rivalry hanging over the whole ceremony, and the certainty of war if Capitalism is not overthrown, MacDonald, the "leader" of the workers, speaks in effect as follows, for the benefit of the workers:—

Do not think of the future. Bow your heads and do your "duty" (*i.e.*, obey Capitalism). Trust in "God" (*i.e.*, do not trust in yourselves, but let Capitalism rule). We are in no hurry; we need make no effort (*i.e.*, leave the existing order alone).

Is it not the voice again of the "Little Father" speaking to his people, of the Tsarist priest speaking through the mouth of this cultivated Labour leader?

### *Heart and Brain*

*I do not feel justified in saying Yes, though I cannot find it in my heart to say No.*

C. E. M. JOAD on "Is There Proof of a Future Life?" in the *New Leader*, May 8, 1925.

This is a more pitiful example of the foregoing.

The Right wing, or direct supporters and associates of big capital and privilege, are coarsely open in their use of religion.

The Centre, or vacillating petty bourgeois intellectual elements supporting the Right Wing, are torn in this, as in every other issue, between conflicting impulses, and end in impotence, attempting to reconcile verbally both worlds. (It is this impotence, or inability to think to a conclusion, which they mistake for "open-mindedness," "free thought," "tolerance," &c.) They cannot swallow intellectually the coarse religion of their leaders, and yet they shrink from tearing themselves free. So they try to construct for themselves two worlds, an intellectual world in which religion is admittedly not true, and then some "other" world of the "heart" in which "perhaps" it is.

Unfortunately there is only one world in real life, a world which punishes unforgettingly any failure to apprehend it as intellectually and scientifically as we are able.

The *New Leader*, the most typical organ of the Centre, has "no opinion" editorially on the question of religion. Unhappy *Leader*, that must become dumb on a central issue facing the workers.

Unfortunately it is not possible to live in a vacuum. The writers in the *New Leader* inevitably deal in practice with religion. And then appear the Two Worlds in all their glory, so dear to the intoxicated vision of the Idealist.

Questioned as to the "Proof of a Future Life," the writer in the *New Leader* discovers that he is "not justified in saying Yes" (*i.e.*, intellectually he cannot accept it), but—here comes the saving other world, the world of the heart—he "cannot find it in his heart to say No."

What a mess this fellow would get in if he behaved like this in real life!

Suppose Mr. Joad out for a walk with a friend who is blind. They reach a precipice; the friend, delighted with the fine day, and eager to go forward, asks, "Can I step forward?" Swiftly comes the brilliant answer:—

I do not feel justified in saying Yes, though I cannot find it in my heart to say No.

Suppose a battle, and valiant Mr. Joad in command of the reserves. The general sends an urgent message, "Can you bring up the reserves within one hour?" Back comes the reply of our Wise Man of Gotham:—

I do not feel justified in saying Yes, though I cannot find it in my heart to say No.

However, in practical life, as Bucharin has remarked, all men, whatever their professions, invariably conduct themselves as atheists.

### *The Evolutionary Fallacy*

*The question for us to consider is what we are to do in the event of a catastrophic breakdown of a system which we expected to have to supplant by easy and orderly stages till we reached the goal of Socialism.*

BROUGHAM VILLIERS in *Forward*, May 23, 1925.

*An evolutionary strategy can proceed experimentally.*

BRAILSFORD in the *New Leader*, March 13, 1925.

The "evolutionary" Socialist fallacy follows inevitably from the religious or idealist outlook?

What is the essence of the "evolutionary" Socialist outlook? Is it a question of recognising that social development is historical process, in which each stage arises from the preceding? On the contrary, this is the first principle of Marxism as against the utopian Socialists.

Is it then a question of "slower" or "faster" modes of progress towards Socialism? This is nearer to the actual controversy, but does not yet bring it out clearly. For it is obvious commonsense that "slower" and "faster" depends on circumstances; sometimes it is necessary to proceed slowly, sometimes come sharp breaks demanding rapid fundamental action. How can there be a controversy on this in principle?

The essence of the so-called "evolutionary" Socialist outlook consists in this, in the belief that we can *choose*, as a first principle, "slower" action, not according to circumstances, but according to the dictates of our temperaments, hearts, wishes. "An evolutionary strategy can proceed experimentally." The writer does not say: "The situation is such that it is possible to proceed at leisure, experimentally, without any danger of our calculations being knocked to pieces by facts." He says:—"Since we have chosen an evolutionary strategy therefore we can proceed at leisure, experimentally."

The first beginning of the rough impact of facts upon this view is seen in the quotation from Brougham Villiers:—"What we are to do in the event of a catastrophic breakdown of a system which we *expected* to have to supplant by easy and orderly stages."

It is the old fallacy of idealism—the belief that we can govern our action in the world according to subjective feelings, and not according to reality. "Evolutionary" Socialism is simply the old utopian Socialism over again, dressed up in a falsely termed "evolutionary" dress to make it look presentable.

The practical meaning of "evolutionary" Socialism consists in not facing Capitalism.

# The World of Labour

	PAGE
POLAND: Trade Union Congress .. .. .	633
FRANCE: Socialist Party Congress .. .. .	634
C.G.T.U. Congress .. .. .	635
C.G.T. Congress .. .. .	635
Unity Congress .. .. .	636

## POLAND

### Trade Union Congress

THE Congress of Polish Trade Unions, which has previously been mentioned,<sup>1</sup> opened on June 11 at Warsaw. The fact that the Congress was to be held seems to have been insufficiently known, the intention being, apparently, that only officials or those known to be in agreement with the Central Committee should be represented. Thus the Union of Building Workers, which had recently been dissolved by the police, sent a letter protesting against the refusal to allow its representation, and demanding its credentials.

Efforts were made by the left wing and Communist unions to spread the news, and a considerable number of left-wing delegates appeared, Communists, however, being excluded from the Congress hall. The "red fraction" held an independent meeting, which was eventually broken up by the police, and passed a resolution in favour of Trade Union Unity, conveyed expression of its sympathy to the Chinese and Bulgarian workers and peasants, and condemned the Central Committee.

These views were brought up in the Congress itself. A commission on unity was proposed, but Zulawsky, of the I.F.T.U. General Council, declared that it should be considered in connection with the general question of Communism, and this view prevailed. The resolution eventually passed expressed the official I.F.T.U. position on the admission of the Russian unions, but warned the workers against the dangers of unity with those who profess Communism.

The Central Committee was repeatedly accused of supporting the Grabsky Government. Zulawsky in reply stated that they did not support the Government, but merely did not allow its fall. He who desired this would be a fool or a lunatic, since its successor would be either a Witto's (Fascist) government, or a military dictatorship. It is difficult to suppose that either would bring results appreciably different from the present regime of White Terror.

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<sup>1</sup> See LABOUR MONTHLY, August, 1925. Vol. VII, No. 8, p. 506.

Sassenbach, who was present as a fraternal delegate, bore witness to the bitterness of the campaign against the left-wing unions, in which the Central Committee is implicated. He was invited by a delegate to go on a tour of inspection of Trade Union offices in Warsaw. This he did, visiting offices closed and raided by the police, others lodged in private flats and cellars, and even one Secretariat trying to carry on its business in the street. He appeared amazed at what he saw, and repeatedly stated in his remarks at the Congress how scandalous such a state of things appeared to him.

## FRANCE

### Socialist Party Congress

**T**HE Congress of the French Socialist Party was held in Paris from August 15 to 18. The total membership was reported to be 105,000, a remarkable increase on the total of 48,000 reported at the last congress in January, 1924.

The first business of importance was the case of M. Varenne, a deputy, who had accepted the position of Governor of Indo-China. The rank and file of his local federation had moved his expulsion, and in spite of opposition from M. Blum, M. Grumbach, and others, this course was agreed to.

The next three sessions were occupied by the most important matter before the congress, the general political situation, and the attitude to be adopted towards the Government. This attitude had been highly ambiguous since the fall of M. Herriot, and there had been fear of a split. Many deputies wished to continue the alliance with the Radicals, but most local federations had expressed disapproval of this.

M. Blum's "middle course" motion, which really leaves the parliamentary position undecided, obtained 2,210 votes against 559 for the "right wing" motion of M. Renaudel, and preserves, for the time being, the unity of the party. The discussion was throughout exclusively in terms of parliamentary tactics, and showed how completely the party had fallen into the traditional snare which awaits the socialist politician. M. Blum's conception of workers' demands is illuminating also. He would promise support for any government which would "attempt to bring into being measures demanded by the working class—in particular in connection with peace, financial stabilisation, social measures, and military and educational reforms."

The agenda of the Labour and Socialist International was discussed, the chief emphasis again being laid upon the diplomatic tangles of the moment. The Pact was promised the support of the party, on the grounds that it would be a step towards the Protocol, the policy of the French Imperialist Government, and could be used to promote disarmament.

A resolution was passed defining the attitude to be taken up towards the Moroccan War, over which the party had badly compromised itself.<sup>1</sup> The uncompromising opposition of the Communist Party has won a great deal of support from the working class, and has been very confusing for the rank and file of the party. It was at last decided therefore to oppose the war, to deny

<sup>1</sup> See Allen Hutt, "The Riff War of Independence," *LABOUR MONTHLY*, August, 1925. Vol. VII, No. 8, pp. 493-495.

responsibility for it, and to demand from the Government immediate steps in favour of peace. It was decided, however, not to demand evacuation of Morocco and to repudiate those individuals and federations which had taken part in the " Council of Action."

## C.G.T.U. Congress

The Congress of the C.G.T.U., attended by 800 delegates, and claiming the allegiance of 500,000 workers, was held in Paris from August 26 to 31. It was decided to send a delegation to the C.G.T. Congress, asking the co-operation of that body in an effort towards the national unity of the Trade Union movement. The letter, after recalling previous efforts of the C.G.T.U., and rejecting the idea of unity by the simple entry of the members of one organisation into the other, proposed the holding of a joint conference as soon as possible, to discuss :—

- (1) A Unity Congress in August next.
- (2) Preparation for the Congress by the convention of general meetings for fusion (of the different industries, &c.) before the general congress. These could be held in May or June and could set up the committees of the re-constituted unions.
- (3) The holding of federal and departmental conferences in the same way.
- (4) The setting up of an Inter-Confederal Committee to supervise the measures decided upon by the mixed conference.

The announcement on the second day, that the C.G.T. had decided to accept the delegation, was received with the greatest enthusiasm. It was decided further to hear a speaker from the autonomous unions, and to invite Oudegeest, who was a fraternal delegate to the C.G.T. Congress, to speak on the subject of unity. He replied, refusing, on the ground that on the general question he had nothing to say, and in the domestic one he could not interfere. The congress confirmed the steps taken by the Executive, and decided to maintain the struggle for unity.

## C.G.T. Congress

The Congress of the *Confédération Générale du Travail* was held at Paris from August 26 to 29, and was attended by over 1,000 delegates, claiming to represent 1,800 *syndicales* and 750,000 members. During the first session, letters were read from the *Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire*, which was holding a congress simultaneously, and from the *Union Fédérative Autonome*, which had held a congress on June 28, proposing joint action to achieve unity, and asking for permission to send representatives. A vote was taken after some discussion, and by 2,762 to 1,500 it was decided to receive delegations, one speaker from each being allowed half an hour.

The speeches were duly delivered, and received, as *Le Peuple*, the organ of the C.G.T., insisted, in almost complete silence. The delegations withdrew, and a discussion followed, in which some genuine desire for unity was displayed. On the next day, however, Jouhaux, the secretary, in the course of a long survey of the situation and the work of the C.G.T., practically decided the question of unity by giving the view of the Bureau. He attacked the efforts of the C.G.T.U. as "diplomacy" and "duplicity," and declared that unity

could only be achieved by the re-entry of the "dissidents" into the C.G.T. His object was clearly shown when, in speaking of the proposed mixed commission and its work, he said :—

What does this mean ? Simply this : the Inter-Confederal Congress will have as its task the constitution of a single organisation which cannot exist without the disappearance of the C.G.T. They must think the leaders of the C.G.T. very simple if they imagine that they will accept the dissolution of their organisation.

On the last day of the Congress the vote was taken, and 3,936 votes were cast for and 365 against the official resolution, which rejected the unity proposals. Some opposition delegates wished to take part in the Inter-Confederal Congress, but a disciplinary motion forbidding such participation was passed, with, it is reported, only one dissident.

A motion proposing to send a delegation of 20 to Russia, in response to an invitation from the A.R.C.T.U., was defeated, only seven votes being cast for it.

The remainder of the period was chiefly occupied by the reports, during one of which Jouhaux gave the official I.F.T.U. view on International Unity, namely that the Russian unions can enter the I.F.T.U. provided that they accept the present statutes unchanged.

A report on the Moroccan war attacked the Communist Party policy, and declared that working class action against the war must be "exerted upon the French Government on the one hand and the Riff chief on the other," and in every way echoed the recent decisions of the Socialist Party on this subject.

#### Unity Congress

The Inter-Confederal Congress which had been arranged by the C.G.T.U. took place on August 30 and 31 in Paris. Greetings were sent to the British Minority Movement, and to the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council, and Liebaers was present as fraternal delegate from Belgium. The Conference decided during its first session to limit itself to 54 Unitary delegates and 56 Confederal and Autonomous delegates, the latter representing approximately 200 unions, and to call itself a "Unity Conference," thus avoiding violation of the terms of the disciplinary motion passed by the C.G.T.

The resolution finally accepted unanimously contained the following clauses :—

- (1) Unity cannot be realised in a lasting and effective fashion unless the trade union movement retains its autonomy and its character of class-struggle.
- (2) The practical realisation of unity can only be obtained by the simultaneous fusion, controlled by mixed committees, of all parallel organisations.
- (3) The mixed committees shall decide locally the practical steps to be taken towards unity.
- (4) This conference condemns the formation of new organisations beside those already in existence.
- (5) Resolved, to bring about this ideal, the Conference considers that the organisations present should put forth every effort among the working masses, whether organised or not, in order that, in the shortest possible time, unity, which is so urgently required, shall triumph.

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## C O N T E N T S

Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 641
		<i>AFTER LIVERPOOL</i>
Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism ?	- ..	659
		<i>By L. TROTSKY</i>
Scarborough and Liverpool	- - - ..	667
		<i>By P. BRAUN</i>
Getting Mosul into Perspective	- - - ..	679
		<i>By W. N. EWER</i>
The Drive into the Factories	- - - ..	692
		<i>By J. T. MURPHY</i>
The World of Labour	- - - - ..	699
		International—Trade Union Unity

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*Old Forms and New Struggles—Dead Relics—Scarborough versus Liverpool—The Left Wing at Liverpool—The last Parade of the Old Guard—Bourgeois Attacks Ahead—Civil War and Common Sense—The Economics of Mr. Cramp—The Logic of Mr. Cramp—Penny Wise—Civil War as a Scapegoat—Plain Practical Issues—Splitting the Working Class—“Clear Out”—Bourgeois Aims—Left Wing Next—A Coalition Government?—The Next Labour Government—A Law and Order Government—MacDonald Fears a Labour Majority—Programme and Policy—Left Wing Unity—The Lesson of Liverpool.*

**I**N the social structure of Great Britain, all the existing institutions and organisations are built on the stability of Capitalism. Only the force of events is driving to Revolution. The policy of the bourgeoisie has always been traditionally a liberal policy at home (accompanied by violent conquest abroad) ; the policy of the organised working-class movement has been equally liberal, *i.e.*, accepting the stable capitalist framework and attempting by reforms within it to achieve material improvements in conditions. But on this seemingly stable system has come violent economic unsettlement, itself the working out of the capitalist order. The basis of British exploitation of the world has weakened, owing to the rise of new powers, and begun to contract. The result is a situation of intense and growing conflict at home. The bourgeois peaceful policy is, in fact, ended : capitalists and working class are compelled to organise, more and more openly, for struggle with all their forces. But alongside this reality of growing struggle the old shell of Liberal forms still persists ; and the bourgeoisie is able to use this old shell—Parliamentarism, the old “constitutional” Trade Union and Labour tradition, &c.—to disorganise the working-class front. This is what happened at the Labour Party Conference at Liverpool.

**F**ROM the process of sudden and violent change which is taking place in Britain arises a complete contradiction between appearances and reality in social and political life. The old forms still persist : Parliament still appears to function, though more and more remotely and perfunctorily, the interplay of parties to determine politics, democratic suffrage to provide the expression of the popular will, the Trade Unions to perform their economic rôle of collective bargaining in the existing system, and all the rest of it. But the reality, as everyone more or less realises, is an extremely concentrated capitalist oligarchy, working through a very powerful State machine, and controlling an elaborate Press as the principal organ of popularising its rule, confronted with a growing, confused, but steadily advancing power of the organised working class. The real political crises are no longer the fate of a Bill or a Budget or a Parliamentary vote, but a confrontation of the Cabinet and the General Council. However, constitutional writers continue to write in the old terms.

**T**HE same contradiction is seen in the working-class movement. All the forms, the organisations, the general character of the programmes, belong to the old pre-war conditions, to the outlook of the once sheltered aristocracy of labour, to the confidence of stable advance and security. But the whole force of the working class, under the overmastering pressure of actual conditions, is pushing forward to something very different, to more and more desperate struggles against worsening conditions and to more and more revolutionary struggles. The force of the working class is compelling and hammering at the old forms to conform to its new needs, is compelling the Trade Unions to take on new and unwonted shapes, and even the Labour Party (as in 1920) to appear in revolutionary guise. At Scarborough, where the less rigid political outlook of the Trade Unions made an advance easier, the awakening force of the working class was able to make a powerful impression. At Liverpool, where all the outposts of the old capitalist control in the working-class movement were strategically concentrated, the strength of the old machine to resist change was demonstrated. The decisions of Scarborough and of Liverpool are contradictory in the logical sense, but in fact they are com-

plementary. Scarborough and Liverpool together constitute a very good picture of the existing stage of transition of the working-class movement.

**L**IVERPOOL is not in any sense an ebbing of the left revolutionary tide. It is, on the contrary, a very strong evidence of the existence of that tide. For the fact that it was found necessary to concentrate so much time and attention and energy, more than at any previous Conference, to dealing with the revolutionary issue (which, as Mr. Henderson justly and plaintively remarked, had been already "settled" every year for the past three years) is sufficient evidence of the reality of that issue. All the more so in that it was found necessary to bring the whole combined force of the capitalist machine and Press, as never before, in support of the Right Wing leaders. What Liverpool showed was not the weakness of the revolutionary issue—that is, of the rising revolutionary temper of the masses in response to the rising revolutionary situation—which more and more clearly dominates all working-class politics to-day, but the weakness of the existing Left Wing leadership, which has endeavoured to reflect the new issue and the new forces. The Left Wing leaders in the Trade Unions, who had taken a prominent part at Scarborough, failed even to attempt to put up a fight under the harder conditions at Liverpool. The Left Wing leaders in the Labour Party also played a negligible rôle. On central questions of policy, on which they had made public professions of faith during the previous twelve months, all the most prominent Left Wing leaders alike failed to raise either voice or finger in support of their opinions. They allowed themselves to be mustered in complete unchallenged unity with the most reactionary decisions of the Conference and the whole economic, social and political policy of MacDonald. This failure reflects the political uncertainty and lack of self-confidence of the Left Wing. It is a failure which is very serious in its immediate consequences for the working-class movement, and to overcome this weakness is an essential task for the future. Once again is illustrated the statement that it is not the Trade Unions as economic organs which govern or can govern politics, but that politics—either bourgeois Liberal politics or revolutionary politics

—must and always will lead the Trade Unions, and that the political field is the supreme battleground. The moment that the Trade Union Left weakened their association with Communism they fell under complete subjection to MacDonaldisism. They could not, in the nature of things, put forward an alternative of their own. Between the two political faiths the future battle lies. The Left Wing must reach a stronger political foundation, cohesion and self-discipline, political courage and political leadership.

**L**IVERPOOL was the answer of the bourgeoisie to Red Friday. On Red Friday, for a moment, the workers were united ; the bourgeoisie at once made a temporary retreat. At Liverpool the working-class forces let themselves be broken ; the Stock Exchange and the whole capitalist Press at once acclaimed the victory. It is doubtful if in the whole history of the Labour Party there has been a campaign so completely and openly instigated, led and generalised by the whole combined forces of the capitalists, with the Right Wing leaders so visibly as only their agents and mouthpieces. Liverpool was in fact a calling up of the last reserves to meet the new forces that, from the facts of the existing economic and political situation, are shaking the old Labour movement and threatening the old secure capitalist control. It was a registering of the whole force of the inherited machine of the Trade Union bureaucracy against the rising working-class revolt. It was a registering which certainly happened in its present form for the last time. The demonstration is over. Does anyone believe that the realities of the situation are changed ?

**L**ET us estimate the position as it exists after Liverpool. The bourgeoisie is anxious to inflict a crushing defeat on the working-class movement. They are compelled to attempt this by the facts of the economic situation. They know that the economic crisis, which is in fact getting worse, cannot be met within capitalism save by lowering the costs of production, that is attacking the position of the workers. They know that, in view of the experience of the past five years, they will meet with a heavier and more united resistance from the workers than ever before, and that the intensification of the conflict is inevitably raising the

political and revolutionary consciousness of the workers. They therefore know that they must prepare for a heavy conflict of a type not previously experienced, for which they may need to bring up all their forces, economic, political, legal—and illegal—and military. They are making these preparations very openly and busily. At the same time, it is equally part of the bourgeois preparations to endeavour to break up the working-class front in every way beforehand. To achieve this they have two methods of attack. The first is the direct attack from outside—the campaign of Joynson-Hicks, supported by special legislation and the police—against “sedition.” The second is the attack from inside—the campaign of MacDonald, supported by Rothermere and Beaverbrook, against “extremism.” The policy of the first attack is a policy of direct suppression. The policy of the second attack is a policy of splits and expulsions. The combined effect of both is to break the back of the movement before the fight. It is only necessary to note the expressions of the responsible organs of the Press immediately after Liverpool, and the direct incitement to the expulsion not only of individuals but of whole local Labour Parties, Trade Union branches, and even Trade Unions, to see the character of the bourgeois campaign.

**A**T this point, what is the leadership of the existing Labour Party Executive to the movement? The official leadership offered, as in Cramp’s opening address to the Conference, is a warning against civil war, as unlikely to lead to material benefits, and an advocacy of peaceful methods. What then of the preparations of the bourgeoisie? No reference is made to these. What of the coming struggle? This is left out of view. What is the working-class movement to do if it should find the doubtful protection of legality, in which it has placed all its trust, break in two in the hour of trial? No answer is given. On the morrow of the Conference, Mr. MacDonald, fresh from his triumphs in the cause of Constitutional Democracy, found himself obliged to write to *The Times* in protest against the Home Office’s direct sanction and support of the notorious O.M.S. And no doubt, when the whole working-class movement is feeling the blows of the full weight of the capitalist machine, legal and illegal, both Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Cramp will write letters of protest to *The Times*. But by that

time the working-class movement will have had opportunity to judge the practical value of a leadership which, in a crisis like the present, contents itself with preaching Sunday school wisdom on the evils of civil war instead of dealing with the actual struggle of the working class. The blessings of peace are an admirable theme, and no doubt in the last Imperialist war Mr. Cramp was only prevented by the urgency of his other duties from giving more active expression to the faith he now professes ; but, at the moment when the whole bourgeoisie is preparing war, then to come forward with sudden eagerness to preach pacifism to the working class means a very different thing.

**M**R. CRAMP argues that Great Britain is economically dependent upon other countries and, therefore, cannot risk a catastrophic break. The economic dependence is correct, and in its present exaggerated form is the outcome of the advanced capitalist process, which has sacrificed national development to the interests of Imperialism. But the same capitalist development which has led to this situation is also now breaking it. The old basis of world monopoly and exploitation is crumbling and cracking in every direction, and the catastrophic break which Mr. Cramp fears is most certain to come if capitalist development is allowed to continue. The reconstruction that is necessary cannot take place within the capitalist framework, as the complete breakdown of the ambitious Lloyd George schemes after the war (considerably more ambitious, as well as more energetically striven for, than the present Labour Party programme) bears witness. Only the Revolution, which Mr. Cramp fears, can bring about the solution of the impasse in which Great Britain is placed. Mr. Cramp, who has studied at the Labour College, may remember having read, in the course of his studies, how capitalism in its decline produces conditions of economic collapse and decay from which no measures of reform, but only the strong hand of the revolution, can find a way of re-organising the economic structure. He should not now, when he is face to face with this collapse in actual experience, shrink back from it in terror, forget all his lessons and run back to Mother Capitalism for protection, instead of seeing the plain revolutionary moral that it reveals.

**I**N a characteristic statement, Mr. Cramp argues that a "revolution of force" to be "justified" must "increase material well-being." He does not make clear whether he means an eventual increase in national well-being, such as a Socialist revolution by the release and re-direction of the productive forces inevitably must bring, or, as he appears to imply by the context, an immediate increase in material well-being in the midst of conditions of civil war. If he means the latter, his argument can only be compared to an argument that a man should not put out a fire in his house until he is convinced that he will be richer at the end of the whole affair than he was at the beginning, and that otherwise he is not "justified" in putting it out. We may assure Mr. Cramp that the British people, like every other people that has to go through the furnace, will probably be poorer at the immediate end of the revolutionary struggle than before it—though nothing like as poor as they will become under capitalism if they do not face the struggle. But just as the Russian workers, after all their sufferings, are already to-day, alone of all the workers of the world, on the up-grade of material well-being, so the workers of the other countries, all the more rapidly by reason of the previous success of the Russian workers and also of the more advanced stage of economic development, will be able to replace the material loss of the revolutionary struggle by material advance once the victory is won. The shirking of the struggle, on the other hand, leads only to the impoverishment of capitalist decay.

**I**T is indeed a characteristic argument, redolent of the whole viewpoint of the old aristocracy of labour from whose tradition Mr. Cramp has come, to put forward an immediate temporary "improvement of material well-being" in the scale against the whole struggle of the working class. Three hundred and eighty million coloured workers live in subjection to autocratic British rule, ground down to the lowest level of "material well-being" (compared to which the condition of the British worker still is luxury) waiting for the action of the British workers to break their chains. But that day must wait for the three hundred and eighty millions until there is a guarantee to the already better off British minority of an immediate "improvement in material well-being."

Here is revealed, in all its nakedness, the outlook of the old aristocracy of labour, which sacrificed the whole struggle of the working class for the sake of an infinitesimal sectional benefit, and by so doing cut itself off from the international working class. The sufferings of the British workers to-day from the collapse of the Empire are only part of the paying of the price for the crimes of the old opportunist leadership against the working class.

**B**UT the question is not a question of "for" or "against" civil war. Nobody wants civil war. Nevertheless civil wars happen when a conflict of social forces reaches a certain point. The history of England is no exception to this rule, any more than any other country. The long period since the last civil war in England is simply a reflection of the long period of bourgeois ascendancy in England, which has now reached its decline. The question of Parliamentarism and coercion, of "reason" and "force," is not an absolute question, to be settled by a vote at a conference. Every class system rests upon force, and the capitalist system in Britain is based upon a very considerable apparatus of force. It is only on the basis of that apparatus, and within its limits, that "discussion" is allowed; the moment that apparatus itself is questioned, the whole machinery of violence and coercion will be put into operation against you. During periods when the class struggle is not acute, the province of Parliamentary forms or "discussion" is relatively large, because no fundamental issues are raised; as soon as it becomes more acute the province becomes restricted and, at a certain stage, abolished altogether and replaced by dictatorship. The question of proximity to peaceful discussion or civil war is therefore precisely a question of the stage of working-class advance and capitalist dissolution. The working class, which is the sole pacific force in the world, will have to face the successive conditions of the struggle as those conditions develop. The workers are the last to wish for any measures of violence and suffer the most; but they will have to overcome the opposition of the bourgeoisie, and they will have eventually to challenge and overcome the apparatus of bourgeois violence, and the bourgeoisie will be too skilful to allow them to do this from the convenient vantage point of bourgeois legality.



**T**HE immediate question, however, is not yet a question of these ultimate issues. It is a question of the immediate struggle facing the working class and the best way of meeting it. This is not met by abstract disquisitions on the evils of civil war or the dependence of the British people on the export trade. The bourgeoisie is making very definite preparations. They are threatening special legislation against the Labour movement. They are organising, under various forms and under semi-official control, large bodies of disciplined blacklegs, street-fighters, &c., openly for use against the working class. They are preparing, according to prominent and responsible Labour Party leaders, the use of the military against the workers. The situation calls for certain plain measures of self-defence by the working-class movement, which can be agreed on by all, apart from any discussion about ultimate issues. It is necessary to prepare the greatest possible unity of action of the whole movement under a centralised lead. It is necessary to conduct a campaign of propaganda which shall familiarise the issues of the coming struggle throughout the country. It is necessary to prepare against legal and other attacks upon the movement (which will begin always in a piecemeal fashion and only against "extremists") by closing the whole ranks of the movement and bringing its whole force to bear against any attack in any quarter. It is necessary to prepare in the localities for Workers' Defence and to organise peaceful propaganda in the forces for the workers' cause. All these are plain tasks on which there can be, and needs to be, plenty of concrete useful discussion. But when a responsible leadership meets a situation like the present only with a repetition of capitalist bogey talk about the menace of revolution and, at the same time, instead of taking a single step to organise the movement, proceeds to carry out (again in absolute unity with the capitalist campaign) a policy of splits and expulsions within the movement, then that leadership is simply playing the bourgeois game.

**T**HE policy that the Right Wing is pursuing is in fact splitting the movement. As this is likely to become a cardinal issue in the near future, it is necessary to make clear why this is so, and why the Right Wing policy inevitably means a splitting of the movement on a scale hardly yet guessed at by

most people in this country. It is often argued that Communists and Left Wingers who hold views at variance with the existing policy of the Labour Party should leave the Party and propagate their views outside. This is a very superficial suggestion, which could only be put forward by one who has completely broken with the whole conception of the working-class movement. Now every Socialist and Marxist knows that the struggle of Socialism is not the struggle of an isolated section, but of the organised working class, and that the task of the Socialist is to win the working class as an organised force for the Socialist struggle. The Communists, therefore, who make it their aim to endeavour to win over the mass of the organised working class for the struggle are acting correctly. But the Right Wing leaders who, instead of meeting them on this basis and fighting point by point within the working-class movement, endeavour to maintain their position by expulsions are smashing the working-class movement for the sake of their own notions.

**H**OW will it work out in practice? Mr. MacDonald says :—  
 Liverpool has laid down the charter of the Labour Party, and those who are not to respect it had better clear out.

Here we have it plain and clear. For the sake of this petty programme of small Liberal reforms and Imperialist illusions, which the Right Wing leadership has temporarily fastened upon the movement, and which has no more real meaning and permanence in the life of the movement than the Imperialist resolutions of the time of war-fever, for the sake of this, the existing stage of working-class unity and consciousness, which has been built up through the Labour Party, is to be cheerfully smashed. Do revolutionary workers who have given their lives to the building up of the movement protest against this abandonment of Socialism? Let them "clear out." Do Trade Union branches and local Labour Parties venture on opposition and dare to stand on the unity of the working class front? Let them be expunged and "re-organised," as it has already been attempted to "re-organise" local Labour Parties, no longer on the basis of the organised working class in the locality, but on the basis of perhaps one "loyal" branch, and for the remainder a middle-class membership. Does a Trade

Union reach a revolutionary outlook, as many of them are within a few stages of doing? Let them "clear out." Is it not clear that what is happening is, not the clarification of the basis of a particular party, but the smashing and disorganisation of the whole working-class movement? And is it not clear that, as the inevitable advance of the working-class proceeds, the disorganisation will reach larger and larger proportions?

**B**UT this policy of counter-revolutionary splits and expulsions plays straight into the hands of the Government and the bourgeoisie. The language of the bourgeois Press shows their aim clearly enough :—

The future of the Labour Party—even its existence as a party of power in the councils of the state—depends upon the resolutions of the Executive being made effective not only in local Labour Party organisations but throughout the Trade Unions as well . . . This would be more than a Party achievement. It would be a definite gain for England.—*The Times*, September 29, 1925.

If these resolutions are carried, Labour will have nailed its colours—it could hardly do otherwise—to the Parliamentary mast. Its breach with the Minority Movement in the Trade Unions will be complete. The battle is thus joined and likely to be vigorous.—*Observer*, September 7, 1925.

Clearer of all is the *The Times* leader "From Words to Deeds" on the morrow of the Conference decision—a typical piece of bourgeois statesmanship :—

The Party has made a great and welcome affirmation . . . But these resolutions do not end the matter . . . The declarations of the Conference will in due course have to be transformed into acts . . . The main difficulty is in dealing with the Communists in the Trade Unions. It is a comparatively simple matter to expel a handful of Communists from a local Labour Party or even to expel one or more of such bodies which have renounced the Party principles. But a Trade Union cannot be called upon—such is the constitution of the Labour Party—to expel its Communist members. It can only be instructed in the inconsistency of belonging to the Labour Party and sending Communists to represent it in the Party meetings . . . Some of the Trade Unions will be placed in a dilemma.

The Liverpool Conference has enunciated a principle. So far so good. A policy must follow. Communism must not only be condemned ; it must be cast out.—*The Times*, October 1, 1925.

Here is set out an open bourgeois lead to the Right Wing in the Labour movement, setting out in detail every stage of tactics

to be followed in order to split the movement. The language of MacDonald in his "Clear Out" article completely coincides with the provocative language of the *The Times*. He says :—

This will require firm handling, and the National Executive, after the Liverpool decisions, will no doubt put its foot down heavily upon offending parties.

It should be understood that this is not a question simply of Communism and Communists, but of the bourgeoisie and the working-class movement. Everyone knows that the campaign of the bourgeoisie against the working-class movement for a policy of persecution and suppression always begins with the "extremists," and that for the purpose of that suppression the first step is to win the collaboration of the Right Wing leaders in dealing with the "extremists." This has been the experience in country after country. Once the working-class front has been broken, the persecution extends to a wider and wider field, and eventually also to the "moderate" Labour elements. The united front of the working class, of which Mr. MacDonald is so contemptuous ("Superficially the United Front seems desirable. In reality it is a disorganisation of our forces."—*Forward*, September 26, 1925), is a bitter need of the working class in the present period of struggle. Those Left Wing leaders who let themselves be carried along the easy stream of the bourgeois campaign against Communism acted very foolishly and with a complete short-sightedness as to the future issues which they will presently have to face. The delegates of the Conference may for the moment enjoy the applause of the capitalist Press, but they will learn that that applause always costs a very heavy price to the working class. The decisions of the Liverpool Conference constitute a direct invitation to the bourgeoisie to begin the attack.<sup>1</sup> This invitation will be made use of to the full and to an extent that is not yet guessed. The policy of Liverpool is a policy of suicide.

**B**UT the campaign of the bourgeoisie goes very much further than a campaign of enlarging expulsions. The aim of the bourgeoisie is completely to split the working-class forces, here as in Germany, by directly associating the "moderate"

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<sup>1</sup> Since this was written, has taken place the Government's arrest of the Communist leaders—within a fortnight of Liverpool.

Labour elements in the task of suppressing the revolutionary elements. The aim is to involve Right Wing Labour in some form of bourgeois coalition which shall directly throw upon it the responsibilities of administration, of the maintenance of bourgeois law and order, and of the maintenance of supplies in the coming period of struggle. This objective is set out with absolute clearness in such a typical organ of the progressive bourgeoisie as the *Observer* (where the propaganda is directly linked with the propaganda of the O.M.S.) :—

We do not believe that national safety, confidence and progress will ever be sufficiently restored until Liberalism at least, and moderate Labour if possible, combine with progressive Unionism to restore majority rule, the full strength of Parliamentary supremacy and its vital expression—the maintenance at all costs of public transport and supply.—*Observer*, September 27, 1925.

No less clear is the language of *The Times* :—

By disowning and denouncing violent measures the Labour Party leaves possible the co-operation of all men who are bound together by a common citizenship for the promotion of the national prosperity. Men and parties may differ fundamentally as to the desirability of a society founded on social or on private enterprise. No sane man will question the necessity, while that issue is remitted to the arbitrament of reason and public discussion, of using the means now at command for maintaining the supply of all those things which contribute to the common good.—*The Times*, October 3, 1925.

In this sentence, incidentally, which really deserves word-by-word study, is expressed the whole philosophy of the Second International. Remit the issue of Socialism to “the arbitrament of reason and public discussion,” and *in the meantime, i.e.*, in the actual class struggle, co-operate with the bourgeoisie (“all men who are bound together in a common citizenship for the promotion of the national prosperity”) for the protection and maintenance of the existing profit-making system (“using the means now at command for maintaining the supply of all those things which contribute to the common good”). Nowhere has been set out more clearly the rôle and destiny of our future Eberts and Scheidemanns.

**A**ND now let us compare with these statements, which express with exact precision the aims of the bourgeoisie, the very significant language of the Labour Party Executive leaders on the question of a Minority Labour Government. The

Labour Party Executive favours the formation of a second Minority Labour Government. But what is a Minority Labour Government, as they understand it? It is in fact a coalition with the bourgeoisie. It is again the taking of office under the control of a bourgeois majority, responsible to and removable by the bourgeoisie, administering the Government State machine under the criticism and supervision of the bourgeois controllers, acting, that is to say, purely and simply as caretakers for the bourgeoisie. What is the difference between this and open Coalition Government? By comparison, in an open coalition the Labour elements might at least make some little bargain as the price of their betrayal of the working class. Here they act simply as agents, performing the dirty work of the bourgeoisie. A foretaste of this, but only a foretaste, has been experienced last year. But in the future period, because the future period is going to be a period of large-scale class struggle, the meaning of the future Labour Government which is being worked for ("We have had a Labour Government. It is possible—and not too remotely possible—that we may have another and a better one."—*Star*, September 30, 1925) will be realised on the backs of the working class.

**T**HE Labour Party Executive leaders are perfectly conscious of their future rôle. Mr. Thomas, in the course of the debate on a Minority Labour Government, openly said that he expected the next Labour Government to arise directly out of the intensification of the industrial situation :—

The Miners were in an industrial dispute. He was convinced that the present Government would fall on its industrial policy. Visualise the situation that would then arise. The Government, having fallen on its industrial policy, would go to the country. In his judgment the Labour Party would be the largest individual party returned to the House of Commons. Well, the country having justified the Labour Party and declared that it considered that Party's industrial policy the best, what was the Party to do? If the Congress passed that resolution the Labour Party would have to say that the other people must go back to office and continue their mischief. A more ridiculous and absurd situation could not arise.—*Manchester Guardian* report, October 1, 1925.

What does this mean? Mr. Thomas is not a revolutionary. He is not proposing that a Labour Government should enter into

office in the midst of intensified class struggle all over the country in order to lead that class struggle, breaking down all constitutional barriers. But what is the alternative? The alternative means that the Labour Government is entering on office as the protector of capitalist law and order, as the protector and maintainer of capitalist supplies, as the responsible head of the capitalist administrative and coercive machine against the working class in the struggle. This is the objective aim of the next Minority Labour Government.

**M**R. MACDONALD is even more clear as to the future situation. In the course of the same debate on a Minority Labour Government, Mr. MacDonald made an even more significant declaration. He said :—

Unless I am perfectly certain of a team spirit I am far more afraid to go in with a majority than in a minority, because if everyone in the team with a majority is going to develop conscientious scruples and say : “ I am a better class representative than the hundred or two who remain behind the Government,” then that majority is weaker as a Parliamentary weapon than a confessed honest and loyal minority.—*Daily Telegraph*, October 1, 1925.

“ I am far more afraid to go in with a majority than in a minority.” In that sentence is expressed the very root of the situation. For, in fact, the bourgeois majority which controlled the last as it will control the next MacDonald Labour Government is not the shackle upon his eager feet that stays his advance—as his apologetic supporters would like to suggest. It is, on the contrary, his safeguard and his protection—against the working class. He could know no greater fear than the possibility of a working-class majority whose existence would remove the last shred of cover from the realities of his policy and whose demands would bring him face to face with his betrayal of the working class. In the unconscious heat of debate he has given expression to the innermost essence of his position. He would rather be in a minority than in a majority. Such a statement may seem strange in the leader of a working-class party aspiring to power. But it is not at all strange if it is understood that a Minority Government means in fact a coalition with the bourgeoisie and that the policy of MacDonald is and can only be a coalition with the bourgeoisie.

**T**HE new programme adopted at Liverpool is only the expression of this policy. It admittedly does not bear the character of a thought-out, serious or fundamental programme. It is simply a safeguarding of the interests of the next Labour Government—a formal renunciation of the otherwise embarrassing claims of even the limited degree of Socialist aims expressed in the old 1918 programme of “Labour and the New Social Order.” It is in fact a retreat, corresponding to the intensification of the class struggle and the increasingly reactionary rôle which Right Wing Labour has to play. The contents are a mixture of small Liberal reforms and Chamberlainite social imperialism. The criticisms of the *New Leader*, reflecting the dismay of old-fashioned Liberal socialism, are fully justified. But the programme is only the expression of a policy, and in the realities of this policy the details of the programme occupy only a secondary position. The essential fact of the position is that the coming period is a period of intensified class struggle. The Labour Party Executive is preparing for the fact that in the crisis of the struggle it will have to come down on the side of bourgeois law and order. The programme is a suitable programme for the coming Law and Order Government or Minority Government.

**T**O fight this programme and to fight this policy it is necessary to take a wide view of the whole issues of the coming struggle, and not to get lost in details. It is useless for the Left forces to make some small advance or some small contest in this or that particular aspect of the field, on this or that particular detail, and to leave the fundamental strategy and leadership to the Right Wing. An openly reactionary and capitalist-serving leadership on the one hand, and confused and unorganised protests on the other, are a pitiful condition for a great movement to enter into a great struggle. The Left Wing bloc that shall challenge the whole policy of the existing Right Wing leadership, that shall put an alternative policy before the working class and fight for it through thick and thin, and so build up out of the demands of the struggle a new leadership for the working class, is needed now more than ever. What happened at Liverpool happened, not by reason of any weakening of the determination



and the readiness of the masses to face the coming fight (the tremendous response to Trade Union Unity has shown the readiness of the workers to respond to a Left lead), but solely owing to the weakness of those whose duty it was to lead. But the very fact of the tremendous response to 'Trade Union Unity, the Workers' Alliance and every similar sign of Left leadership, shows the tremendous field that there is and the tremendous response that awaits a real Left leadership which has the courage to stand out on political issues. The necessity of a united Left Wing on the big central issues facing the working class in the coming struggle is the immediate lesson of the Liverpool Conference.

**W**HAT Liverpool showed is that the new revolutionary situation which confronts the British workers is still only slightly understood. The elements of mass awakening are present, as was shown by the Trade Union Unity campaign and Red Friday. But the awakening forces need a courageous leadership to voice their demands. Revolutionary political understanding is still lacking. In consequence the reins of leadership remain in the hands of the old and experienced reformist leaders who are following a conscious counter-revolutionary policy. The new forces have so far only expressed themselves in limited and traditional forms of Trade Union organisation and the like, and have not yet raised the conscious challenge of new leadership. The working-class awakening which has begun in response to the new situation has so far only superficially affected the upper elements of the movement : and a considerable section of these upper strata are endeavouring to consolidate their position in union with the bourgeoisie against the new forces of working-class revolt. This creates a dangerous situation for the working class and makes more necessary than ever the United Front of all working-class forces. The two immediate dangers after Liverpool, against which the whole movement must be on guard, are the dangers of splits and of bourgeois persecution. Preparation for the coming struggle must occupy first place. The need of the working class is to build up a leadership of struggle in place of the existing leadership, and this necessitates the unification of the Left Wing. The consolidation of the Left Wing is a political necessity of the present stage. On the

other hand the experience of Liverpool has shown that the Left Wing can only attain strength and success in so far as it has political clearness and firmness. Here we come to the cardinal issue which Liverpool most strongly teaches. It is necessary to strengthen and deepen our agitation, to raise, and concentrate on, fundamental political issues, to break down old habits of outlook and organisation, to force to the front the revolutionary realities of the existing situation in Britain and the coming struggles, and to carry all this to the masses of the workers in the Trade Unions and in the factories. Only by so doing will it be possible to build up, against the shackles of the old machine that is paralysing the growth of the working class, a living and militant working-class movement which will be prepared to face the heavy trials of the new period. The task in front is not only one of preparing for an immediate struggle, but of driving home a revolutionary understanding of the issues ahead. This revolutionary understanding alone can give the new leadership.

R. P. D.

# TOWARDS SOCIALISM OR TOWARDS CAPITALISM ?

## The Language of Figures

By L. TROTSKY

### I.

**T**HE State Planning Commission (Gosplan) has published a comprehensive table of "control" figures of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. for 1925-26. All this sounds very dry, and, so to speak, bureaucratic. But in these dry, statistical columns, and in the almost equally dry explanations, there can be heard the fine musical notes of the harmonious growth of socialism. It is no longer here a question of guesses, of suppositions, of hopes or of theoretical deductions. On the contrary, we have here the weighty language of figures, convincing enough for even the New York Money Exchange. We wish to dwell for a short time on the most fundamental of these figures. They are well worth it.

In the first place, the very fact of the publication of these comprehensive tables represents for us a veritable economic triumph. The day of their publication (August 20) is a noteworthy day in the Soviet calendar. Agriculture and industry, the goods turnover, both internal and foreign, the circulation of money, the price of goods, credit operations, and the State Budget, are all reflected in these tables, both as regards their development and their mutual relations. We have here a clear, simple and convenient comparison of all the fundamental facts for 1913, for 1924-25, and of the estimated figures for 1925-26. In the explanatory text statistical data for other years of Soviet national economy are given wherever necessary. Thanks to this, we have a general picture of the development of our social structure and of the prospects for the following economic year. The very possibility of constructing such tables may well be considered a victory of the first order.

Socialism is a keeping of accounts. Under the conditions of the New Economic Policy only the forms of our account keeping are different from those which we endeavoured to employ during the period of Military Communism, and which will receive their final form with the development of socialism. But socialism is account keeping, and at present, in the new stage of the new economic policy, it is possibly of even greater importance than when socialism has been finally established. For then account keeping will be purely of an economic character, whereas now it is bound up with complex political problems. And so, in these comprehensive tables and estimates, we see for the first time the Socialist State taking into account all branches of economy, their relations to one another and to their development. This is undoubtedly a great victory. The very possibility of doing this is an undoubted testimony both to our material economic achievements, as also to our success in taking into account every detail, in generalisation, and in directing economic thought. These tables may indeed be looked upon as a kind of matriculation certificate. Only we must remember that a matriculation certificate is only granted to people, not when they conclude their education, but when, having finished their secondary education, they are ready to start on a higher educational course. It is precisely problems of a higher order which these comprehensive tables of the Gosplan place before us. We desire to subject them to an analysis.

The first question which arises when glancing at the tables is, how far are they exact? Here there is wide scope for reservation and even for scepticism. Everyone knows that our statistics and our methods of account keeping are often faulty. Not because they are any worse than other branches of our economic and cultural activities, but only because they reflect all, or, at any rate, many sides of our general backwardness. But this by no means justifies any wholesale distrust. At the present time the figures of the Gosplan are the nearest approximation to the actual facts. Why? For three reasons. In the first place, because they are based on the fullest possible material, which material, moreover, is worked up from day to day by the various sections of the Gosplan. Secondly, because this material has been worked up by the most competent and skilled economists, statisticians and technical experts. Thirdly,

because this work has been carried out by institutions entirely free from departmental interests, and always able to confront the departments directly.<sup>1</sup> It should also be added that there are no commercial or economic secrets for the Gosplan. It can verify (either itself or through the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection) any industrial process or any commercial calculation. All balance sheets are open to it, as also all departmental estimates, and that, not only in their final form, but also in the original drafts. Of course, there will still be disputes regarding separate figures. Certain facts are disputed from this or that point of view by the departments. The corrections of given departments, whether accepted or not, may exercise a considerable influence on certain practical enterprises, on the export and import estimates, on the assignments made in the Budget for certain purposes, and so on. But these corrections can have no influence on fundamental facts. There cannot be at the present time better thought-out and more thoroughly verified figures than those published in the Gosplan tables. And in any case even inexact figures, providing they are based on previous experience, are far preferable to working in the dark. In the first place, we introduce corrections based on our experience, and we learn therefrom, whereas in the second case we simply exist on chance.

The tables are brought up to October 1, 1926. This means that in about twenty months' time, when we shall have at our disposal the reports from our economic departments for 1925-26, we shall be in a position to compare the facts of to-morrow with our suppositions of to-day as expressed in figures. Whatever discrepancy we may find, the very possibility of making such a comparison will in itself be a valuable economic lesson.

In discussing the exactitude of our forecast, it is necessary before all to understand what manner of forecast we have in mind in the given case. When, for instance, the Howard Institute in America endeavours by means of statistics to determine the direction or rate of development of various branches of American national economy, they work to a certain extent in the same way as

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<sup>1</sup> "The figures given by operative economic departments are more than incomplete, they are even weighted in a given direction." This is an explanatory note by the Gosplan. We must carefully bear in mind this severe stricture. With the participation of the Gosplan and the press, our operative economic departments must be taught to give objective, that is, correct accounts.

astronomers. That is to say, they endeavour to determine the dynamics of processes entirely independent of their will, with only this difference, that one cannot apply methods anywhere near so exact to statistics as to astronomy. Our statistics stand in a fundamentally different position. They exercise decisive influence in the institutions which direct our national economy. Estimates are here not merely the product of passive forecast, but they are the pivot of active economic observation. Every figure is not a mere photograph, it is a signpost. The table of estimates has been worked out by a State Department in which the very highest directing staff of our national economy participates. When the table says that our exports should rise from 462,000,000 roubles in the current year to 1,200,000,000 roubles in 1925-26, that is by 160 per cent., this is not merely a forecast, it is an instruction. On the basis of what we have already achieved, we are shown here what more we must do. When the table says that the capital investments in our industries—that is to say, expenditure on the renewal and extension of our basic capital—should amount to 900,000,000 roubles, this again is not merely a passive calculation, but a statistical well-founded practical task of the first importance, and this is precisely the character of the table from beginning to end. It is a dialectical combination of a theoretical forecast with practical observation, *i.e.*, the combining in calculation of objective conditions and tendencies with the subjective formulation of the economic tasks confronting the workers' and peasants' State. Herein lies the fundamental distinction between the Gosplan tables and all possible statistical data, accounts and forecasts of any capitalist State. Herein also, as we shall see below, lies the gigantic superiority of our—that is, of socialist—methods over capitalist methods.

The tables of estimates of the Gosplan give, however, a valuation in figures of socialist economic methods, not in general, but in their application under given conditions, that is to say, at a definite stage of the so-called new economic policy. Spontaneous economic processes can be dealt with in the main by the objective statistical method. In their turn, the economic processes directed by the State at one stage or another make themselves evident in the market, and thereby are linked up with the spontaneous, so to speak, uncontrolled, economic processes, which owe their origin principally

to the irregular phenomena of peasant economy. To a very large extent planning at the present time consists precisely in the conjunction of the controlled and directed economic processes with the spontaneous processes of the market. In other words, in our national economy, socialist tendencies at various stages of development are combined with and interlocked with capitalist tendencies, again at different stages of maturity and immaturity. Our estimate figures give the connection between the one set of processes and the other, and thereby reveal the equilibrium of development. Therein lies the fundamental socialist importance of our draft plan.

That the economic processes developing in our country are fundamentally antagonistic, presenting a struggle of two systems which mutually exclude one another, this we have always known and never concealed. On the contrary, precisely during the transition to the new economic policy, the historical question was formulated by Lenin in two pronouns—"who whom?" The Menshevist theoreticians, and particularly Otto Bauer, condescendingly welcomed the new economic policy as a sensible capitulation of the premature violent Bolshevik methods of socialist economy to well-tried and reliable capitalism. The misgivings of some, and the hopes of others, have now received a very thorough verification, and its results are expressed in the estimate figures of our social-economic draft plans. Its significance lies also in this, that it is now impossible any longer to talk in a general way of the socialist and capitalist elements of our national economy, of plans *in general*, and of spontaneity *in general*. Even though it may be only roughly, and in a preliminary way, we have now made our calculations; we have now defined quantitatively the relation between socialism and capitalism in our national economy, both for to-day and for to-morrow. We have thereby obtained valuable practical material for a reply to the historic question—"Who Whom?"

## II.

In all that has been said above, only the theoretical significance of the Gosplan tables has been dwelt upon. We have shown the enormous importance for us of the fact that we have at last been enabled to estimate all the fundamental processes of our national economy, their connections and developments, and thereby obtain

a basis for a far more conscious and considered policy, and that not in the sphere of national economy alone. But of far more importance to us is, of course, the actual content of the Gosplan comprehensive tables, that is to say, the actual statistical data which express our social development.

In order to receive a correct reply to the question—towards socialism or towards capitalism?—we must first of all formulate correctly the question itself. This question naturally divides itself into three sub-questions : (a) Are our productive forces developing? (b) What are the social forms of this development? (c) What is the rate of the development?

The first question is the simplest and the most fundamental. Without the development of the productive forces, neither capitalism nor socialism is conceivable. Military communism, which had its birth in stern historical necessity, spent itself quickly and impeded the further development of the productive forces. The most elementary, and at the same time the most compelling, significance of the new economic policy, consisted in the development of the productive forces as the basis for any social movement whatever. The new economic policy was welcomed by the bourgeoisie and the Menshevists as a necessary (but, of course, "insufficient") step on the road towards the liberation of the productive forces. Menshevik theoreticians, both of the Kautsky and of the Otto Bauer persuasion, approved of the new economic policy precisely as the dawn of capitalist restoration in Russia. They added: either the new economic policy will destroy the Bolshevik dictatorship (a happy consummation) or the Bolshevik dictatorship will destroy the new economic policy (a very sad outcome). *Smenavekhovism*<sup>2</sup> in its first form rose from the belief that the new economic policy would ensure the development of the productive forces in a capitalist form. And now, the comprehensive tables of the Gosplan give us the basic elements for a reply, not only to the question regarding the general development of the productive forces, but also to the question as to what social forms this development is assuming.

We know very well, of course, that the social forms of our economic development are of dual character, since they are based

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<sup>2</sup> *Smienna Viekh* ('The Change' of Landmarks) was the slogan of a movement among Russian bourgeois and intellectual *émigrés* in support of the Soviet Government.



on both co-operation and antagonism of the capitalist and socialist methods and aims. The new economic policy has to work under these conditions of our development; therein lies its fundamental content. But such a general idea of the antagonism within our development is no longer sufficient for us. We seek and demand a measurement as accurate as possible of these economic antagonisms, that is to say, we demand not only the dynamic co-efficients of the general development, but comparative co-efficients of the specific gravity of this or that tendency. On the reply to this question depends much; more correctly speaking, everything in our internal and our external policy.

Let us consider the question from its most acute angle. We may say that, without a reply to the question regarding the relative force of the capitalist and socialist tendencies, and of the direction in which the relation between their specific gravities is changing as the productive forces grow, it is impossible to form a clear and reliable idea of the prospects and possible dangers of our peasant policy. In reality, if it turned out that, as the productive forces developed, the capitalist tendencies grow at the expense of the socialist tendencies, then the final extension of the framework of commodity-capitalist relations in the villages might have a fatal influence, directing all further development on the road towards capitalism. On the other hand, if the specific gravity of the State, *i.e.*, of socialist economy, increases in the general national economy of the country, then the greater or less "liberation" of the commodity-capitalist process in the villages becomes only a question of the relative equilibrium of forces, and may be solved from merely a business point of view. How? When? To what limits? In other words, if the productive forces in the hands of the socialist State, and which has in its hands all the commanding positions, not only grow rapidly, but grow more rapidly than the private capitalist productive forces of the towns and villages; if this has been confirmed by the experience of the most difficult period of restoration, then it is clear that a certain development of the commodity-capitalist tendencies, springing from within peasant economy, in no way threatens to take us unawares, or to overcome us by the transformation of quantity into quality; that is, by a sudden turn towards capitalism.

Finally, the third question before us is the rate of our development from the point of view of world economy. At a first glance it might appear that this question, although important, is nevertheless of entirely subordinate significance. Of course, it is desirable to reach socialism "as soon as possible," but once the socialist tendencies are assured of victory under our new economic policy conditions, then the question of the rate of this movement would seem to be only of minor importance. This, however, is not so. Such a conclusion might have been correct (but not wholly so) if we had a closely-knit self-sufficing economy. But this is not the case. Precisely owing to our successes, we have entered the world market. That is to say, we have entered into the system of the world division of labour, and, moreover, we remain surrounded by capitalism. Under these conditions, the rate of our economic development defines the force of our resistance to the economic pressure of world capital, and to the military-political pressure of world imperialism. And, at present, these factors cannot be left out of account.

If we now apply our three leading questions to the comprehensive tables and explanatory notes of the Gosplan, then we shall see that the reply of the tables to the first two questions regarding the development of the productive forces and of the social forms of this development, is not only both clear and concise, but most favourable. As for the third question regarding the rate of development, our economic development so far has only reached the stage of considering this question in its international aspect. But here too, as we shall see, the favourable reply to the first two questions prepares the grounds for the solution of the third question. The latter will form the highest criterion for our economic development in the near future.

*(To be continued)*

# SCARBOROUGH AND LIVERPOOL

By P. BRAUN

**A**FTER the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party Conference the question naturally arises as to how it could happen that the same British Trade Unions could adopt the path of the class struggle against Capitalism and Imperialism through one set of representatives at Scarborough, while at Liverpool, through other representatives they came out in defence of class collaboration under the banner of social-imperialism.

If we forget for one moment the resolutions passed at Liverpool and Scarborough and simply deal with the structure of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, we at first receive an impression of idyllic harmony and personal accord between these two organisations that the British working class has created. The executives of both organisations hold joint meetings, at which general questions concerning the entire British movement are discussed and decided upon. Both the Labour Party Executive and the General Council have their offices in the same buildings, have common departments conducting press, information and research work, international questions, &c. The biggest campaigns, as a general rule, are conducted jointly by both organisations. For this reason it is certainly so much the more astonishing that there was so acute a parting of the ways between Liverpool and Scarborough. In order to discover the reasons for this sharp distinction between Liverpool and Scarborough, we must first of all attempt to unravel the real physiognomy of these two Congresses.

Let us take Scarborough first. The Trades Union Congress at Scarborough started its work after the Trade Unions had succeeded in resisting the attack on the miners' wages without any assistance on the part of the Labour Party. The trade unionists proudly called July 31—the day when the mining magnates called off the lock-out—"Red Friday." This Red Friday was naturally popular with the workers, because, ever since Black Friday four years ago

they had not really gained one serious victory in the struggle against the capitalist attack on wages. The Trade Unions were indeed proud of this accomplishment, commemorating the fact that they had succeeded in warding off the powerful blow of capital by means of their own Trade Union resources.

The speech of A. B. Swales, the President of the Trades Union Congress, reflected this proud and fighting mood. The special correspondent of the *Daily Herald* remarked in his report on the opening of the Congress, that never had the speech of a leader produced such emotion as was caused by Swales' speech at Scarborough. Harry Pollitt<sup>1</sup> asserts that two of the statements in Swales' speech met with exceptional sympathy. These concerned the necessity for a consistent fighting policy, and secondly concerning those "good comrades" who in bygone days preached the gospel of destroying capitalism and who now attempt to save this bankrupt system with the aid of the ruling classes. Thus Swales repaid his colleague Cramp in advance, and with interest, for the speech he was to pronounce at Liverpool.

However, despite Swales' fighting speech, the *Manchester Guardian* the next day was able to write that the influence of Moscow (*i.e.*, the idea of the revolutionary class struggle) was only seen in the sphere of phraseology and not in the sphere of activity. What was the reason for this wise liberal newspaper coming to a conclusion so consoling for the ruling classes? An attentive study of the first day of the Scarborough Congress shows that the conclusion arrived at by this thoughtful journal has a very serious basis.

The General Council, in its Report presented to Congress, made a timid attempt to distinguish itself somewhat from the Labour Party. It modestly spoke of the necessity for separate premises, and declared that the joint departments controlled by the Labour Party Executive and by the General Council cannot cope sufficiently with the work of the T.U.C. Everyone understood that the Trades Union Congress was attempting to emerge from its position of *subjection*. But the General Council did not have the courage to look the problem in the face and tell the truth as to the mutual relations existing between the two centres of the Labour

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<sup>1</sup>THE LABOUR MONTHLY, October, 1925, Vol. VII, No. 10, p. 605.

movement. The right wing were on the look-out. They talked demagogically about unity, hiding from the Congress the fact that the group which controls the Labour Party subserves the interests of the ruling class.

The memory of the events which preceded July 31 was still keenly impressed on the minds of those who took part in the Scarborough Congress. Everyone knew that MacDonalld had made heroic attempts to intervene in the crisis that had broken out in the mining industry, and that Swales, Hicks, Smith and Cook held aloof from the "politicians." Then why was Swales so afraid of MacDonalld's intervention? The leaders of the Miners' Federation and of the Trades Union Congress knew quite well that the intervention of MacDonalld would have led to the whole question being handed over for solution to the National Joint Council, in which MacDonalld had an assured majority. On the basis of this experience the General Council could have openly opposed this constitutional arrangement which hands over the leadership of the entire Labour movement to the Labour Party. But the General Council was timid. As a result of this it was really Thomas and Clynes who were victorious.

The next question which faced Congress was that of the General Council's powers. The Labour Party is an absolutely centralised organisation. From time to time conflicts occur between the Labour Party Executive and the Parliamentary Party. But as a general rule it is the leader of the Party who has the decisive vote, who acts on his own responsibility, and who comes down heavily upon any organisation which dares to "poke its nose into other people's business." The General Council, however, is an organ without power. The chairman of the General Council is in no way whatever a leader. He is a Caliph for an hour. Last year Swales was president. This year the president's chair is occupied by the consistent conservative Pugh. The election of president is not determined by the views of the candidate, but by some kind of very complicated "turn" commencing from the year 1868. Even without taking into consideration the National Joint Council mentioned above, advantage is on the side of the Labour Party in all the joint departments as well as in the Labour movement as a whole.

The question of the General Council's powers was important

and momentous not only from the point of view of mutual relations with the Labour Party, but also from the view-point of the vital interests of the Labour movement. The right wing realised at Scarborough how serious the position was and rushed headlong into the struggle. The left wing took up the defence of the General Council. But the General Council itself remained silent, as if overwhelmed. And it was of course difficult to obtain an increase of power for an organisation which itself remained silent on this subject. After this the ruling classes naturally had a right to say : things are not so bad as they looked.

It is true, the subsequent work of Congress noticeably changed the generous mood of the entire Press, including even the *Manchester Guardian*. Day by day the swing towards the Left became clearer and clearer and the ruling classes began to sound the alarm, the leaders of the Labour Party soon following in their footsteps. There is no doubt, however, that a few days after Congress terminated its labours, the leaders of the Labour Party, and with them the leaders of the bourgeois parties, in summing up everything that had taken place at Scarborough, were able to arrive at the calm conclusion that the left wing mood of Congress was not so very dangerous as it seemed during the days when it had made its appearance in a number of decidedly revolutionary resolutions.

It was clear from the discussions that the overwhelming majority of delegates were thirsting for a sharp change in the policy of the Trade Unions. The right wing quickly sensed the situation created. They understood that they only had to come out with their full programme and they could be smashed, so they preferred a tactic of flank attacks, and only endeavoured to prevent the left-wing mood of the Congress majority acquiring definite forms. The centrists and left wingers, including the group of Swales and Purcell, were rather passive. The real leadership passed into the hands of the Minority Movement delegates, for whom a very large number of delegates began to display all the more sympathy. The Minority Movement was sufficiently strong to carry a number of important resolutions with the help of the left wing, but it was still too weak to effect the reorganisation of the apparatus of the British Trade Union movement.

The decisive fight arose in connection with the resolution of the Tailors and Garment Workers' Union, which reads :—

This Congress declares that the Trade Union movement must organise to prepare the Trade Unions in conjunction with the party of the workers to struggle for the overthrow of capitalism.

At the same time Congress warns the workers against all attempts to introduce capitalist schemes of co-partnership, which in the past have failed to give the workers any positive rights, but instead have usually served as fetters retarding the forward movements.

Congress further considers that strong, well-organised shop committees are indispensable weapons in the struggle to force the capitalists to relinquish their grip on industry, and, therefore, pledges itself to do all in its power to develop and strengthen workshop organisation.

This resolution, in spite of certain points that are not quite clear, embodies not only a new programme, but also a new form of organisation. On the very eve of Congress arch-left "Plebs" criticised the points on factory and workshop committees put forward in my pamphlet, *Problems of the Labour Movement*. But at Congress itself even certain right wing leaders had not the courage to speak against the Garment Workers' resolution, as their delegations had decided to vote for the resolution. And this resolution received 2,138,000 votes against 1,787,000. This was a majority to be reckoned with. What is most characteristic of all is that Communists of the Minority Movement well-known to Congress supported this resolution.

The fate of the resolution on Trade Union unity was also very instructive. Here the Minority were able to secure the deletion of the clause limiting international unity within the bounds of Amsterdam, and instead gained the substitution of the clause instructing the General Council to work for an "all-inclusive International."

The resolutions on the Dawes plan and on imperialism speak for themselves. The bourgeois Press teased MacDonald that every one of these resolutions was a resounding slap in the face for him. This same Press remarked that Pollitt's speeches on these two questions were listened to with the most profound attention. After all, it would hardly be possible that anyone or anything would erase from the history of the British Labour movement the fact that 3,032,000 votes were given for a clearly-worded resolution against

imperialism, while only 79,000 voted against. The press paid an enormous amount of attention to the speeches of Purcell, Pollitt, Cook, Elsbury. However, one could hardly explain the colossal change in the mood of the Congress by the eloquence of the Minority and Left Wing leaders. The reasons evidently lie deeper.

For a considerable number of years two groups of Trade Union officials have played a decisive rôle. The first and most numerous group was composed of those officials whose societies were in effect simply benefit clubs. This group naturally adopted a hostile attitude towards strikes and towards any development of the class struggle affecting the state of the cash-box. As guardians of the fire-proof safes, they were the apostles of moderation and conservatism. The second group was recruited from among members of all kinds of arbitration and conciliation boards—the so-called industrial diplomats. These two groups pushed into the background those Trade Union officials who adopted the standpoint of the class struggle. To use the terminology of Webb, the business-like officials vanquished the demagogues.

But Webb finished his *History of Trade Unionism*, which is an ode to a moderate man, in 1920. Since then things have radically changed. The safes of the largest Trade Unions have become empty and the guardians have consequently climbed down from their towers. The diplomats have also been rather luckless. Respect for them naturally waned. And both groups together were compelled to recede into the background under the pressure of mass working-class discontent, increasing under the influence of a successful capitalist offensive. The masses were seeking for new slogans and new ideas. They eagerly grasped all proposals in which they saw indications of new paths and new possibilities. Therein lies the secret of the growth of the Minority Movement. But they were not yet sufficiently organised to smash the machine constructed by the old trade union bureaucracy.

Swales made an honest appeal for shaking off the shackles of capitalism, but the General Council he leads dared not lay hands on its own rusty fetters, the fetters of a Congress constitution which dates from 1894, and which was largely inspired, according to the authoritative statement of Webb, by James Mawdsley, a reactionary leader of the cotton trades who was a Conservative



parliamentary candidate in 1906. As a result of this peculiar situation, the Fifty-Seventh Trades Union Congress, after adopting a number of revolutionary resolutions moved by the Minority Movement, and supported by the left wing, elected a General Council more than half of whose members could hardly be expected to execute wholeheartedly the mandate given to the General Council.

Now let us turn to Liverpool.

The Liverpool Conference was very thoroughly prepared. The leaders of the Labour Party, to all appearances, did not have sufficient faith in Trade Union democracy to rely on its creative ability. They preferred to prepare a complete set of resolutions on all questions under the general heading "A Co-ordinated Policy of National Reconstruction and Reform." The "co-ordinated policy" contains answers to all problems of internal and external policy. Every separate section of the resolutions commences with praise for the leaders of the Labour Party, and the "heroes" of the Labour Government. The first resolution remarks without any ambiguity that the Labour Party has already "justified the hopes and ideals of its founders." Proudly put, *n'est-ce-pas?* But it is not so much the tone as the contents of this resolution that takes the palm.

It is sufficient to glance hurriedly through these resolutions to become absolutely convinced that Liberalism in England is not so dead as it is supposed to be. It has merely been reincarnated. The difference between the declamations in the Labour Party resolutions and the old manifestoes of the Liberal Party is simply that MacDonald and his friends have replaced the usual phrases about justice and humanity by diffuse words on Socialism and public ownership.

It is said that Sidney Webb put a great deal of work into these resolutions. If that is so, the Conference did well in taking revenge for this Liberal programme by causing him to be defeated in the elections to the Executive Committee. The traces of "Sidney Webbicalism" are clearly perceptible in the entire programme of "reconstruction." But the influence of Liberalism is felt still more. Webb and his friends tried to persuade the workers that their main task in life was to permeate the ruling class with the spirit of Socialism. It could hardly be said that they have succeeded. On the other hand, they *have* succeeded in permeating a considerable section of the

leadership of the British working class with the spirit of Liberalism. And the Fabians were not alone in this work. There are many capable pupils of Liberalism among the leaders of the Labour Party, pupils who, in the authoritative words of the late Keir Hardie, had been able to deceive the masses for years. (See Keir Hardie's open letter to Lloyd George in 1903.)

Having prepared this Liberal programme, the leaders of the Labour Party calmly and assuredly awaited its approval by the Liverpool Conference. At Labour Party conferences a tradition has already been established whereby resolutions are moved from the platform, and the delegates vote for these humbly and obediently, from time to time interrupting the speakers either with applause or with polite critical observations.

During the Scarborough Congress the Liberal leaders of the Labour Party became rather discouraged. An energetic mobilisation of the "true friends" commenced. Ramsay MacDonald himself assumed the leadership of this campaign, assuring his friends that the prophets of evil would be severely punished at Liverpool and that the virtuous people would leave that Conference cheerfully celebrating victory. By making the fullest use of the Labour Party machine it proved easier than had been expected for MacDonald to justify the hopes of reaction, which so persistently goaded him on to avenge himself for Scarborough.

MacDonald's first task was to deal a knock-out blow to the Communist Party. The first discussions already revealed that the weight of the Communist Party at the Labour Party Conference could not be compared with that of the Minority Movement in the Trade Unions. The Minority Movement succeeded in rallying the most active elements of the trade union movement, mobilising and organising those masses who, under the blows of decaying capitalism, are striving to rid themselves of the oppressive heritage of the past. On the political arena, however, the Lefts represented and represent disconnected and scattered groups. On the other hand the Liverpool Conference once more showed the fundamental difference between the General Council and the Labour Party Executive. The latter is a systematically organised political machine which has been nourished on a century's experience of

Liberalism, in the work of splitting up the masses in general, and the proletarian masses in particular.

The voting on the question of excluding the Communists showed only a small minority of about 300,000 votes supporting the Communists. The other Left groups were apparently outvoted at the Caucus meetings of their delegations. Thus MacDonald had a more or less solid majority of 90 per cent. of the Conference. It is obvious that this 90 per cent. is obtained as a result of the vertical division of the Conference which makes new and young groupings merely static and deprives them of the possibility of influencing the fate and decisions of the Conference. It will suffice to say that if in the Miners' Federation 401,000 votes were given for MacDonald, the remaining minority of 399,000 miners could not express their attitude to the question under discussion. It was thanks to such mechanism that the resolution for the exclusion of the Communists, despite resolutions to the contrary effect on the part of scores of Labour organisations, was able to secure 2,870,000 votes as against 321,000.

Two factors in the attack on the Communists deserve attention. The Executive Committee, in moving the resolution, only spoke of individual sections of the local Labour Parties. These sections first saw light as a result of the new constitution accepted by the Labour Party on the advice of Mr. Webb in 1918. It is natural that the Liberal leaders of the Labour Party value these organisations highly. Up to the time of the Liverpool Conference, the hopes that had been placed in them had not been justified. When MacDonald spoke spitefully about manufactured resolutions, he had in view the hundreds of resolutions of local Labour Parties, which occupied a very large part of the agenda of the Liverpool Conference. Each resolution of the Executive Committee was accompanied by an enormous number of precise left wing amendments in which the direct influence of the Communist Party's proposals, or more exactly, of the programme which the Communist Party opposed to the co-ordinated MacDonald-Webb programme, could be seen. The Labour Party, through its Liberal leaders, wanted to get rid of this proletarian influence on the individual sections at any price. And by a cruel irony of fate it was with the aid of Trade Union

votes that MacDonald carried out his plan (on paper, of course) of liberalising the local Labour Parties.

The subsequent work of the Conference is of no substantial interest. *Nolens volens* one must agree with *The Times* (October 1, 1925) that, practically speaking, MacDonald was able to get all his resolutions put through in one day, and then go home. As a general rule the delegations, or rather their secretaries, monotonously handed in their cards and the Conference tellers registered millions of votes for various sections of the "reconstruction" programme. The further things developed, the more frank and the more cynical became Messrs. Clynes, Thomas, MacDonald and their disciples. MacDonald hurled dirty accusations against the Communists, sneering, *en passant*, against those workers who were clearly expressing their discontent with the Liberal trend of the Labour Party. The *Daily Herald*, for instance, reported the following incident: MacDonald attacked the Communists who are very popular at street corner meetings; Gallacher interrupted him with the question—"What about the support we are getting?" And MacDonald with pride and disdain replied, "I don't care two straws what support you are getting." He then endeavoured to persuade his audience that they should highly esteem those Lords and Ladies who enter the Labour Party, as their minds are directed by the will of God.

The overwhelming majority of resolutions tabled by local organisations were either left entirely without discussion, or else fell through. The attempt of Bevin to move a resolution directed against MacDonald, which amounted to nothing more than that the Labour Party should not take power until it has a majority in the House of Commons, was defeated, despite the support it obtained from all the Left groups.

Bevin's vehement criticism of MacDonald, in which he recalled MacDonald's pre-war tactics of collaboration with the Liberals and his frequently hostile attitude to the Trade Union struggle (a reference to MacDonald's notorious preparations to use Lloyd George's Emergency Powers Act to "settle" the London Transport strike when he was Prime Minister) is a significant fact which deserves more notice than it has received. It shows the extent of the divergence between even an extreme right wing Trade Union

leader and the "politicians." Only one resolution, that calling for support for the *Sunday Worker*, rallied practically one-third of the votes of the entire conference, the voting being 1,143,000 for the resolution and 2,036,000 against.

It would be a mistake, however, to exaggerate the significance of the MacDonald victory. At Liverpool the leaders remembered Scarborough. Only one year ago the Labour Party Executive presented the Twenty-Fourth Conference with a proud statement about the carrying out of the Dawes plan, which they eulogised as an instrument of peace. At this year's conference, however, both Cramp and MacDonald made profoundly diplomatic speeches on that topic, apologising rather than boasting. Moreover, the resolutions passed on the question of imperialism tally badly one with the other, and spoil the structure of the socialist-imperialist conceptions of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

But of course the substance of the matter does not lie in one or other of the new notes sounded at Liverpool. The political significance of Liverpool is that it was a challenge, under the direct leadership of the ruling classes, to the better elements in the British Labour movement. Despite all the slovenliness of the left wing, it can hardly refrain from acting now. Prior to the Liverpool Conference, the Communists persistently called upon the left wing to rally together, so as to act in a co-ordinated and agreed fashion. These appeals had no practical results. But MacDonald has strengthened these appeals with hammer-blows. And the left wing will be compelled to respond. The stronger the Labour Party gets, the more are the workers interested in seeing that it does not become an instrument of capitalist oppression. After Liverpool, the workers must seriously ponder over the touching contact that has been established between the Labour Party leaders and their worst enemies, and also over the increased enmity between these leaders and the workers' best friends.

MacDonaldite "reconstruction" fits very nicely into an artificially composed resolution. But such a resolution does not deter the process of disintegration of British capitalism. It is true that the Stock Exchange could feel encouraged for a short while, after MacDonald's victory. But profound economic processes will not yield much to the influence of Liberal-Labour resolutions.

Scarborough was powerless to form an apparatus for struggling against the capitalist attack. Liverpool actually participated in this attack, overwhelming the most active wing of the Labour movement. And beneath the blows of this offensive the workers must forge their weapons of defence and attack.

I will endeavour to sum up my conclusions.

At Scarborough there was not a single group that could lead the work of the Congress. The free struggle of various groups within the Congress proved the existence of colossal movements among the masses of the workers. These movements were able to acquire definite organised expression, thanks to the considerable achievement of the Minority Movement. The right wing at the Scarborough Congress preferred, like Brer Fox, to "lay low and say nuffin," rather than to fight for their programme openly. At Liverpool just the opposite was the case. The work was conducted by a well-organised and correctly-adjusted political machine. But at Liverpool the extreme flank of the left wing—the Communist Party, came out into the open.

The Left elements proved to be disconnected and badly organised both at Liverpool and at Scarborough. Both Congresses constitute a call to the awakening workers not to be content with fine words and high-sounding resolutions, but to endeavour to snatch the apparatus they have themselves built up out of the hands of those who hand over the banner of the Labour Movement in order to consecrate its suppression.

# GETTING MOSUL INTO PERSPECTIVE

By W. N. EWER

**T**HERE are among us certain superficial Marxists who, having learned that there is oil in Mosul, say contentedly : “ Here is the economic interpretation of the question ” and proceed to murmur the euphonious names of Deterding, Zaharoff and Gulbenkian, for all the world after the manner of Mr. William Bailey talking of the Jews or Mr. Walton Newbold of munition makers.

Now the fact is that, though there is plenty of oil in Mosul politics—perhaps more than in Mosul itself—the roots of the whole business run far deeper and further back. The Mosul question is a part of that “ Eastern question ” which has been for a century the focal point of British foreign policy. And unless we get it into its proper setting and perspective we are likely to make a very bungling job of understanding it.

That Eastern question—made vitally important to British Imperialism by the possession of India and the conspicuous feebleness of Turkey—is the *leitmotif* of nineteenth-century British diplomacy. For, even before the cutting of the Suez Canal, both Downing Street and Calcutta realised instinctively the strategic importance of the Middle East. Already in 1845 it was obvious to Kinglake that “ the Englishman, leaning far over to guard his loved India, will plant his feet firmly in the Valley of the Nile and sit in the seats of the Faithful.” And throughout the century we were ready again and again to go to war rather than allow France or Russia to gain a foothold in Syria or Egypt or the Persian Gulf.

The British Government jealously watched the Levant. The Indian Government edged its way tentatively up the Persian Gulf, where British warships patrolled the waters and British “ politicals ” intrigued with vaguely independent local rulers like the Sheikhs of Koweit and Bahrein and Mohammarah. Southern Persia and Mesopotamia were marked out as Great Britain’s share of the heritage when the sick men of Teheran and Constantinople should finally collapse.

Right back in 1833, Palmerston declared that it was impossible to allow Mehemet Ali, the protégé of the French, to control Syria, for Syria was "the avenue to Mesopotamia;" while half a century later Beaconsfield was anxious, under pretext of supporting Turkey, to send an Indian force to occupy Basra and Bagdad. He failed to persuade his colleagues. The Indians went spectacularly but rather pointlessly to Malta. But out of the turmoil he did snatch Cyprus. It was a significant and not usually understood choice. For Cyprus has no harbour to compare with Suda Bay; nor has it any relevance to the defence of the Canal or the blockade of the Straits. But it lies—and this was undoubtedly in Beaconsfield's mind—athwart the Gulf of Alexandretta and the historic route through Aleppo to the Euphrates valley.

For three-quarters of the nineteenth century, then, Mesopotamia had been marked down as a sometime British possession. The Valley of the Euphrates, like the Valley of the Nile, was both strategically important and economically desirable. England had pegged out her claim before, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the discovery of the South Persian oilfields and the rapidly developing importance of oil came to emphasise its importance. It was in 1901 that Mr. D'Arcy was granted a concession of all South-West Persian oil-rights; in 1909 that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was formed.

Meanwhile, rather overlooked by British diplomacy, which was for the time being intent on other troubles, the German economic penetration of Asia Minor had begun. The Deutsche Bank and its associates had their first railway concession in 1888. By 1896 they had reached Konia. In 1903 the concession was signed which empowered the German company to continue its line through Bagdad to the Gulf.

It was a direct challenge to British domination of the Gulf, to British control of the new Persian oilfield and to the British reversion to Mesopotamia. Imperialism, already bitterly jealous of German expansion, was up in arms. An offer to let British capital participate in the concession was contemptuously rejected. Britain wanted control, not a junior partnership. And the Foreign Office was set the task of blocking at all costs the German scheme.

Ten years of tortuous diplomacy followed. The newly formed



Anglo-French Entente, soon reinforced by Russia, fought the diplomatic battles of France in Morocco and of Russia in the Balkans. On the Persian Gulf, France and Russia repaid Britain for her support by their aid in opposing the completion of the Bagdadbahn. Their chief weapons were two. Great Britain since 1899 claimed to be protector of the Sheikh of Koweit. And Koweit was the destined terminal of the line. More important still, the consent of the powers was necessary for the increase of the customs dues by which Turkey was to provide the money for the kilometric guarantee required by the Deutsche Bank. To this the triple veto of the Entente was opposed.

Germany, baffled, tried to buy off British opposition. A tentative offer was made that the German line should run to Bagdad, and that the sector thence to the Gulf should be British built and British controlled. It was in effect an offer to partition Mesopotamia into a German and a British sphere of influence. A tempting proposition. But Russia had no wish to see such a solution. France feared that it might be the first step to an Anglo-German *rapprochement*. The German Government wanted "compensation" elsewhere. And Sir Edward Grey, under pressure from his allies, refused to deal on these terms. His refusal may have been influenced by the fact that the oil of Mosul had now become a factor in the calculations, and that the partition would have left it in the German zone.

The first survey had been made in 1901 by a German expert who reported that the region was "among the richest in the world." It was an enthusiastic judgment which has yet to be confirmed; for even now this coveted area has not been properly drilled. Oil companies know to their cost how often the hopes of the surveyor and the geologist are disappointed when put to the test. And there are not wanting experts who declare roundly that the fabulous oil-wealth of Mosul is a myth.

The prospects, however, were sufficiently alluring to attract the big and little oil men. Anglo-Persian were showing interest. Germans were following up the original survey. Concession hunting was opening at Constantinople. The Chester group had already secured provisional rights, though on a title which was later to be fiercely debated. Mosul was becoming as desirable as the lower

Euphrates valley and the Gulf ports. The securing of it must lie in the future. For the moment the urgent task was to keep the Germans out.

Suddenly in 1912 the barrier which Sir Edward Grey had laboured to build collapsed. It was largely in deference to Russian opposition that he had refused the tempting offer of 1910. And now Russia let him down. The Potsdam conversations between the Tsar and the Kaiser had alarmed London. (For throughout the pre-war decade any contact between one Entente partner and the Germans was watched with suspicious fear by the other two.) And when it was learnt that the Russians had withdrawn opposition to the customs increase and had reached an agreement with the Germans for the linking of the Anatolian railways, via Mosul and Bagdad, with a North Persian system, the British were terrified and furious. Sir Edward hinted that he might reverse his whole foreign policy. King George expressed his august displeasure. Simla was haunted by visions of Turko-German armies at Herat. All for a while was consternation and confusion.

When it died down, Sir Edward informed Sazonoff that he had no alternative now but to come to the best agreement he could with Turkey and with Germany, since the compact of opposition had been broken, and since it was reported that even without the customs increase funds for the building might be obtained by the Deutsche Bank.

It was indeed imperative to sacrifice something in order to retain the essential grasp upon the Gulf terminal of the railway and in order to obtain some share in the prospective oil supplies of Mosul. Compensation was looked for in Southern Persia. The Anglo-Russian agreement had left this in the "neutral zone." But now operations there began in earnest. The Persian Government was asked for the concession for a railway system running eastward from Mohammarah to Baluchistan. The activities of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company were intensified, and the negotiations opened which were to result in the investment in 1914 of £2,000,000 of British Government money in the Persian oil fields. The policing of Southern Persia began to be a subject of discussion. The military were asked to consider what force must be sent to protect the oil

fields if need be. Sir Percy Cox, the Indian Political Department's "Resident" in the Persian Gulf, became exceedingly active.

Negotiations were opened with Turkey and with Germany. They were, after the Grey habit, kept profoundly secret; and when rumours gave rise to questions in the House of Commons, they were met by evasive or misleading answers. The bargaining, one gathers, was hard: but the bargain was struck, and on June 29, 1914, Sir Edward, rather casually, and in the middle of a long speech, informed the House that he had reached an agreement with the German ambassador. Characteristically he even then concealed from the Commons some of the most important clauses of the agreement.

The date is possibly of tragic significance (it was two days after the Archduke's murder). For the fear was always present in the minds of the diplomats of Paris and Petersburg that an Anglo-German agreement over the Bagdad railway might be the first step towards an understanding which would draw England away from her partners, make her a dubious ally, perhaps even break up the Entente and produce a new—and for them unfavourable—European grouping.

How far Sazonoff's knowledge of the Anglo-German negotiation and his fear of its possible consequence determined his policy in the summer of 1914—how far they account for his insistent effort to draw England into accepting more definite obligations, for his demand—furtively conceded by Grey—for an Anglo-Russian naval convention, for his grim determination in the last ten days to face the risk of war and to drag England into it if it came—these are matters on which one can only speculate. But there is at least the possibility of truth in the tragic paradox that the movement towards an Anglo-German understanding was a powerful factor in precipitating the Anglo-German war.

The Grey-Lichnowsky agreement, initialled in June, 1914, but never signed, became of course a scrap of paper two months later. But it is none the less a significant document, and some of its clauses became important in the later diplomacy.

Its main provisions were these. The railway was to be built by the German group as far as Basra. From Basra to the Gulf the line was to be British. Two British directors were to go on to the

German board. The ports of Basra and Bagdad were to be equipped and exploited by mixed companies (Anglo-German-Turkish). The river navigation was to be Anglo-Turkish. The Willcocks irrigation scheme was not to be opposed by the Germans. Finally—and in this clause the oil of Mosul definitely enters diplomatic society—a concession of all Mesopotamian and Mosul oil rights for a long term of years was to be granted to a new concern called the Turkish Petroleum Company, in which the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was to hold 50 per cent. of the shares, the Anglo-Saxon Company (a Shell-Royal Dutch subsidiary) 25 per cent. and the Deutsche Bank 25 per cent.

Certainly it was a good bargain from the British Imperialist point of view. It entrenched Great Britain firmly in Lower Mesopotamia, it gave her the lion's share of the hypothetical oil and the less hypothetical irrigation profits, it gave her a voice in the management of the Bagdad Railway. Germany had conceded very much, willing no doubt to pay heavily for the political implications of an Anglo-German agreement which ignored France and Russia.

But two months later the whole arrangement went sky high, and British policy had to be swiftly re-orientated to meet the possibilities of a war in which Turkey was sure sooner or later to be implicated. Diplomacy—as Sir Edward Grey boasts—worked hard and effectively to delay that entry until we were ready. Troops were hurried from Bombay to the Gulf. Turkey did not declare war until October 29. On November 7 the expeditionary force landed at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab. The campaign which was to lead to Kut and Mosul, to Baku and the Caspian, had opened.

Officially the purpose of the landing was to guard the Anglo-Persian pipe line, which runs only a few miles from the old Turco-Persian frontier. But in August Sir Edward Grey had already begun to talk of the partition of Asia Minor. And there is little question that from the beginning it was in many minds that at last the opportunity had come for acquiring the whole of Mesopotamia.

In the spring of 1915 came Russia's demand for the annexation of Constantinople, the shores of the Straits and a large slice of Asia Minor; and at once we replied that in the event of any division of the Turkish dominions Mesopotamia and the "neutral" zone of Persia must be regarded as in the British sphere. France was

putting in her "historical" claim to a Syria with ambitiously elastic borders. And the Secret Treaty with Russia left England and France to settle among themselves the partition of the spoils that would remain when the Tsar's appetite had been sated. Later Italy had to be promised Adalia, Smyrna and the Aidin Vilayet. But these did not affect the areas coveted by the Imperialists of London and Paris.

Their conflicting claims were temporarily adjusted by the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. Britain was to get Lower Mesopotamia including Bagdad. France was to take Syria, the Adana Vilayet and a wedge of territory running up to the source of the Tigris. Between them was to be (in fulfilment of pledges given to the Arabs) an Arab state or states divided into French and British spheres of influence.

This partition left Mosul in the French sphere. But in a separate (and of course also secret) agreement between Grey and Cambon France agreed to sanction in her sphere of influence all pre-war concessions. This was intended to secure the oil rights of the Turkish Petroleum Company, the German shares in which had been contingently appropriated by the British Government. Yielding the territory, Britain was determined to keep hold of the oil.

But when the final crash of the Central Empires came, there was a significant change: Britain now showed much reluctance to give up the territory, for events had opened up new prospects, which made territorial possession more tempting than oil concessions.

Russia was in the throes of civil war and believed to be on the point of collapse. The British army was master of Mesopotamia and, after the armistice, occupied Mosul. Southern Persia was firmly held, and Dunsterville's force had pushed north to the shores of the Caspian. Batoum and Baku were in British occupation. Other columns had moved through Eastern Persia to Merv and Meshed. There were plans for seizing Khiva and Bokhara. The whole of South-Western Asia seemed to lie as a prize in the hands of British Imperialism.

If Persia were to become, in fact if not yet in name, a British dominion; if the Trans-Caucasian and possibly the Trans-Caspian states were to be under British protection, it would be absurd to give up Mosul to the French. The partition arranged in

1915 and 1916 had been rendered obsolete by the withdrawal of Russia from the plunder-game. New arrangements were necessary. Mr. Lloyd George promptly demanded that Great Britain should retain Mosul (under the newly devised system of "mandates") and that Palestine (which by the Sykes-Picot agreement was to be internationalised) should come under British administration—or mandate.

Let me emphasise again that this was a demand for territory, not a demand for oil fields. The oil concessions were safeguarded. Mr. Lloyd George was even willing to concede some of them to France. But he wanted the Mosul territory to round off the great area of Irak and Persia, and complete the new westward extension of India to the Mediterranean. The Syrian coast line had perforce to be yielded to the French. But save for Syria—and Afghanistan—the whole vast territory from Egypt to the Indian frontier, from the Arabian Sea to the Caucasus, was in the hands of Great Britain, or of client chieftains. "And Afghanistan" I have written. But even Afghanistan was invaded by British columns and its capital bombed by British aeroplanes.

The definite acquisition of this new Empire was a vision to dazzle Imperialist minds. It opened up vistas of innumerable lucrative posts for the British upper and middle classes, of inimitable opportunities for profit for British capital. That it was seriously contemplated is scarcely open to question. The demand for Mosul is one item of evidence. The many millions of pounds expended in Persia (over £6,000,000 in bribes alone) under Sir Percy Cox's supervision are another. The insistence in the Mudros Armistice on the right to occupy Transcaucasia; the attack on Afghanistan; the Maxwell mission in Transcaspia; the building of strategic roads across Persia; all the signs are there. It was this gigantic plan, and not considerations of oil, which motived Mr. George's claim to Mosul.

He succeeded: for he was in a strong bargaining position. France needed his support in Europe against President Wilson. She could but pay the price. The details of the negotiation are obscure. Clemenceau said afterwards that he had been tricked: he thought he was ceding a city and found he had ceded a province. But in any case he yielded, and the bargain was struck. The oil

part of it was finally embodied in the San Remo agreement of 1920, by which a French group, headed by the ubiquitous and international Sir Basil Zaharoff, was given the Deutsche Bank's 25 per cent. of the Turkish Petroleum Company's shares.

Between the Allies it seemed that the whole business had now been disposed of. Turkey was settled with at Sèvres. A secret agreement with the Persian Government—which in effect made Persia a British protectorate—had been signed, after the necessary financial preparation. The Middle Eastern Empire was well on the way to be made.

Within a year the whole scheme, or at any rate great and integral parts of it, collapsed.

The Afghan expedition was a muddled and disreputable failure. Russia, instead of collapsing, showed an alarming vitality. The Red Fleet controlled the Caspian. The Red Armies pushed the slender British forces out of Northern Persia. The Persians angrily repudiated the secret agreement and the minister who had signed it. The Turks equally repudiated the Treaty of Sèvres. The Kurds of Mosul rose in revolt.

It was clear that the fruit was by no means as ripe as had been supposed. The effective conquest of the new Empire would demand a tremendous and costly military effort of which Britain was now both economically and psychologically incapable. The internal situation in India was doubtful. The more level-headed soldiers—Sir Henry Wilson and Sir William Robertson, for example—were strongly opposed to the assumption of such enormous new military responsibilities. The pressure of organised Labour had compelled the cessation of the Russian campaigns.

Very reluctantly, in the face of facts, the Indian Political Department and the financial powers behind Anglo-Persian and the Lynch companies had to give way, and to admit that at least the time was not ripe for establishing King George V as the heir of Xerxes. Peace was made with the Amir. The British columns fell back from Teheran and Merv. Persia was evacuated, the great and costly military roads remaining as a reminder of the past and a warning of the future, if and when British Imperialism was again prepared for effort.

But to Irak and to Mosul we held on, stamping out the insurrections in a bloody little campaign which cost us 2,000 casualties before the tribesmen of Southern Kurdistan would realise that the "liberation" which they had been promised was merely a euphemism for British domination. The swallowing of Persia had been an afterthought, an irresistible temptation of what seemed for a moment wholly favourable circumstances. But Irak was a prize on which, as I have pointed out, we had had our eyes for upwards of half a century. Moreover, the development of our transport gave it new importance as a "stage" on the route to India. And Irak, the "politicals" and the "forward" type of soldier insisted, must imply Mosul. The old conditions of the Punjab repeated themselves. We held the river plains. To the north lay high mountainous country, inhabited by restless tribesmen, dubiously controlled by a government of uncertain strength. And a hundred miles or so across the hills, the Russian frontier.

The old fears which have haunted generations of Anglo-Indians awoke again. "The ghost of the Russian bear," Mr. Churchill cried in alarm, "comes padding across the immense fields of snow." The same deduction was drawn. Irak, like India, must have a "scientific frontier" in the mountains—a frontier which would facilitate defence and, possibly, offence. It must include not only the Mosul vilayet, but the Hakkari district beyond. That was the first point. The second was that the Kurdish districts of Mosul flanked the Persian-Kurdish provinces between Kermanshah and Lake Urmia, and gave control of a second line of advance on Teheran and the Caspian—a notable consideration for future eventualities. The third, certainly, was the oil of Mosul itself: for if the area reverted, not to France but to Turkey, the fate of the concessions was still uncertain.

At all costs, therefore, Irak, and with Irak, Mosul, were to be held, not only for their own sakes, but as an essential strategic point on the new airway to India, and as the nucleus of that Middle Eastern Empire of which the acquisition was postponed rather than abandoned.

There followed five years of intricate diplomacy, to trace which in detail would take vastly more space than I have left. Its main lines were two—or shall I say rather that it was a diplomatic



war on two fronts? Irak and Mosul had to be held, firstly against the claims of a reviving Turkey, secondly against the growing demand at home for evacuation. The American oil offensive at Lausanne was a side-show. Using the dubious Chester concession as a weapon and the "open door" as a catchword, American diplomacy demanded for the American oil magnates a share in the possibilities of the Mosul field. Again Great Britain yielded—significantly willing again to part with the oil if she could thus ensure her grip on the territory. Half the Anglo-Persian shares in the Turkish Petroleum Company were the price paid for America's complaisance. They were duly allotted, not to Admiral Chester, his heirs and assigns, who had been so useful in the negotiation, but to a group in which the all-powerful Standard and Sinclair companies were the dominant partners.

The policy evolved for the two-fronted diplomatic war was an ingenious one. The credit for the ingenuity must presumably go to the newly-created Middle Eastern Department of the Colonial Office—which had taken over Irak from the Indian Government. Its main idea was that our occupation of Irak, and of Mosul, must be converted into a treaty obligation from which we could not, with the best will in the world, free ourselves. The mandate was insufficient; for clearly a mandate could be relinquished: whereas a binding treaty obligation must be fulfilled, however reluctantly.

The first step clearly must be to establish a government at Bagdad with which the treaty could be signed. The puppet was ready to hand. The Emir Feisal, turned out of his ephemeral "Kingdom of Syria" by the French, was looking for a job. The Cairo Conference of 1921 decided that he should be King of Irak. He came opportunely to Bagdad. Sir Percy Cox, skilled in the management of Eastern politics, did the rest. Experienced political officers collected "petitions" inviting Feisal to mount the throne. Arab leaders who opposed him were promptly jailed: opposition parties and their newspapers were suppressed: Feisal was announced to the world as the spontaneously and unanimously chosen of the people of Irak, and was duly enthroned in the presence of an adequate guard of British infantry.

The way being clear, a liberally-minded British Government declared that it was unwilling to hold Irak longer in the leading

strings of mandatism: that it purposed at once endowing it not only with its chosen King, but with a constitution: and that with the King it would conclude a Treaty by which it would undertake to help him financially, militarily and administratively for four years, at the expiration of which Irak would become a fully independent state, duly equipped with membership in the League of Nations, and Great Britain would be free of all its obligations and responsibilities.

The treaty was signed in due course: but when the newly-elected Assembly met it showed an irritating reluctance to ratify it—a reluctance overcome by the simple expedient of a hurried midnight session to which the opposition members (a majority of the whole) were by a curious accident not summoned, while popular demonstrations were dealt with in the usual manner. The obedient minority not only ratified the treaty, but added a useful rider declaring that it only did so on condition that Great Britain defended Irak's rights in Mosul in their integrity.

The British House of Commons, persuaded that it was preparing the way for rapid evacuation—though Mr. Thomas declined to give a binding pledge that we would get out at the end of the four years—added its ratification. And the Middle Eastern Department was fully armed. For in the treaty there was, as joker in the pack, that provision for the conclusion of a new treaty on its expiration, which Mr. Amery was, at the right moment, to produce as implying an obligation of honour not to desert poor King Feisal in 1928.

The evacuationists, Tory, Liberal and Labour alike, had been successfully duped by the treaty dodge. The Turks were more difficult. But they were persuaded at Lausanne to refer the question of the sovereignty of Mosul to the League Council. Whether Lord Curzon's assurance that the decision would have to be a unanimous one of a body on which Turkey would be represented was a deliberate trap, or whether it was based on genuine ignorance of the provisions of the League Covenant, must still be matter for speculation. But whatever the intention, it acted effectively as a trap. The Turks accepted, to find themselves confronted two years later with the suggestion that the fate of Mosul must be determined by the vote of a majority of the Council—a majority already assured, for various reasons, to Great Britain. But in the

meantime a brilliant piece of diplomacy, achieved by some unknown hand, had inserted into the minds, and so into the report, of the League's Commissioners, the recommendation that the treaty of 1923 should be renewed for a further period of twenty-five years. That completed the obligation of honour. The treaty bound us to assert Irak's claim to Mosul. The League said that if we did this we must stay in Irak. What could the Government do but patiently accept the decision? The evacuationists might fume. But they had been out-manoeuvred all along the line. So had the Turks. But the Turk is an unreliable fellow, with a deplorable ignorance of the rules of the game. Said Sout of Beresford after Albuera, "I had pierced his centre. I had turned his flanks. I had cut his communications. By every rule I had him beaten. But he was so bad a soldier that he didn't know it." So the Turks, beaten at all points, calmly upset the table and propose starting all over again. And there the question stands at the moment—Imperialism clutching tenaciously at its prize, but still uncertain of its ability to hold it.

In this two years of post-Lausanne diplomacy the Turks have again and again declared that if England will give up territorial claims she is welcome to the oil concessions. And each time the British Government has declined even to discuss the possibility of such a sordid deal.

And so I end where I began. The claim to Mosul is not motivated primarily by the desire to obtain for British oil interests the profits of its hypothetical wells. It is part of a far more grandiose scheme, the scheme of a great Middle Eastern Empire stretching from the Indian frontier to the Mediterranean, from the Arabian Sea to the Caspian and the Caucasus. The faint beginnings of that scheme were when the East India Company began to build its factories along the Persian Gulf. The end of it is not yet. The retreat is momentary: the ambition is lasting. One may prophesy without hesitation that at least one more supreme effort will be made. It may be that Parthia will be fatal to Britain as to Rome, and that the downfall of the Empire will come in an attempt, beyond its strength, to add "the wealth of Ormuzd" to the "wealth of Ind." In that case, the struggle for Irak and Mosul will have historical importance as the beginning of the end.

# THE DRIVE INTO THE FACTORIES

## How to Begin

By J. T. MURPHY

*“ . . . Congress further considers that strong well-organised shop committees are indispensable weapons in the struggle to force the capitalists to relinquish their grip on industry, and, therefore pledges itself to do all in its power to develop and strengthen, workshop organisation.”*

**T**HE passing of this resolution by the Scarborough Congress throws into sharp relief the change that has come over the trade union movement since the days when some of us set up “unofficial workshop committees” in the teeth of general opposition in the trade union movement. To-day, there is practically no opposition to the idea of “workshop committees.” We have not to fight either the railwaymen, the miners or any other body of industrial workers on behalf of the “principle,” as we had to fight in the war period. There are not many trade unions which have not in some way or other attempted to adapt themselves to this principle. Miners have put forward their schemes of pit committees and worked the theme into schemes for the democratic control of their industry. So have railwaymen, builders and the like as well as the engineers. The ground is then well prepared so far as the unions are concerned. But there is just one fly in the ointment—Unemployment.

This word sums up the opposition to-day. The spectre of unemployment haunts the minds of many active trade unionists who would be well pleased to translate their activities into workshop organisation were it not for the fact that they know, if they make themselves prominent in the workshop, they will be cleared out exactly as the majority of those who led the workshop committees in the “unofficial” days were cleared out with the first slump in trade. That unemployment and the fears arising from it are

tremendous factors in the armoury of the employers it would be folly to ignore. It is because I do recognise these factors that I welcome the decision of the Trades Union Congress. In my opinion it paves the way as nothing else could to the defeat of the fears and the solution of many other questions now tormenting the movement.

This is not a freshly formed opinion on my part by any means. In *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* for January, 1922, I wrote:—

The conditions which made possible the rapid development of factory committees are gone. To get such organisations we require a sense of power and a degree of stability in the position of the workers, derived either from strength of organisation or the abolition of unemployment, as in the war period . . .

After supporting the re-affiliation of the Trades Councils to the T.U. Congress I went on to say :—

The Congress nationally, and the Trades Councils locally, should be immediately reinforced with delegates from the unemployed committees, and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress ought to have within its ranks a direct representative of the National Administrative Committee of the Unemployed. We cannot allow a movement thriving on bitter poverty to create a cleavage in the working class when a united mass movement is within easy reach the moment we are prepared to demonstrate in deeds that we mean business on this question. Such a move is as sound in principle as in tactics. Massing the organisations is a source of strength. Unity of action is essential in policy. By these means we regain strength to initiate once again an organisational drive into the factories.

Since I wrote these lines, remarkable changes have taken place in the development of the trade union apparatus. The General Council of the T.U.C. is now a more powerful body and has greater prestige than ever before. There is an organised Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement working in close alliance with the General Council. The Trades Councils have been re-awakened and brought within the purview and direction of the General Council. There is a more powerful will toward unity of action and organisation than at any previous time. All these factors together present us, therefore, with an entirely new situation for the approach of the workers to the application of the Congress decision. For the first time in the history of the unions the way is clear for a concentrated drive of the organised workers into the factories. And at no time has there been a more urgent need for such a drive.

Let us see. What are the outstanding needs of the trade union movement? First, to recruit the ten million workers eligible for membership. Where is the main line of approach to these ten million? At their work in factories, mills, mines, &c. Second, to unite the workers in common defence against the attacks now being prepared against them. Where must this unity find expression to be of any avail? In the factories, mills, mines, &c. Third, to eliminate the confused muddle of union organisation and establish organisation by industry for the purpose of exercising control in industry. How can this be brought about other than by mass pressure expressing itself in organised form in the mills, mines and factories which are to be controlled? Any real attempt to tackle a single leading issue before the unions points us at once to the problem of workshop organisation.

This statement of the position in the form of question and answer is not simply a theoretical statement to be proved in experience at a later date. The questions have been put before and the answers are on record. Who were the greatest recruiting agents in the heyday of trade union recruiting during the war years and immediately afterwards, other than the shop stewards? Who overcame the divisions and antagonisms of the unions in the factories more effectively than the shop stewards through their workshop committees? While it is beyond dispute that they were responsible for bringing the whole question of the ways and means of exercising control in industry to the forefront of trade union experience.

On all these questions, therefore, there is a vast amount of experience from which we can draw. It is true that unemployment is still with us, but it is beyond question that against unemployment as a factor retarding the efforts to create workshop and factory committees can be set a number of advantages hitherto absent. There is no question of an unofficial shop stewards movement competing with the union apparatus. The circumstances which fully justified such a movement during the war are non-existent to-day. The unions are not tied to the State as they were then, but are free to function as instruments of the workers' struggle.

They are not only free to struggle, but possess a greater degree of centralisation and co-ordination of activities than at any previous

time. The leading features of this process having been mentioned there is no need for me to emphasise them further. It is sufficient to say that the position of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress in relation to the Unemployed Workers' Committees and the Trades Councils places the whole trade union movement in an exceedingly favourable position to carry out the decision of the Scarborough Congress.

I propose, therefore, to outline, on the basis of my own experience in the shop stewards movement, how I think the Congress decision can be effectively applied. The initiative should come from the General Council of the T.U.C. and its sub-committee of Trades Councils. Not that these bodies are the only people concerned, but they are in a position to prevent sporadic and sectional efforts which would simply break themselves against victimisation. Both need, of course, the complete co-operation of the trade union executives, and this ought not to be difficult to obtain if they are at all intent upon defending their own interests.

To illustrate this permit me to recall the manner in which we overcame this phase of the problem in 1916. At that time I was a member of the A.S.E. District Committee in Sheffield. It was through this committee that the first move was made, paving the way to the workshop and factory committees in that district. The A.S.E. constitution at that time provided for shop stewards, but there were very few actually functioning. The District Committee decided on an attempt to alter this state of affairs. An agitation was begun in the branches of the union which rapidly spread to other unions. This was followed by a complete registration of the members as to the place of occupation. This was done through the branches.

Meanwhile a set of instructions to shop stewards were drafted and submitted to the Executive Committee and approved. The instructions were simple and clear. They dealt with—show of pence cards, recruiting members, reporting and dealing with grievances, and included the proposal to co-operate with other trade unions in the workshop to maintain the conditions agreed upon by the unions. It should be clearly understood that there was no question of "joint committees" for the interpretation of trade union rules, but the application of the trade union agreements.

This paved the way at once for other unions to take up the question of shop stewards in a similar way and provide for co-operation in the workshops, and the only possible form in which the co-operation could express itself was in the formation of workshop and factory committees. I think there are but few important unions that have no provision in their rules for shop stewards or shop delegates. It should be no great task on the part of the executives of the unions to co-operate with the General Council in facilitating this process to-day.

But this is only one phase of the problem. In the case I have cited the initiative was in the hands of the District Committees of the unions and not the Trades Councils. This throws into relief at once a situation which threatens to become more confused unless immediate steps are taken by the local organs of trade unionism.

At the present moment we have not only the local centres of the unions, *i.e.*, the District Committees, unco-ordinated, but the projected scheme of a quadruple alliance must have its local expression as well as its national. And this comes on the scene just at the time when the Trades Councils have assumed much greater prominence, and under the leadership of the General Council are awakening to a sense of their responsibilities to the struggle in industry. The moment is, therefore, opportune, even as the problem is pressing, for a clearing up of the situation.

To get the workshop and factory committees we need much more than propaganda from the Trades Councils to be effective. As they stand at the present, they do not possess the authority to establish anything effectively in the factories. A first essential in this respect is the co-operation of the District Committees of the unions. This I think can be secured if the plan of the General Council to apply the Congress resolution includes within it, besides the co-operation of the union executives, the convening of conferences of the Trades Councils with the District Committees of the unions to consider how best to pursue common action and centralise in the Trades Councils the power expressed in the conferences.

It is time the District Committees of the unions were definitely affiliated to the Trades Councils so that when the councils speak they do so with the full authority of the unions affiliated. With the union representation grouped in the Trades Councils in the same



manner as they are grouped in the General Council, the way would be clear for making more effective the joint activities of the General Council and the Trades Councils. At the same time it would prevent the overlapping and possible rivalry of the Quadruple Alliance machinery by bringing it at once into the apparatus of the Trades Councils.

The advantages in these directions could be elaborated further, but here I wish to stress the urgency of the co-operation between the Trades Councils and the District Committees of the unions for the united drive into the factories. I am convinced that it is essential to give every member of the union the consciousness of the united backing of the whole of the union machinery to gain the confidence necessary to carry out the work of the workshop committees. We do not want the situation to arise that the Trades Councils take the initiative and the district organs of the unions deny responsibility and leave their members stranded, or that the same District Committees attempting to carry out the Congress decisions only find themselves deserted by the Trades Councils and the other unions who do nothing. That is the way to demoralise the workers and give the employers the full benefit of the demoralising effect of unemployment. A concerted effort from the beginning is the best guarantee of success and the surest weapon against victimisation.

With such a beginning the next steps are clear—from experience. Under the direction of the Trades Councils and the District Committees the whole machinery of the unions should be set to work to summon meetings of all workers in each workshop and factory in the district. These meetings should elect the shop committee on which each union should be represented. The committee that is elected should be endorsed by the Trades Council, whose endorsement should be supported by every union concerned. It may be argued that each union should meet separately to elect their particular representative. I am confident, however, that if this course is adopted it will only accentuate union divisions instead of liquidating them. A full shop meeting, including even the non-unionists, secures the full confidence of the shop to every member of the committee and facilitates the recruiting of members into the

unions as nothing else can. It is not only the way to 100 per cent. confidence, but to 100 per cent. unionism.

This is the method we adopted in the Sheffield district during the war period, and I venture to say there was no district better organised both from the standpoint of the trade unions or the workshop committees ; and at that time we were not supported by the Trades Council. It is true that the movement was then confined to the engineering industry. But the experiences in this industry are experiences in an industry where there are probably more unions and more confusion than in any other. To overcome these difficulties, as we did overcome them, gives us confidence in the application of the same methods in less difficult circumstances, especially after the general acceptance of the principle of workshop organisation.

The chief problem is that of a united effort of the unions to carry out the Congress decision that is accepted as a most pressing question of the day, both for recruiting, establishing unity of action and overcoming the sectionalism of the unions. The above proposals based upon our experience of workshop organisation are put forward as a contribution to the solution of the difficulties the trade union movement has got to face.

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*Unprecedented pressure on our space compels us to hold over till next month articles on LANGUAGE AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT and on LABOUR RESEARCH.*

# The World of Labour

	PAGE
INTERNATIONAL: L.S.I. Congress . . . . .	699
TRADE UNION UNITY: Anglo-Russian Report . . . . .	701

## INTERNATIONAL

### L.S.I. Congress

THE Second Congress of the Labour and Socialist International opened on August 22 at Marseilles. Four hundred and twenty-six delegates were present from the affiliated parties, and in addition there were fraternal representatives from the I.F.T.U. and the International Labour Office. The constituent parties number forty-four, of which three are American and two Asiatic. The total membership is estimated at seven millions, and their total electoral support exceeds twenty-five millions of votes.

The political section of the report, which covers the activities of the International since its foundation two years ago, shows clearly the rôle which it attempts to fill. As the L.S.I. official *International Information* sums up:—

How the claims of the workers, at first put forward in seemingly fruitless resolutions and disregarded, were impressed little by little on the public mind till they have been finally recognised even by adversaries as the only path towards the solution of the great problems of international politics; how these claims, some brought to fulfilment, others still left unheard, must ever and again be pressed home with renewed tenacity—all this tells of an achievement in the service of the proletariat which far surpasses the manœuvres of Moscow.

This quotation gives a good idea of the spirit in which the parties, with their 1,022 parliamentary representatives, including numerous ministers and ex-ministers, have worked, at any rate in theory.

The full results of the policy of gradualism and parliamentary opportunism, enunciated in Mr. Henderson's opening address, can only be appreciated by a study of the records of the individual parties, but some indication was given during the Congress. Perhaps the most important part of the presidential address was a benediction on the policy of participation in Coalition Governments, which had been rather frowned upon so recently as at the Hamburg Congress of the L.S.I.

He recognised to the full the difficult problem involved in the transition from Capitalist to Socialist government in the world at large. In the transition stage, the problem appeared to be one of minority government or coalition. Minority Governments and Coalition Governments . . . were viewed with very great suspicion and distrust by a considerable section of their movement. Many stalwarts among them seemed to wish to raise this question to the plane of

principle. . . . In his judgment (and he spoke only for himself on this point) this method of approach would lead them to endless barren controversy upon a question which, for all practical purposes, settled itself as a question of expediency in each country where it arose.

The first discussion, on "Peace Policy," dealt almost entirely with the question of the "Pact of Security," and resolved itself into a dispute on national lines between the French and Germans on the one hand and the British on the other.

The discussions on unemployment revealed even more clearly this divergence on nationalist grounds. A British proposal cited the payment of reparations as a major cause of unemployment, and condemned the policy. The Belgian and French delegations opposed this view, and acrimonious discussions followed.

On the colonial question, the commission decided to postpone a decision until the next Congress. The complexity of the problem, declared M. Piérand (Belgium), rendered any summary doctrinaire solution untenable at present, when it is necessary to reconcile the rights of the native populations with the needs of the great industrial States, whose prosperity depends on the use of a colonial empire, as the situation of Germany shows. All Socialists are, indeed, agreed in recognising that it was iniquitous and absurd to take away Germany's colonies.

The burning question of the Morocco war was dealt with on the last day, without discussion. The resolution demands "immediate action to restore peace." The peace terms of France and Spain are to be published, and communicated to the Riffs, and their answer is required. Peace terms must include Spanish recognition of Riffian independence, and such drawing of frontiers as shall enable the Riffs to obtain food. As in all other cases, we are left to assume that parliamentary action will be used to enforce these demands.

The "Eastern question" (*i.e.*, the attitude towards Soviet Russia) occupied more of the time and attention of the Congress than perhaps any other subject, and the greatest difficulty was found in reconciling the views of the different sections, which varied from militant counter-revolution in Tchernoff (Russia—Socialist Revolutionary) and the Polish and Roumanian Socialist parties, to the modified sympathy which the British, Austrian, and other delegates had to assume. The resolution finally agreed to opposes aggression upon Russia, but declares that the Congress,

realising that the danger of war would be considerably diminished if any Soviet decision concerning European peace were in the hands, not of a dictatorship, but of the people, supports the endeavours of the Socialist parties of Russia to democratise the Soviet régime and establish political liberty.

An argument brought forward by Otto Bauer (Austria), to restrain the counter-revolutionary enthusiasts, is of interest. In the words of the *Manchester Guardian's* report, he

argued that the development of capitalism in Russia was drawing political changes inevitably, and that the International's attitude should be not merely critical of Communism, but should be one of helpfulness to these liberalising tendencies.

This, apart from organisational and other minor questions, and a resolution in favour of the ratification of the Washington Agreement on the eight-hour day, concluded the business of the Congress.

M. Charles Dulot, the well-known Labour correspondent of *Le Temps*, in reporting the discussion on the colonial question for that journal (29/8/25), wrote :—

The Congress has thus ended with this final manifestation of the tendency which is forcing the International to adapt itself to economic, if not to Socialist, realities.

## TRADE UNION UNITY

### Anglo-Russian Report

THE Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council met on September 17, after the Trades Union Congress at Scarborough, and in the light of its ratification of the Agreement decided upon in April, published a report. After recalling that both responsible bodies have now ratified the decisions, and emphasising the previous joint pronouncements on the need for unity, it proceeds:—

The industrial and economic situation, aggravated by the Dawes plan in most of the countries, has become worse since the beginning of this year. Unemployment is world-wide in its effects and is steadily increasing. The attacks of the employing class on the workers' hours and wages become more and more definite and deliberate.

Parallel with the growth of economic reaction, the political situation has become more and more reactionary and obstructive to working-class interests. In the various parts of Europe reactionary groups of capitalists are obtaining more and more power and leadership in the policy of the State. The danger of war is becoming nearer and more evident. The Anglo-Russian Conference last April, in the following words, expressed the situation as it had developed up to that time: "Already it would appear that a new war, more terrible, more monstrous than hitherto, is being prepared."

These words still preserve and maintain their full force. Already in Morocco, in Syria, in China, the thunder of warfare is giving evidence of the justice of this warning. War is being waged upon the Riffs in Morocco, and upon the Arabs in Syria, while the Chinese workers and peasants revolting against exploitation and usurpation are held down by armed force. This is making clear to all workers of the world the insincerity of the lofty professions of peace made by capitalist statesmen.

The Guarantee Pact places upon Germany the duty of using sanctions (military and economic penalties) against the States unwilling to submit to the League of Nations. The object of this is to include Germany in a military alliance directed against the U.S.S.R. (Soviet Russia). This would make Germany a constant menace to Soviet Russia, and at the same time would create in Germany a strategical base for any projected attack upon the Soviet Republics.

The establishment of an all-inclusive world-wide Trade Union International has therefore become more necessary than ever. The world-wide and active sympathy aroused by the creation of the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council amongst the workers of all countries is an unmistakable proof of the justice and correctness of the line taken by the Anglo-Russian Conference, of the practical proposals adopted, and of the inevitable success of the cause of national and international trade union unity. The Joint Advisory Council,

prompted by the firm desire ardently expressed by more than 11,000,000 British and Russian workers, appeals to the workers of every country, to their organisations and leaders, to join their efforts with the British and Russian trade union movements, in order to secure the removal of all obstacles and difficulties in the way of national and international working-class unity, and to help them to bring into existence one all-inclusive world-wide federation of trade unions.

*On behalf of the All-Russian Trade Union Council—M. TOMSKY.*

*On behalf of the British Trades Union Congress General Council—  
FRED BRAMLEY.*

This pronouncement, in conjunction with the renewed and increased enthusiasm for unity displayed at the British Trades Union Congress, has drawn angry comments from the opponents of unity. Thus the *I.F.T.U. Press Reports* (No. 37, October 1, 1925), under the heading "Not the Right Way to Unity," severely rebuke the General Council. Recalling that the Congress ignored the decisions of the National Minority Movement, it declares:—

Internationally, on the other hand, the British have, so to speak, proposed a pact with those minority movements and dissidents which, very much to the disadvantage of the whole Trade Union Movement, have seceded from their respective national centres.

It concludes with what can only be regarded as a threat of a new split:—

Nevertheless, they have continued their campaign for the Russian conception of the unity question with so much zeal that occasionally they seem in their eagerness to have come very near overstepping the bounds of loyalty to the I.F.T.U. and its affiliated national centres. In their anxiety to force the Continental unions to their own way of thinking, the British comrades seem to overlook the fact that their action, instead of leading to greater unity, may only cause further secessions. It seems highly improbable that the Continental unions will allow themselves to be influenced by the peculiar form of radicalism which has so suddenly developed among the British trade unions.

Similarly the Berlin *Vorwärts* (September 29, 1925), in an article on the Anglo-Russian statement, headed "A Shameful Document: the English Trade Unions as the Agents of Russian Foreign Policy," concludes:—

With the latest document, however, the British trade union representatives have allowed themselves to be tricked by the Russians into a position which makes it impossible for the International Trade Union Movement to keep silent on the subject. It is now time for the rest of the trade unions organised in the Amsterdam International to repudiate the British attitude in no uncertain terms, because we have ample grounds for stating that the members of the British General Council are no longer conscious how far by their friendship with the Russians they have alienated themselves from their colleagues on the Continent.

The *Manchester Guardian* (October 5, 1925) received enthusiastically the I.F.T.U. statement which is quoted above, with the comment:—

The campaign for international trade union unity that seemed to go so swimmingly at Scarborough has now turned against the Russians. . . . Everything points to the end of this blind co-operation of the General Council with the Russians having been reached.

*The Times* (October 5, 1925) also gave great prominence to what it called "Sharp Amsterdam Criticism."

# THE LABOUR MONTHLY

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## CONTENTS

Notes of the Month	- - - -	Page 705
<i>VIOLENCE AND WORKERS' DEFENCE</i>		
R. Palme Dutt : A Personal Statement	- „	716
India under British Rule	- - - - „	717
<i>By KARL MARX</i>		
Locarno and Aix-la-Chapelle	- - - - „	729
<i>By W. N. EWER</i>		
Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism ?	- „	736
<i>(Concluded) By L. TROTSKY</i>		
Labour Research	- - - - - „	749
<i>By MAURICE H. DOBB</i>		
The World of Labour	- - - - - „	755
<i>Germany—India</i>		
Index to Volume 7 (1925)	- - - - - „	762

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*The Government's Attack—The Sequel of Liverpool—Class Law—  
Protests and Practice—The Democratic Illusion—What is the  
Answer?—Still Hoping—Hypothesis versus Facts—Only  
the Beginning—Whose Violence?—Sub Judice—  
“Violence and Civil War”—Mr. MacDonald  
and the Earthquake—Communism versus  
Violence—“Heavy Civil War”—Was  
Lenin Wrong?—The Revolutionary  
Answer—No Alternative—  
Towards New Leadership*

**S**HARP on the heels of Liverpool has followed the Government's attack. The Government's attack has carried out the course predicted with exactitude. First, the concentration on the revolutionary wing, by the prosecution of the Communist Party. Second, the extension to a wider field of the whole Labour Press, by the Government's dropping of the case against the gunmen who seized the *Daily Herald* van. Third, the extension to the whole trade union field, by the renewed Conservative taking up of the Political Levy Bill (though this will probably have to wait on the success of the economic offensive). Finally, the preparation of the economic offensive, which is being organised more and more openly and with more and more open co-operation between the Government and Fascism. It is clear that Liverpool has not ended the class struggle by its resolutions of trustful faith in capitalist democracy, nor has it conciliated the bourgeoisie by its obedient surrender of working-class unity in response to the imperious clamour of the capitalist Press. On the contrary, Liverpool has only encouraged the Government to attack.

**T**HE intensified Government attack on the working class is the direct and logical sequel of the Liverpool decisions. This is the first and most important lesson to learn,—for it is the beginning of wisdom for the future. The policy of the united working-class front in action, of “Red Friday,” and of

Scarborough, so far as it is carried out, means strength for the working class; in face of it the bourgeoisie was compelled to retreat. But the moment there came instead the policy of Liverpool, the policy of MacDonald, the policy of working-class disunity and of concessions to capitalist democracy and the capitalist Press, from that moment the bourgeoisie recovered their position and pressed forward their attack; the working-class ranks were temporarily broken by the failure of those who should have been organising them. The contrast in practical effect on the political situation between Scarborough and Liverpool is so clear that none can fail to see it. It is to be hoped that this lesson will sink deep into the masses of the workers, and also into the minds of those Left Wing leaders who thought that they could safely leave the battle unfought at Liverpool without damage to their own cause.

**S**LOWLY the workers are awakening to the full measure of the capitalist attack that is threatening them. They are beginning to realise that strong forces are being prepared against them; that the capitalist class is forming special organisations, technical, economic, political and military, legal and illegal; that the State, the law, the Press, the police, Fascism and the employers' organisations are working together with obvious co-operation; and that it is no longer a question of a strike here or an election there, but of a supreme trial which will put to the test, not only the whole future of working-class standards, but the whole existence and rights of working-class organisation. They are beginning also to learn another thing: and that is that the promises of legal protection and democracy and peaceful progress which their leaders have held out to them are not honoured when it comes to the test; that the law exists for the rich and not for the poor; and that those who counselled them not to place their trust in it, but only in their own working-class organisation, may have been right after all.

**T**O-DAY the air is full of protests. A change is taking place in Right Wing Labour expression which is worth noting. Six months ago the Right Wing Labour Press invariably laughed at the idea of Fascism in England. It was too

comic for words. It was "a comic opera organisation." It was "little children playing at soldiers." The correct policy for Labour was to "ridicule and ignore" them; they would be "killed by ridicule." If they attempted anything, the police would deal with them. To-day the tune has changed. The Right Wing Labour Press is full of passionate protest and indignation. They have forgotten to giggle at Fascism. They are beginning to understand the meaning of the statement that, so far from the police being likely to deal with Fascism, the police and Fascism are in practice one and the same thing. They are beginning to realise that Fascism is the problem of Reformism, the dilemma which Reformism cannot solve: If the law fails them, how are they to meet it? To that question they have no answer.

**P**ROTESTS are the last weapon in the armoury of democratic illusion. Mr. MacDonald is busily writing letters of protest to the newspapers at the Government's semi-legal attacks upon the working class. It would be better if Mr. MacDonald, instead of protesting after the event, had taken a little thought at Liverpool for the defence of the working class. If Mr. MacDonald and his friends opened the door so invitingly for the Government at Liverpool, it is not to be wondered at that the Government took advantage of it. Mr. Wedgwood has declared that if only he had guessed the Government was going to act like this, he and others would never have behaved as they did at Liverpool. Sacred innocencel Of such, at all times and in all countries, are the hosts of Reformism made. But Mr. Wedgwood endeavoured in a subsequent speech to go on to deal with the question: What then? What must be done? And in his answer to this question the final bankruptcy of the democratic illusion was revealed.

**M**R. WEDGWOOD said:—

It is much better to have things out in the open. We know where we are and what Labour has to expect. The State is against you; the court is against you; Society will not stand your slothfulness any longer. If you will not work, there are bludgeons.

It is no use whining when you are hit like this, or saying, "It's unfair." They want you to realise that they can be unfair. It is vain to make appeals to the law courts or to send deputations to see

Sir William Joynson-Hicks. The lawyers and Sir William enjoy that. It is a little contemptible to beg for justice.

We had much better grin and bear it, and organise in one way or another, or in every way, to change the rulers when we do get a chance, even though we suspect that when we have changed them we may have to change them again.

This statement is the nearest approach of any front bench Labour leader to facing the issue. It is therefore worth consideration.

**W**HAT does this statement offer as the working-class answer to Fascism and class violence? Mr. Wedgwood says that the whole machinery of the existing State and law is against the working class. Correct. Mr. Wedgwood further says that it is useless to appeal to the bourgeoisie or their law-courts: the working class must organise their own strength. Again correct. What is the conclusion? It looks as if we must get some positive proposals how the working class are to organise their strength for meeting the present crisis, close their ranks, prepare their defence, seek to win over or neutralise the State forces, or the like. Nothing of the kind. Mr. Wedgwood's conclusion is more ambitious. The workers must win the power of government: they must

organise in one way or another, or in every way, to change the rulers when we do get a chance, even though we suspect that when we have changed them we may have to change them again.

(*Morning Post* report and the *Daily Herald* report omits the last clause.) What does Mr. Wedgwood mean by this? Mr. Wedgwood is not an advocate of the dictatorship of the proletariat: he cannot therefore mean that. We must presume that he means a parliamentary Government based on a parliamentary majority. This, then, is Mr. Wedgwood's answer how the workers are to meet the present crisis. They are to meet the present crisis that is a matter of months with an alleged future parliamentary majority that is a matter of years.

**T**HIS is to meet facts with a hypothesis. How long is this parliamentary majority likely to take to reach? Five years? Ten? Fifteen? Twenty? Not to mention the possibility—which cannot be ignored—that it may never come, that a few Zinoviev forgeries can easily hold it off for the present,

and that social and international events may reach a crisis long before it is in sight. What then? What is to happen in the meantime? How are the workers to defend themselves? For in the meanwhile the class struggle goes on. The attack on the workers' standards continues. The legal offensive proceeds. The Fascist campaign has full play. What are the workers to do? Are they to submit? Are they to surrender their whole present position in the hope of the elusive future parliamentary majority? Are they to confine their defence to the old economic sectional trade union action, when the class struggle has clearly swept forward to a new stage involving the action of the whole working class and embracing fields never previously covered? Are they to awaken to this new stage and organise their action correspondingly in every direction? Or are they to go the way of Italy, and let their whole organisation be broken up? The latter is the only "democratic" answer. But if that is not the answer, then drop the play of democratic illusion (as the illuminating events of the Fascists and the *Daily Herald* have in practice prompted Mr. Wedgwood to do in the first half of his statement) and come out openly on the ground of working-class strength and power.

**T**HE new capitalist offensive is so far only in its earliest stages. All that has so far taken place is only a guerrilla warfare and skirmishing, in preparation for the main attacks. The experience of other countries shows that England is only at the start of the process that invariably takes place as the class struggle develops. But that this start has already taken place is of immense significance. Sufficient has already happened to raise questions which demand an answer. There are at least possibilities in view which do not fall within the simple democratic vista and which cannot be ignored. The working-class movement will be well advised to consider the answer to these questions. Not to desire to answer these questions is no excuse for failing to answer them. It is useless to bury one's head in the sand. Facts are facts: and the working class will experience them in reality, here as in other countries, and will have to meet them in reality, whatever the theories of eloquent parliamentarians or the resolutions passed at conferences.

**I**T is here on this ground of actual events and experiences, and on this ground alone, that the question of "violence" so-called can be considered. The question of "violence" is not a question of the action of the working class, but of the action of the bourgeoisie. Neglect of this fundamental fact lies behind all the attempts to treat a section of the working-class movement as advocates of "violence." It is worth while to give some care to this question: for the bourgeoisie, and their agents in the working-class movement, all past-masters in the practical use of violence in the colonies or in the imperialist war, are shamelessly ready to use the language of pacifist idealism against the working class in order to teach the workers to submit without resistance to the bourgeoisie. This is the issue which is increasingly coming forward in an acute form, and drawing closer and closer from theory to practice.

**B**Y a benevolent provision of the law the direct discussion of the case at present under trial is not permitted. The object of this provision is to prevent the minds of the jury being prejudiced. The minds of the jury are virgin soil. Eleven out of twelve of them (or more probably, the whole twelve, or whatever the number may be) will have been reading continuously for the past few years the *Daily Mail*, *Express*, *News*, or else *The Times* or *Telegraph*, or similar journals. They may therefore be presumed to have completely unprejudiced minds on the subject of Communism. Nothing must be done to disturb this innocence. Accordingly we must content ourselves with considering the wider issue as it was discussed at Liverpool, and not precisely the same issue, between precisely the same social forces (Sir Douglas Hogg replacing Mr. MacDonald), as it has been discussed at the Old Bailey.

**T**HE question of "violence and civil war," as commonly introduced, is a red herring drawn across the trail. There is no question, trace or suggestion of working-class violence in this country; and there is no question whatever yet of civil war. But there is every question of bourgeois violence already, and it is an issue that is confronting the working class. The Labour leader who, in order to escape this issue and to avoid answering justified political criticism, lets himself make the facile

charge against the revolutionaries of advocating "violence and civil war" is playing straight into the hands of the Government and straight into the hands of the police. He may gain an easy victory for the moment with the unthinking, who will of course eagerly put up their hands for "peace" as against "war"; but it is at the expense of the interests of the working class. It is a lie to say that the revolutionaries advocate "violence and civil war." What the revolutionaries say is that the issue of bourgeois violence confronts the working class and has got to be faced, and that the workers cannot afford to put their trust in the capitalist law and the capitalist State machine for their protection. And events daily are proving the truth of this.

**I**MAGINE a parallel. Suppose a scientist to declare, as a result of his investigations, that an earthquake will take place in England within ten years, and that all houses, unless reinforced in a certain way, will be shattered. It is reasonable to doubt his conclusion, to discuss his evidence, to examine the facts and see how far they bear him out. But the MacDonald method is different. Mr. MacDonald would say: "Infamous scientist! He is in favour of earthquakes. He wants to shatter all our houses. Out with him! Earthquakes are all very well for countries like Japan: but we do not want them here. We like to live at peace. We have always lived at peace. Expel this scientist! Vote for me and no earthquakes!" And amid general applause, by an overwhelming majority, a resolution would be carried denouncing the scientist and denouncing all earthquakes.

Is the parallel monstrous? Yet this is precisely what happened at Liverpool with regard to Lenin's prophecy of "heavy civil war" in England. For a civil war may happen, even though we do not wish it, if the bourgeoisie are determined upon it.

**N**EITHER the Communists, nor any other section of the working-class movement, desire or advocate violence or civil war in any form. Communism stands for the abolition of every form of coercion and every form of violence. The abolition of violence and coercion is only possible under Communism: because Communism alone removes the conditions of human

exploitation which inevitably give rise to, and can only exist by, daily violence and coercion. Compared with Communism, the Quaker opposition to violence is half-hearted and insincere: for the Quakers rest on capitalism and the capitalist apparatus, draw their wealth from it, are mixed up with their financial investments and shares in the whole of imperialism and its daily violent subjection and coercion of the majority of the human race. Communism alone proceeds along the correct method to remove coercion by removing the causes of coercion. But this process involves struggle in the existing world of struggle: and Communism teaches that, so long as the working class submits to bourgeois violence, so long they not only do not escape struggle, but by the continuance and expansion of capitalism and imperialism the sum-total of violence in the world is increased.

**L**ENIN spoke of "heavy civil war" in England. But when that quotation is given, it is never given in full. Lenin did not say: "Let us make civil war in England." Lenin did not say: "Hurrah for civil war in England." Indeed, on another occasion, Lenin declared, as Marx had declared before him, that if the revolution could be carried through peacefully in England, then speed the work. But what Lenin did say was that he was convinced that the revolution could not be carried through peacefully in England. And for this statement he gave sober matter-of-fact evidence and reasons, which have to be gainsaid before the conclusion can be gainsaid. What Lenin did say was that the English workers must "prepare for"—*prepare for*, not seek for, aim at, hope for—prepare for the necessity of winning their freedom, not through "easy parliamentary victories," but through "heavy civil war." That was a sober estimate of the future by the greatest working-class strategist in history. It was a scientific statement, backed by evidence, representing the outcome of his life's work, study, thinking and experience of the working of social forces. It was no impetuous incitement to violence, but a plain facing of realities confronting the working class. The fool who seeks to twist these words into advocacy of civil war does so at his peril.



**T**O-DAY the plain facts of the situation are already in the first stage of justifying Lenin's words. Behind all the pacifism and democracy of his language, Baldwin in every speech is proclaiming his intention to use the full machine of power against the working class. At the same time as the parliamentary democrats are dreaming of a future moment when they will be able to use the machine of State on behalf of the working class, they are failing to see that at the present moment every support they are giving to the trickery of parliamentary democracy is strengthening the position of Baldwin against the working class. It is not for nothing that Baldwin stresses on every occasion his "democratic" claim to represent "the majority" (and every argument of the Labour leaders in favour of parliamentary democracy is a support of that claim)—and in the name of that claim his right and power to employ every weapon of coercion against "the minority," *i.e.*, the workers. The bourgeoisie are not so foolish as to lose their strategic advantage of representing the State as "the people." It is their policy, while they are still possessed of that strategic advantage, to strike at the working-class movement so soon as it has become menacing to capitalist interests and is passing out of "safe" leadership. That is the whole meaning of the present period of the concentrated attack on the miners and the Communists, the organisation of Fascism and the preparations for a great conflict. On the "constitutional" basis of the trickery of the capitalist democratic apparatus (which was never more clearly exposed than in the Zinoviev forgery election, by which MacDonald let Baldwin in) Baldwin is preparing to use any weapon of coercion against the working class—"in the name of the majority." And to save misunderstanding, Churchill adds his comment: "As in time of war."

**W**HAT is the revolutionary answer to this situation? There is no "democratic" answer. What, then, does the revolutionary programme put forward at this stage of the working-class movement? Does the revolutionary programme say: "Let us make a conspiracy." "Let us blow up Buckingham Palace." "Let us abandon parliamentary and trade union action"? Nothing of the kind. The revolutionary programme says very

simply: first, that the action of the bourgeoisie against the workers, both legal, semi-legal and illegal, is to be expected at the present stage and is inevitable: second, that the working class cannot trust in the capitalist law and machine for their defence, but must trust in their own strength; and third, that therefore the workers' ranks must be united and organised to meet the capitalist attack. To realise this the workers need a common leadership and a common movement. The workers all over the country must be awakened to the struggle in front and to the issues to be faced. A leadership is needed which will face these issues and organise the workers' struggle. Centralisation of direction is needed through the General Council, the Workers' Alliance or similar forms. Unification of the workers' ranks is needed all over the country, and can only be achieved on the basis of the factories. The workers need to establish the local protection of their organisation against guerrilla attacks and middle-class hooliganism by the formation of Workers' Defence bodies in every district. Finally the workers need beforehand to strive to disarm the violence of the State machine against them by bringing the propaganda of the working-class movement to their fellow workers in the State forces.

**I**N all these proposals is there a single one which is not already evident to every serious worker as dictated by the barest necessities of the situation? Take, for example, that which has most given rise to controversy: the question of the carrying of working-class propaganda to the State forces. Is there a single reason why the whole working-class movement should not unite to carry out this all-important task? Is there a single argument (other than fear of the law) for not doing it? Is there a single honourable reason that a single member of the Independent Labour Party can give for not performing this duty? But if there is not, and if the same applies with no less strength to every one of these proposals, then the urgent need is the consolidation of a leadership which will carry them out, the consolidation of a Left Wing which will combine every honest element in the movement on a common programme of workers' unity and defence against the capitalist attack. This question of leadership is of vital importance at the present hour; for without it the workers cannot defend themselves because they

cannot act together. The readiness of the workers, revealed in the tremendous response to "Red Friday" and the Workers' Alliance campaign, cannot realise itself without the leadership to give it expression and to organise it. A heavy responsibility is thrown on the whole of the Left Wing. Every sectional difference must give way to the common need. If the workers can only stand firm, united and prepared in time, they need fear no action of the bourgeoisie.

**T**HE attack of the Government covers a very wide field. There are three pillars of the Baldwin Government's policy: the Pact, the Gold Standard and the home offensive against the working class. Every one of these is part of a common campaign to re-establish the capitalist economy in the post-war period by the driving down of the working class. The Pact is the bloc of Western European imperialism, the temporary merging of the old differences, and even the inclusion of the former enemy, Germany, not for purposes of "peace and conciliation," but openly against the revolution, against the Soviet Union and against the awakening colonial peoples of Asia (and ultimately also against the rival imperialism of America). The accompaniment of the Pact is the intensification of the White campaign and working-class persecution in every country in Europe. The Pact is the first stage of preparation of a future war-front. The Gold Standard is the desperate and artificial attempt to re-establish the world position of British capitalism by the forcing down of the British workers' standards. The necessary accompaniment of the policy of the Gold Standard is the offensive against the working class—the attack on the miners, the Communist prosecutions, the organisation of Fascism, the mobilisation of the Right Wing against working-class unity and the preparation for a future conflict. The answer of the workers to this many-sided attack demands a new leadership which does not yet exist in the British movement. The need of the present period is to forge a way forward to this new leadership through the consolidation of the Left Wing on the basis of the practical task of Workers' Defence.

R. P. D.

# R. PALME DUTT :

## A Personal Statement

*This number of THE LABOUR MONTHLY appears a few days late owing to the arrest of our Editor, R. Palme Dutt, in Brussels. No doubt our readers were made aware of this circumstance through the reports in the Press ; but since these reports were garbled and, in certain respects, definitely misleading, we think it desirable to state here the essential facts of the case.*

*Following a severe breakdown in health some eighteen months ago, Mr. Dutt has been compelled to reside out of England. Unfortunately his health has not improved—so much so that it has often been under circumstances of great difficulty that he has written his “ Notes of the Month ”—and recently he left Sweden, where he had been living, for Belgium in order to undergo special treatment at a hospital in Brussels. Here he was so ill that he was frequently unable to leave his bed for more than two days in the week.*

*On Thursday, November 5, four policemen entered the room of this sick man, covered him with their revolvers and arrested him on the preposterous charge of conspiring against the Belgian State. The room was searched, and nothing at all was found—despite Press tales of “ German, Russian and Hungarian money ” and “ Documents in Chinese and Hindustani ”—beyond scientific, economic and philosophic works, and the usual Socialist, Communist and Marxist studies that are found on the bookshelves of most publicists.*

*Naturally, for want of evidence, this fantastic charge was dropped, but in its stead a deportation order was issued. Only urgent representations, by telegram and mail, from influential persons in this country delayed the execution of the order and caused its eventual cancellation by a unanimous decision of the Belgian Cabinet.*

# INDIA UNDER BRITISH RULE

By. KARL MARX

[*The following two articles were contributed by Karl Marx to the New York Daily Tribune in 1853. They were recently re-discovered by Mr. Riasanov, the head of the Marx and Engels Institute in Moscow, and published in the journal, Under the Banner of Marxism. The present translation has been made from the German edition of this periodical (July, 1925), and cannot, therefore, claim to represent the exact wording of the original articles. Quotations also have been translated from the German. It is astonishing to notice how up-to-date Marx's analysis appears. His description of the revolutionary changes in the basis of the Indian social order brought about by the British conquest of India, and his forecast of the involuntary creation by British capitalism of the necessary political and economic conditions for Indian independence have been strikingly confirmed by events.*]

## I. BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

*New York Daily Tribune, June 25, 1853.*

**H**INDUSTAN is an Italy of Asiatic dimensions, with the Himalayas for the Alps, the plains of Bengal for Lombardy, the Deccan for the Apennines and the island of Ceylon for Sicily. Hence the similar great diversity in soil production and the analogous cleavages in political structure. Just as Italy from time to time has been split up by the sword of the conqueror into different national portions, so we see Hindustan, where not under the pressure of Mohammedans, Moguls or Britishers, broken up into as many independent and hostile States as it counts towns or even villages. Regarded from the social standpoint, however, Hindustan is not the Italy but the Ireland of the East. This peculiar combination of an Italy with an Ireland, of a world of voluptuousness with a world of suffering, reflects itself in the old traditions of the religion of Hindustan. This religion is at once a religion of sensual extravagance and of self-

mortifying asceticism, the religion of the Lingam and the Juggernaut, the religion of the monks and the dancing girls.

I do not share the opinion of those who believe in a golden age of Hindustan; without, however, like Sir Charles Wood, appealing to the authority of Kuli-Khan for the confirmation of my view. One has only to picture for oneself, for example, the times of the Aurangzebs, or the epochs when the Mogul appeared in the North and the Portuguese in the South, or the Mohammedan invasion and the Heptarchy in South India, or, if one wishes to go back still farther into antiquity, the mythological chronology of the Brahmins themselves, in order to date back the beginning of Indian misery to an epoch which reaches further back than the creation of the world according to the Christian reckoning.

There is no doubt, however, that the misery which the British have conjured up all over Hindustan is fundamentally different, and of an infinitely deeper consequence, than anything previously suffered by her. I am not referring here to the European despotism of the British East India Company grafted on to the old Asiatic despotism, a more horrible combination than any of the monstrous idols that frighten us in the temple of Salsette. That is no peculiarity of British colonial domination, but only an imitation of the Dutch, and, indeed, to such an extent is this the case, that it suffices for a complete description of the activity of the British East India Company to reproduce the exact words of Sir Stamford Raffles, the British Lieut.-Governor of Java, on the old Dutch East India Company. He said :—

The Dutch Company, governed entirely by the motive of profit, treated its subjects with less consideration or regard than earlier the West Indian plantation owners treated the slaves on their estates, for the latter had paid for the slaves in their possession, while the Dutch East India Company had not. It used the whole existing apparatus of despotism in order to wring out of the people the last penny in taxation, and the last ounce of labour power, and heightened still further the pressure of an arbitrary and semi-barbaric government by employing the latter with all the practical rapacity of a politician and all the finished egoism of a monopolist trader.

All the former civil wars, invasions, conquests and famines, however remarkably complicated, rapid and destructive their succession in India may appear, touched only the surface. England, on the other hand, has torn down the whole scaffolding of the

Indian social order, without so far any obvious signs of a rebirth being visible. This loss of an old world without any winning of a new one lends an especially tragic character to the present misery of the Indians, and distinguishes the present-day Hindustan as ruled by the British from all the ancient traditions and history of the entire past.

For unthinkable ages there have been in Asia only three departments of Government—that of finance or internal plunder, that of war or external plunder, and, finally, that of public works. Climate and soil conditions, especially the enormous stretches of desert reaching from the Sahara over Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary to the highest plateaux of Asia, make artificial irrigation by canals and waterworks the fundamental basis of oriental agriculture. In India, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia alike, river floods were utilised for fertilising the soil and increasing the water storage for feeding the irrigation canals. The absolute necessity of frugal economical use of water, which in the West, in Flanders and Italy, compelled the private owners to join in voluntary union, determined in the East, where the civilisation was too low and the area too great for it to bring about a voluntary union, the interference of the central governmental power. Thus arose an economic function of all Asiatic governments, *viz.*, the function of promoting public works. This artificial fertilising of the soil, which depends on the administration of the central government and immediately falls into decay with the neglect of irrigation and land drainage, is the explanation of the otherwise curious fact that at the present time whole regions are infertile deserts which were once under excellent cultivation, as, for instance, Palmyra, Petra, the ruins of Yemen and whole provinces in Egypt, Persia and India. It explains also the fact that the devastation of a single war could cause the depopulation of a country for centuries and rob it of its whole civilisation.

The British in India have taken over from their predecessors the departments of finance and of war, but they have entirely neglected that of public works. Hence the decay of agriculture, which cannot be carried on in accordance with the English principle of free competition, of *laissez faire, laissez aller*. We are, however, quite accustomed to see in Asiatic empires the decay of agriculture

under one government and its restoration under another. The harvest here corresponds to the presence of a good or bad government, just as in Europe it reflects good or bad weather. The subordination and neglect of agriculture, however bad it might be, could not still be regarded as the ultimate ground of the collapse of the Indian social order brought about by the British invasion if it had not also been accompanied by circumstances of quite a different significance, by a new phenomenon in the annals of the history of the entire Asiatic world.

Whatever the numerous changes in the political picture of India's past, its social order remained unaltered from the oldest times up to the first decade of the nineteenth century. The hand loom and spinning wheel, which employed regularly their millions of spinners and weavers, formed the basis of the structure of this society. For ages past Europe has been in receipt of the wonderful products of the Indian textile craft, giving precious metals in exchange. Thus was provided the material for the work of Indian goldsmiths who formed an indispensable constituent of Indian society, where the love for ornaments is so great that even the almost naked Indians of the poorest sections of the population usually carry a pair of gold ear-rings or some gold ornament about the neck. Rings were also generally worn on fingers and feet. Women and children frequently carried massive bracelets of gold and silver, and in the dwellings one often saw gold and silver idols.

It was the British invasion that shattered the Indian hand loom and smashed the spinning wheel to pieces. England began by displacing Indian cotton goods from the European market. Then she brought cotton yarn to Hindustan, and finally flooded with cotton from abroad the real home of cotton itself. Between 1818 and 1837 the export of yarn from Great Britain to India rose in the proportion of 1 to 5,200. In 1824 the export of British cotton goods to India amounted to hardly a million yards; in 1847 it had already exceeded a figure of 64 million yards. At the same time the population of Dacca dwindled from 150,000 to 20,000. This shrinkage of Indian cities long renowned for their fabrics was by no means the worst consequence. British steam power and British science destroyed all over India the union of agriculture and hand manufacturing industry.



These two circumstances—on the one hand, the fact that the Hindus, like all oriental peoples, left it to the central government to look after large scale public works, the basis of agriculture and trade; and, on the other hand, the fact that this agriculture and this trade, spread over the whole country, was only knit together in small centres through the domestic union of agricultural and hand-craft labour—these two circumstances had led to the creation from time immemorial of a specific social system, the so-called *village system*, which gave to each of these small centres its independent organisation and its own special life.<sup>1</sup>

These small, stereotyped forms of social organisation are for the most part in dissolution, and are on the point of vanishing, not so much owing to the brutal invasion of British tax-collectors and British soldiery, as rather to the influence of British steam engines and of British free trade. These family communities were based on home industry, with specific inclusion of hand-spinning, hand-weaving and hand-cultivated agriculture, thus making them self-supporting. The British invasion which transplanted the spinner to Lancashire and the weaver to Bengal, or swept away both the Hindu spinner and the Hindu weaver, dissolved this small half-barbarian, half-civilised community, inasmuch as it shattered its economic basis, and so carried through the greatest, and in truth the only, social revolution that Asia has ever experienced.

However heavily it may weigh on human sensibility to see how these innumerable, industrious, patriarchal and peaceful social communities have been disorganised, resolved into their constituent parts, thrown into an abyss of suffering and their separate members robbed at the same time of their ancient culture and of their inherited means of existence, it should nevertheless not be forgotten that these idyllic village communes, harmless as they may appear, have always been the firm basis of oriental despotism, have held the human mind prisoner within the narrowest horizon imaginable, have made it the pliant tool of superstition and the slave of traditional usage and have robbed it of every element of greatness and

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<sup>1</sup>Here follows in the article a description of the ancient self-contained Indian village communities with their rigid but simple division of labour, a description of which is omitted here, for it will be found reproduced in almost identical terms in Karl Marx *Capital*, Volume I. (English translation, G. H. Kerr & Co., 1918, pp. 392-394.)

of historical creative energy. Nor should there be forgotten the barbarian egoism of those who, clinging fast to a miserable scrap of soil, have looked on unmoved at the ruin of whole kingdoms, at the practice of unspeakable cruelties, at the massacre of the entire population of large cities, incapable of perceiving in all this anything beyond a simple phenomenon of Nature, and who have themselves been condemned to such impotence as to be devoured by every assailant who deigned to favour them with his attention. It should not be forgotten that this worthless, immobile, passive, vegetative existence evoked as its reaction on the other side wild aimless and unbounded powers of destruction, which in Hindustan made murder itself a religious observance. It should not be forgotten that these small communities were condemned to caste separation and to slavery, that they abased man to be the mere creature of external circumstances, instead of exalting him to be the ruler of external forces, that they transformed the social condition produced by their own special development into being considered an unalterable natural law, and thereby attained to that crude worship of nature, which in very fact revealed their own worthlessness, where man, the ruler of nature, reverently bowed the knee to Kanuman the ape and Saballa the cow.

It is true that England in setting into motion this social revolution in Hindustan was actuated solely by the lowest interests and proceeded stupidly in its endeavour to bring it about. But this is not the matter in issue. Rather the question is: can mankind fulfil its mission without a fundamental social revolution in Asia? If it cannot, then England, whatever the crimes she may have committed, has in the carrying through of this revolution acted only as the unconscious instrument of history.

## II. FUTURE EFFECTS OF BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

*New York Daily Tribune, August 8, 1853.*

How did it happen that British supremacy was established in India? The far-reaching power of the Great Mogul was broken by the Mogul's viceroys. The power of the viceroys was broken by the Mahrattas. The power of the Mahrattas was

broken by the Afghans. Then, while the fight of all against all was raging, the British burst in, and were able to subdue them all. A country in which not only Mohammedans fought against Hindus, but also race against race and caste against caste, with a society the coherence of which arose from a kind of equilibrium the result of a general mutual aversion and inborn segregation of all its members, was not such a land with such a society predestined to become the booty of conquerors? Even if we knew nothing about the history of Hindustan, would not the cardinal and indisputable fact be sufficient that up to this very moment India is held in subjection to Britain by an Indian army maintained at Indian expense? Hence India could not escape the fate of being conquered, and its whole history, so far as it is anything at all, is a history of the successive conquests of which it has been the object. Indian society in general has no history, at least no known history. What we call its history is solely the history of recurrent invaders, one giving place to the other, who founded their empires on the passive basis of this non-resistant and unchanging society. The question is not, therefore, whether the British had a right to conquer India, but whether we would have preferred to see an India conquered by the Turks, the Persians or the Russians rather than by the British.

England has a double mission to fulfil in India, a destructive and a creative; on the one hand the destruction of the old Asiatic social order, and, on the other hand, the creation of the material conditions for a western type of social order in India.

The Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moguls, by whom India was successively over-run, were quickly Indianised, since barbarian conquerors, in obedience to an eternal law of history, always succumb to the higher civilisation of their subjects. The British were the first who were superior to the Hindu civilisation, and therefore conquerors inaccessible to its influence. They destroyed it, in that they broke in pieces the Indian community, wiped out the native industries, and levelled to the ground all that was great and exalted in Indian society. The history of British rule in India gives information of little else except destruction. As yet the signs of a re-birth have hardly begun to appear among the ruins. But, still, it has begun.

The political unity of India, which is to-day more consolidated

and extensive than ever it was under the rule of the Great Mogul, forms the first of the conditions for India's re-birth. The unity forced on the country by the British sword will be heightened and furthered by the introduction of the electric telegraph. The native army, organised and drilled by British officers and sergeants, will be the *conditio sine qua non* of Indian self-emancipation, of an India which will have ceased to become the continual prey of every foreign invader. The free press, now penetrating into Asiatic society for the first time, represents a new and powerful lever in reconstruction. The zemindari and ryotwari systems, however abominable they may be in themselves, signify, however, two pronounced forms of private property in the soil, for which Asiatic society is so greatly thirsting. Among the Indians in Calcutta, so reluctantly and cautiously trained up under British supervision, a new class is springing up which exhibits the qualities necessary for governing and which is acquainted with European science. Steam-power has brought India into regular and speedy communication with Europe. It has linked India's chief harbours with those of all the south-eastern ocean, and snatched her out of the position of isolation which was the chief basis for her stagnation. The day is no longer far-distant when, by a combination of railway and steamship, the distance between England and India, measured in time, will be reduced to eight days, and thus the one-time land of fable will be actually annexed to the western world.

The ruling classes in Great Britain have so far been interested in the progress of India only exceptionally, in passing, and from case to case. The aristocracy wanted to conquer her, the plutocracy to plunder her, and the big capitalists to exploit her. Now, however, the page has been turned. The big capitalists have discovered that the conversion of India into a producing country has acquired vital importance for them, and consequently that it is above all necessary to provide India with means for artificial irrigation and for the expansion of internal trade. They intend now to cover the whole of India with a network of railways—and they will do it. The consequences will be immeasurable.

It is a notorious fact that the productive forces of India have been paralysed by the complete lack of means for despatch and exchange of its manifold products. Nowhere more glaringly than

in India is there shown, as the result of lack of means of exchange, manifest social misery in the midst of natural superfluity. It was proved by a committee of the House of Commons in 1848 that, while grain was being sold in Kandesh for six to eight shillings a quarter, in Poona, where the people were dying of hunger in the streets, the cost of grain was 64 to 70 shillings, without it being possible for stocks to be obtained from Kandesh since the clay roads were impassable.

The introduction of railways can easily be made to serve agricultural needs, for in places where earth excavations are necessary for the building of railway embankments, water reservoirs will be made and the water distributed along the various lines. Thereby irrigation, the *conditio sine qua non* of agriculture in the East, will experience a far-going extension, and the recurrent local famines which result from lack of water will be avoided. The general significance of a railway system applied from this point of view becomes obvious as soon as we remember that an irrigated soil, even in districts in the neighbourhood of the Ghats, pays three times as much in taxes, employs ten or twelve times as many men and yields twelve to fifteen times as much profit as the same area without irrigation.

The railways will also bring about a reduction of the strength of the army and of expenses for military purposes. Captain Warren, Commander of Fort St. William, declared before a Select Committee of the House of Commons :—

The possibility of obtaining information from distant parts of the country in as many hours as at present days and even weeks are required, and of despatching instructions together with troops or stores in the quickest possible way, is a factor the importance of which can hardly be over-estimated. The troops could be stationed in more remote and healthier localities than heretofore, whereby considerable loss of human life through sickness could be saved. The amount of stores required in the various depots would be less than before, whereby damage through destructive climatic influences would be avoided. The strength of the army could be decreased to an extent immediately corresponding to its power of execution.

We know that the communal administration and the economic basis of the village communities have been destroyed. Their most evil character, however, *viz.*, the dissolution of society into rigid and separate atoms, has been retained. The isolation of the

villages determined the absence of roads in India, the absence of roads in its turn perpetuated the isolation of the villages. Thus arose communities with a permanently depressed level of living conditions, persisting in a condition of almost complete lack of connections with one another, and devoid of those needs and activities from which alone social progress can spring. Now that the British have broken this inertia and self-limitation of the villages, the railways will evoke an increased need for trade and communications.

I know that the English big capitalists wish to endow India with railways solely in order to obtain cotton and other raw material for their factories at a low price. If, however, machines are once introduced into a country which possesses coal and iron, then it is impossible to prevent such a country from producing them for itself. It is impossible to maintain a railway system in a country of such huge dimensions as India without at the same time developing all those industries which are needed to fill the immediate current requirements of such a railway system. This must draw after it an application of machinery in those branches of industry which are not immediately connected with the railways. Thus the railway system in India will become in fact a forerunner of modern industry. That will be so much more the case since the British authorities themselves credit the Hindus with a special facility in adapting themselves to the requirements of completely new methods of labour, and in acquiring the necessary technical knowledge. A striking proof of this is furnished by the capacity and skill of the native engineers of the Calcutta mint, which has for years made use of steam machinery. The same is true of the Indians working the steam machinery of the coal district of Hurdwar, and in other cases. Even Mr. Campbell, however much he may be under the influences of the prejudices of the East India Company, has to allow that—

the vast mass of the Indian people possess a great industrial capacity, are well suited for the accumulation of capital, and are endowed with notable mathematical powers, capacity for reflection and talent for exact sciences.

“Their intelligence,” he says, “is remarkable.” Modern industry, developing on the basis of the railways, will do away with

the out-lived division of labour on which the caste system rests, and the chief obstacles to Indian progress and Indian power.

All that, however, which the British bourgeoisie will be compelled to bring about will neither free the mass of the people nor essentially improve its social position, which depends not only on the development of productive forces, but also on their appropriation by the people. What the bourgeoisie will do is to create the material pre-conditions for both. But has the bourgeoisie ever done more? Has it ever brought about any progress without dragging individuals and whole peoples through blood and dirt, misery and degradation?

The Indians, however, will not reap the fruits of the elements of the new society scattered amongst them by the British bourgeoisie as long as in Great Britain itself the present ruling classes are not displaced by the industrial proletariat, or the Indians themselves become sufficiently strong to shake off the British yoke once for all. In any case, in the more or less near future is to be expected with certainty a re-birth of this great and interesting country, of this noble branch of the human race, which, to use an expression of Prince Saltykov, is even in the lowest classes "*plus fin et plus adroit que les Italiens,*" which even in subjection is characterised by a certain calm distinction of bearing, which in spite of its natural forbearance is able to astound the British officers by its courage, whose country was the birthplace of our languages and religions, embodying the type of the ancient Germans in the Jat, and of the ancient Greeks in the Brahmins.

I cannot leave the Indian question without saying a few words in conclusion.

The deep hypocrisy and innate barbarity of bourgeois culture is revealed before our eyes as soon as we turn from our home, where it assumes respectable manners, to the colonies, where it appears in all its nakedness. The bourgeoisie is the protector of property. But where has a revolutionary party ever carried through such an agrarian revolution as in Bengal, Madras and Bombay? Has not the bourgeoisie in India, to employ the phrase of that great robber Lord Clive himself, taken refuge in cruel extortion when simple corruption could no longer keep pace with its rapacity? Has it not, while in Europe it chattered of the inviolable sanctity of the

national debt, in India confiscated the dividends of the Rajahs who had invested their private savings in the securities of the East India Company? Has it not, while it fought the French revolution under the pretext of the defence of "our holy religion," at the same time forbidden the propaganda of Christianity in India? Has it not, in order to extract money from the pilgrims streaming to the temples of Orissa and Bengal, made a trade for itself out of the murder and prostitution of the temple of Juggernaut? This is how appear the men of "property, order, the family and religion"!

The destructive effects of British industry on India, a country as large as Europe and covering 150 million acres, are obvious and terrible. But we should not forget that they represent solely the organic result of the whole system of production, in the form which it has taken at the present time. This production has as its basis the unrestricted rule of capital. The concentration of capital is of essential significance for the existence of capital as an independent power. The destructive effects exerted by this concentration of capital on the markets of the world only discloses in gigantic dimensions the imminent laws of political economy which to-day are in operation in every city in the civilised world. The bourgeois period of history has to create the material basis for a new world: on the one hand, world trade and the means for this trade based on the dependence of nations on one another; on the other hand, the development of human productive forces and the transformation of material production into scientific mastery of natural forces.

Bourgeois industry and bourgeois trade fashion these material pre-conditions for a new world in the same way that geological revolutions fashion the face of the earth. Only when a great social revolution has mastered the work of the bourgeois epoch, the world market and the modern means of production, only then for the first time will human progress cease to resemble that loathsome heathen deity which would only drink nectar from the skulls of its slaughtered victims.



# LOCARNO AND AIX-LA-CHAPELLE

By W. N. EWER

**T**O see a painting clearly one must stand well back from it. Proverbially at close hand one cannot see the wood for the trees. And so it is in politics. The near view of events is often, even generally, singularly incorrect. One is a little bewildered by the detail, a little bemused by the chatter of the moment.

And so this business of the Locarno Treaties will, I think, become a little more understandable if one moves a little away from it—say a hundred leagues and a hundred years in space and time. Forward we cannot go, except in imagination; so let us try backwards. I think we may find Charlemagne's old capital of Aachen in the autumn of 1818 a curiously useful spot and time for our purpose. For at that time and in that place there was also a Conference of the Powers in being: the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle, as English history books, preferring the French name for a German town, usually call it. A pleasant Conference—"I have never seen a prettier" wrote one of the protagonists to his wife.

The first point we shall note is how curiously like is the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle, seen at close hand, to the Conference of Locarno.

A great war had been finished a few years before. A great Imperial power had been beaten by a Grand Alliance. She had been condemned to pay to the victors reparations beyond her capacity. Armies of Occupation were in her Rhine territories. She was still, though she had changed her form of government, a half-pariah state, suspected of hankering after the fallen régime, of harbouring projects of revenge.

How to obtain reparations, how to withdraw the armies of occupation, how to assure permanence for the treaty settlement which had ended the war, how to bring the outcast nation back into the European comity, how above all to obtain "the best

security for a durable peace" : these were the ostensible purposes of Aix-la-Chapelle, as of Locarno.

Even in the details the parallels are eerily precise. The intervention of the bankers—at no small profit to themselves—in the Reparations settlement : the canvassing of great schemes uniting all Europe in a pact of guarantee : the successful insistence of British statesmen that "all notions of general and unqualified guarantee must be abandoned in favour of limited agreements" : the worry caused to those same statesmen by the aversion of British public opinion to any European commitments : their constant pre-occupation with the necessity of finding formulae which would enable them either to justify their acts to, or to conceal them from, Parliament. At Aix-la-Chapelle, as at Locarno, they even debated the questions whether a guaranteeing power might march troops across Europe to enforce a guarantee, and whether the Council of Allied Ambassadors should be liquidated or retained in being for a little while.

Aix-la-Chapelle, like Locarno, was a triumphant success. Difficulties which had appeared all but insoluble vanished in a new atmosphere of goodwill. There had, indeed, to be care exercised in draughtsmanship. But the requisite formulae were forthcoming, and the unanimity was wonderful. The Reparations tangle had already been solved by the good—and remunerative—offices of Messrs. Baring and their colleagues. But it was the merit of the Conference to have solved the even more vexing problems of peace and security. The withdrawal of the armies of occupation was ordered : France was welcomed again into the comity of nations. A nice mixture of idealism and common sense created a European unity without sacrificing national independence. An equally fine balance satisfied at once those who wished Britain to play her due rôle as a guarantor of the new peace and those who dreaded her assumption of European obligations. Above all the mists of suspicion and mutual fear which had hung over the Continent as a result of the long war and the dictated peace had been dissipated and replaced by a purer atmosphere. Castlereagh, who had so ably about the same time secured the peace of the world and safeguarded the interests of his country, returned in triumph to receive the thanks of his Sovereign, the congratulations of his colleagues

and the applause of Parliament. Only a disgruntled and disreputable opposition group dared to criticise the work of the Conference and to impute sinister motives to the activities of the peace making diplomats.

So Aix-la-Chapelle appeared to those who saw it close at hand, just over a century ago. "It is," wrote the enthusiastic American Ambassador, "a compact between the five principal European powers for the preservation of universal peace."

But, seen at a distance, as we see it now, this prettiest of conferences has quite another aspect. We have the double advantage of being able to judge it by its fruits and of having access to much that was carefully hidden at the time both from American Ambassadors and from the public. Diplomats were no less cautious and secretive folk in those days than now. And the real purposes of the diplomacy of the conference were discreetly hidden. Castlereagh, in particular, hampered—as his Prussian, Austrian and Russian colleagues were not—by the constant fear of Parliament, had over and over again to remind them of the need for discretion. And so, as Gentz, who acted as secretary of the conference, noted, "they carefully avoided giving opportunities for malevolence or indiscretion by putting into the formal documents wishes or declarations of which each carried the principle in mind, but the enunciation of which would have provoked vexatious and hostile criticism."

Aix-la-Chapelle, as we see it now, was not at bottom concerned with the preservation of universal peace, but with the preservation of the old order against the menace of "the democratic principles"—the phrase is Castlereagh's—"but too generally spread throughout Europe." It was the prelude to Peterloo, to the Six Acts, to the Carlsbad Decrees, to the armed suppression of the popular movements in Spain and Italy. It was the Alliance of Governments against peoples. If the Powers agreed to forgo or to settle peaceably their differences with each other, their motive was not pacifism but fear. They laid aside their quarrels in order that the old régimes—whether autocratic or oligarchic—might present a united front towards the new danger. Gentz in his confidential memorandum to Metternich on the achievements of the Conference is nakedly frank. "The nucleus of organised strength which this union presents is the barrier which Providence itself seems to have raised to

preserve the old order." While Metternich himself, in writing to his Emperor just before the Conference, notes rather naively that the "first notion" must be peace, "and that the fundamental idea of peace is the security of property."

Not peace then, but universal oppression, was the outcome, and indeed the prime purpose, of the Aix-la-Chapelle Conference. It is often assumed that in this régime of oppression the British government refused to play its part. That is a delusion, carefully created and fostered by Castlereagh for political reasons. On the morrow of the conference his parliamentary position weakened. The opposition became stronger and more vigorous. He did not dare to join overtly in the repressive activities on the Continent. But he gave them all the support he dared. "He is," wrote the Austrian Ambassador to his chief, "like a great lover of music who is at church : he wishes to applaud but he dare not." "We are always," he himself wrote to Metternich, "pleased to see evil germs destroyed without the power to give our approbation openly." And again, "we can aid you far more by our actions than by our words." At home the Liverpool-Castlereagh government did its bit enthusiastically. Peterloo follows Aix-la-Chapelle in its list of honours.

Seen from far off, in historical perspective, the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle, then, presents an appearance very different from that which it presented to observers near at hand. The professions of peace are seen to have been mere rhetoric. The rulers of the Great Powers are seen to have come together not under the urge of lofty ideals but under the pressure of a common fear. Their alliance was a bond not of peace, but of resistance to the common danger threatening their prerogatives. A "*faisceau moral*" Metternich termed it. The phrase has a prophetic and sinister aptitude. The English for "*faisceau*" is "bundle" : but the Italian is "*fascio*."

Is it otherwise with Locarno, whose "close-up" appearance presents so curiously close a resemblance to that of Aix-la-Chapelle? Step back, clear of the illusions of the moment, clear of the rhetoric, clear of the glittering atmosphere. Is not Locarno at a distance still singularly like Aix-la-Chapelle?

The statesmen of Locarno talk the same sonorous platitudes as

the statesmen of Aix-la-Chapelle. But their assurances are as valueless as those of their predecessors. Mr. Chamberlain and M. Briand, Herr Stresemann and Signor Mussolini, are no more pacifists and idealists at heart than were Castlereagh and Metternich. Not even the sunshine of Lake Maggiore can bleach the Ethiopian skin of diplomacy. And these men who have for years been devotees of force and exponents of Imperialism have not changed miraculously in an hour.

The governments of the four great Powers of Locarno, like the governments of the five great Powers of Aix-la-Chapelle, are reactionary governments, concerned above all at the present juncture for the preservation of the old order against clearly threatening dangers. And it is this preoccupation which has driven them into a temporary unity. As France in 1818, so Germany in 1925 is brought into the fold, not from any Christian motive of forgiveness, but from the fear lest isolated she may lend aid and support to the opposition.

The dangers which threaten the established order to-day, though more complex, are not dissimilar from those which threatened in 1818. Then there were the democratic movement at home and the national resurgence in the Mediterranean countries. To-day there are the working-class movements at home, the national awakenings in Asia and Northern Africa. And there is also Soviet Russia.

England is conscious that she must strain every nerve if she is to hold her Eastern-Empire in subjection. France is already hard pressed in Syria and Morocco. Italy is by no means sure of her existing colonies and yet is greedy for more. All of them are faced at the same time by internal economic difficulties—haunted by the fear of working-class revolt. It is a situation imperatively calling for a truce to inter-governmental quarrels and for a closing of the ranks. Equally it calls for the conciliation of Germany and for her inclusion in a common system with her late enemies. For there is clear danger lest an ostracised Germany may lean towards Russia, may lean towards Turkey, may use her renascent economic strength, and the influence which it gives, to combat instead of to support the Allied domination in the East.

It is this need for a united front which explains in particular

England's Locarno policy ; and it was English diplomacy, skilfully working in Berlin, which started the whole business. For Germany and for France there are evident advantages in the pacts themselves and in the assurances—as to the Rhineland, as to commercial credits and so on—which accompany them. But for England Locarno is, on the surface, all give and no take. She assumes heavy military obligations. She has made expensive financial promises. Directly she gets no return. But indirectly she gets that which she needs most of all—the assurance of support, or at the least of benevolent neutrality, in her struggle to hold her Eastern Empire.

It is in the East that the key to British foreign policy lies, as it has lain for a century past. India, the new Empire between India and the Mediterranean, and the quasi-Empire in China are her chief concerns. Even the hostility of British Imperialism to the Soviet Union is based far more upon Asiatic anxieties than upon class prejudices. Russia is regarded in Downing Street as the "traitor" power, the blackleg of Imperialism. Her deepest crime is that she has broken the European phalanx. She has dared to treat Asiatics as comrades and partners, not as exploitable subjects. She has "gone native."

Persia and Afghanistan it is hoped may be penetrated and controlled. That leaves in Western Asia two strong powers which are at least potential enemies, and whose very existence provides an inspiration and a rallying point for the nationalist movements within the Eastern Empire. To isolate those two powers—precisely as Metternich aimed to isolate the democratically-tending states of Spain and Naples—is the obvious first task of British diplomacy.

And for that a *rapprochement* with Germany is as essential to Chamberlain as was a *rapprochement* with France to Metternich. Germany in isolation and conscious of her ostracism might seek alliance with Soviet Russia, might re-establish intimate relations with the new Turkey. Perhaps at the moment the second was the more dreaded possibility. Locarno puts an end to both. Russia must abandon any hope she may have had in Berlin. Turkey must face the Mosul issue knowing that she cannot look for German support, either diplomatic or financial or technical. Britain can face her Eastern problems without fear of complications in the West.

The Imperialist Powers, having called a truce to their own dissensions, having agreed to forget old grievances, can present—precisely as after Aix-la-Chapelle—a united front to discontent at home and to nationalism in their dependencies. The aftermath of the one as of the other will be not peace but a sharper conflict between repression and revolt. The West is preparing not for the millennium but for the struggle with the East. It is as the prologue to that struggle, not as the epilogue to the German war, that the historian will see Locarno.

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### *The Communist Trial*

*As we go to press on the night that the verdict and the sentences have been made known, we are compelled to defer till next month our comments on this first attempt at suppressing the revolutionary working-class movement in this country.*

# TOWARDS SOCIALISM OR TOWARDS CAPITALISM ?

By L. TROTSKY\*

## III

### *The Growth of Productive Forces.*

**T**HE rapid restoration of our productive forces has now become a well-known fact, and it could not have been better illustrated than by the tables of the State Planning Commission (Gosplan). The output of agricultural produce in 1924-25, including as it did the bad harvest of 1924, amounted to 71 per cent. of that of the good harvest year of 1913 (calculated in each case in values at pre-war prices). The value of the produce of 1925-26, which will include the good harvest of 1925, will undoubtedly exceed that of 1913, and will probably not be far off from that of 1911. Although during the last few years the grain crops have never reached three milliard poods, the harvest of the present year is estimated to yield about 4.1 milliard poods.

The value of the output of our industries during the past economic year has now reached 71 per cent. of the prosperous year 1913. In the coming year it will certainly be 95 per cent. of that of 1913. That is to say, the process of restoration will have been practically completed. If we remember that in 1920 our output only reached a fifth, or even a sixth, of the capacity of the factories, we see how rapid has been the rate of restoration. The output of State industry has more than trebled since 1921. Our exports, which this year had not yet reached half a milliard roubles, promise to reach considerably over a milliard. Our imports are developing similarly. The State Budget, which last year totalled two and a-half milliard roubles, will this year exceed three and a-half milliards. The quality of our goods is far above that of the first or second years of the new economic policy. Thus, to the

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\* Concluded from *THE LABOUR MONTHLY*, November 25, 1925, Vol. VII, No. 11, p. 659.



question of the development of our productive forces, we get a clear reassuring reply. The "liberation" of the market has given a powerful impetus to our productive forces.

But it is precisely the fact that it is from the market—from a capitalist element—that the impetus has come, which has fed and is feeding the malevolence of the bourgeois theoreticians and politicians. The nationalisation of industry and the planned orderly methods of conducting the national economy had been hopelessly compromised by the very fact of the transition to the new economic policy, and still more by the undoubted economic success of the latter. This is the reason why only the reply to our second question regarding the social forms of our economy can give a socialist estimate of our development. The growth of the productive forces, for instance, in Canada, is nourished by United States capital. A similar growth is proceeding in India in the face of the pressure of colonial exploitation. Finally, in the form of restoration of productive forces, it has been going on in 1924 in Germany, in spite of the application of the Dawes Plan. In all these cases we have to deal with capitalist development. In Germany, the nationalisation and socialisation plans, which were so flourishing—at any rate, in the bulky volumes of the armchair socialists and Kautskyites in 1919 and 1920—have now been abandoned as useless rubbish, and under the cruel guidance of America, the principle of private capitalist initiative, in spite of the fact that its teeth have either been lost or knocked out, is now in its second youth. And how are we off in this respect? In what social forms does the development of our productive forces proceed? Are we going towards capitalism or towards socialism?

The preliminary condition for socialist economy is the nationalisation of the means of production. Has this preliminary condition been maintained under the new economic policy? Has the introduction of market commodity forms of distribution in any way weakened nationalisation, or has it strengthened it?

The comprehensive tables of the Gosplan supply invaluable material for estimating the mutual relations and struggles between the socialist and capitalist tendencies of our national economy. We have here absolutely indisputable "control" figures which

refer to basic capital, to output, to trading capital, and generally to the most important economic processes in the country.

The figures characterising the distribution of basic capital are the most subject to reservation, but this affects far more the absolute figures than their relative value and at the present moment we are chiefly interested in the latter. According to the calculations of the Gosplan, at the beginning of the economic year, 1924-25, the capital funds of the State amounted, at the most moderate estimate, to not less than 11.7 milliard chervonetz roubles ; that of the co-operatives, to 0.5 milliard roubles ; and that of private, mainly peasant, enterprise, to 7.5 milliard roubles. This signifies that, in the sphere of the means of production, over 62 per cent. of the total has been socialised, and that the technically most up-to-date. Only 38 per cent. of the means of production has not been socialised.

As regards agriculture, here it is not so much a question of the nationalisation of the land, as of the liquidation of the landed estate owners. The confirmation of this process is most instructive. The liquidation of the landed estate owners, and of land ownership other than peasant in general, has resulted in the almost total liquidation of large agricultural enterprises, including even those conducted on more modern lines. This was one of the reasons, although a secondary one, of the temporary falling off of our agricultural economy. But we now know that the present year's harvest will raise our agricultural produce to practically the pre-war level without the help of landed estate owners, and without farms conducted on "cultured" capitalist lines. And yet we are only at the very beginning of our liberation from the agricultural methods of the landed estate owners. Consequently the abolition of the nobility, and of all its breeding grounds, and even the barbarian transformation, of which our righteous mensheviks were afraid, has been completely justified by the economic results. This is the first and a not unimportant conclusion.

As regards the nationalisation of the land, in view of the widespread small-scale farms of the peasantry, the principle of the nationalisation of the land could not be properly realised. The popular tinsel which inevitably covered socialisation in the first period has equally inevitably fallen from it. At the same time

the significance of nationalisation as a fundamental socialist measure in a State where the workers rule, has been made sufficiently clear for its important rôle in the further development of agriculture to be understood. Thanks to the nationalisation of the land, we have assured to the State unlimited possibilities in the sphere of land arrangement and distribution. No barriers of private individual or group ownership will be able to hinder the adaptation of the forms of land utilisation to the needs of our productive processes. At the present time, the means of production of agriculture have only been socialised to the extent of 4 per cent. The rest of the 96 per cent. is in the private hands of the peasants. It is, however, necessary to bear in mind that the agricultural means of production, both peasant and State, forms little more than one-third of the whole of the means of production of the Soviet Union. It is unnecessary to explain that the full significance of the nationalisation of the land will only manifest itself as a result of advanced development of agricultural technique, and of the consequent collectivisation of agriculture, that is to say, in the course of a number of years. But it is just in this direction that we are going.

#### IV

##### *The Share of State Industry*

It was quite evident to us, as Marxists, even before the revolution, that the socialist reorganisation of our economy would start with industry and transport, and would spread from that to the villages. Consequently the statistical valuation of the work of our nationalised industry is of fundamental importance in the socialist estimation of the present transition forms of our economy.

In the sphere of industry the means of production have been socialised to the extent of 89 per cent, and if railway transport is included, to 97 per cent., whilst in large-scale industry alone, 99 per cent. of the means of production have been nationalised. These figures prove that so far as the nationalisation of property is concerned, there has been no alteration to the detriment of the State. This alone is of very great importance. But we are principally interested in another question, namely, the proportion contributed by the socialised means of production in the annual output of our industry. That is to say, to what extent does the State utilise the resources in its hands?

The comprehensive tables of the Gosplan give the following answer. The State and co-operative industries in 1923-24 were responsible for 76.3 per cent. of the gross output. This year they are contributing 79.3 per cent., whilst next year they are estimated to yield 79.7 per cent. Private industry, therefore, provided in 1923-24, 23.7 per cent. of the output ; in 1924-25, 20.7 per cent. and next year it is estimated to yield 20.3 per cent. Apart from the cautious estimate figures for the coming year, the comparison of the dynamics of State and private production is of colossal importance. We see that during last year and the current year, that is to say, in years of intense economic progress, the share of State industry increased by 3 per cent., while that of the private industries decreased by that amount. This percentage is the measure for this short period of the growing preponderance of socialism over capitalism. This percentage may appear insignificant, but in reality its symptomatic significance is enormous, as we shall show below.

Wherein lay the danger in the transition to the new economic policy during the first few years ? The danger lay in this, that, as a result of the complete exhaustion of the country, the State might prove powerless in a sufficiently short period to raise up on its shoulders the big industrial enterprises. In view of the fact that the big enterprises worked to only a small fraction of their capacity (in some cases only 10 to 20 per cent. of their pre-war capacity) the middle, small and even handicraft enterprises might possibly have outweighed the larger enterprises by their mobility. The so-called "relinquishing" of enterprises during the first period, which was the socialist reward to capitalism for setting into operation the factories and workshops which had been confiscated from it, threatened to transfer into the hands of the traders, middlemen, and speculators, a large proportion of State property. The handicraft enterprises and the small-master workshops were the first to revive in the atmosphere of the new economic policy. The union of private trading capital with small private, including home, industry might have led to a fairly rapid process of primary capitalist accumulation.

Under these conditions it was possible that progress would be so slow that the reins of economic guidance might be wrested from the hands of the working-class State. By this we do not, of course,

mean to say that every temporary, or even prolonged increase in the relative specific gravity of private industry as compared with industry as a whole, necessarily threatened catastrophic or even very serious results. Quality here, too, depends on quantity. Even had our statistics shown that the specific gravity of private capitalist production had increased by 1, 2 or 3 per cent. during the last two or three years, this would by no means have rendered the position threatening. The State output would still have consisted of three-quarters of the total output, and the restoration of the lost rate of development would have been quite a possible task, seeing that large scale industry is working to greater and greater capacity. Had private capitalism increased the output of its industries by 5 per cent. to 10 per cent., we should have had to take the fact seriously into account. But even such a result during the first period of restoration would by no means have signified that nationalisation was economically unsound. The conclusion would simply have been that the most heavy section of the nationalised industries had not yet manifested the necessary rate of development. It is, therefore, the more important that as a result of the first, purely restoration period, and the most dangerous and difficult period of the new economic policy, nationalised industry had not only not lost ground, but, on the contrary, had succeeded in outstripping private capitalist industry by 3 per cent. This is the great symptomatic significance of this small figure.

Our conclusions will become still clearer if we take the figures relating not only to output, but to the trade turnover. During the first half-year of 1923, private capital accounted for nearly 50 per cent. of the middleman trade. In the second half-year, it accounted for 34 per cent. ; in 1924-25, nearly 26 per cent. In other words, the specific gravity of private capital in the middleman trade has been reduced by nearly 50 per cent. during these two years. This has not been attained by the exertion of pressure on trade, for during this period the turnover of the State and co-operative trading organisations was more than doubled. Thus, not only private industry, but also private trade, is playing a diminishing social rôle and this in spite of a general increase in the productive forces and the trade turnover. The estimates for the coming year show, as we have already seen, a further diminution, true, a small one, in the relative importance of

private industry and private trade. The victory of State industry over private industry need not be imagined as forming necessarily a continuously ascending line. There may be periods when the State, secure in the knowledge of its economic power, and endeavouring to increase the rate of development, consciously permits the relative specific gravity of private enterprise to increase : in agriculture, in the form of "solid"—that is, capitalist farms ; in industry, and also in agriculture, in the form of concessions. Taking into account the heterogeneous character of the greater proportion of our private industries, it would be rather naïve to think that every increase in the relative proportion of private production above its present proportion of 20.7 per cent. would signify some imminent menace to our socialist construction. In general, it would be incorrect to endeavour to fix here any hard and fast rule. It is not a question of formal limits, but rather of the general dynamics of the development. A study of these dynamics proves that, in the most difficult period, when the large enterprises manifested rather their negative than their positive advantages, the State came out successfully from the struggle against the first attack of private capital. During the period of very rapid development in the last two years, the relation between the economic forces arising from the revolutionary transformation, constantly, and according to plan, assumed a favourable position as regards the State. Now, when the fundamental position is stronger and more reliable than ever, as shown by the single fact that the large enterprises are now working to 100 per cent. of their capacity, there can be no ground whatever for fearing anything unexpected happening, at any rate so far as the internal factors of our national economy are concerned.

## V

*The Worker-Peasant Alliance.*

As regards the question of the peasant and worker alliance (*smychka*) that is to say, the co-ordination of the economic work of the towns and villages, the comprehensive tables of the Gosplan give fundamental, and for that reason highly convincing, facts.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In this, as in other cases, I do not mean to say that the facts in the tables are all new. But they have been verified, revised, and systematised so as to include the whole of the national economy. It is this which makes them so exceptionally important.

It can be seen from the tables that the peasants throw on the market less than a third of their gross produce, and these agricultural commodities constitute more than a third of all the trade turnover.

The relation between the value of the mass of agricultural and industrial commodities varies but slightly, the proportion being about 37 to 63. This signifies that, estimated not in poods, arshines, &c., but in roubles, agricultural goods on the market constitute a little over a third, and industrial or town goods a little under two-thirds. This is due to the fact that the villages satisfy their needs to a large extent without recourse to the market, whereas the towns throw on the market practically the whole of their produce. About two-thirds of the heterogeneous mass of the peasantry do not participate in the general trade turnover, and only one-third influence directly the national economy of the country. The whole of the produce of industry, on the other hand, by its very nature participates directly in the State turnover, since the "natural" turnover within industry itself (through the trusts and syndicates) which diminishes the amount of commodities by 11 per cent., not only does not lower, but on the contrary raises the influence of industry on the general economic process.

If, however, the agricultural produce consumed by the producers themselves does not influence the market, it does not signify that this part of the produce has no influence upon the national economy in general. It constitutes in the present state of our economy the natural necessary complement of that third of the total commodities thrown upon the market by the peasantry. This third in its turn constitutes the value for which the country demands the equivalent from the towns. We thus see the gigantic importance in the general economy of the country of the produce of the countryside as a whole, and of that third of the commodities which it supplies to the market in particular. The sale of the harvest and, in particular, the export operations in connection therewith have become important factors in the annual economic balance sheet. The mechanism of the alliance between country and town is becoming more and more complex. The question is no longer limited to the number of bushels of peasant grain which can be exchanged for a particular number of yards of calico. Our

economy has now entered the world system. This has resulted in the forging of a new link in the union of town and country. Peasant grain is now being exchanged for foreign gold. Gold is exchanged for machines, implements and the various other articles required by town and village. Textile machinery obtained in exchange for the gold received from the export of grain re-equips the textile industry, and thereby reduces the price of cloth sent into the villages. The general process of circulation has become much more complex, but the basis of it remains as before the definite economic relation between town and village.

We must not, however, forget for a moment that this relation is a dynamic one, and that the leading rôle in this complex dynamic process is played by industry. This signifies that although the product of agriculture, and particularly its commodity portion, determines to a certain extent the limits of the development of industry, these limits are not hard and fast. This means that industry may develop even by a greater sum than that represented by the increase in the harvest. The mutual relations are even more complex. Industry, while depending mainly on the countryside, and developing as a result of the development of the latter, nevertheless more and more becomes itself a big market for its own products.

At the present time, when both agriculture and industry are nearing the end of the process of restoration, industry becomes more and more the driving force in development. The problem of the influence of the town on the socialist development of the countryside, not only by means of cheap articles of consumption, but by the perfection of the implements used in agriculture, which necessitates a collective form of working the land, now confronts industry in concrete and immediate forms.

The socialist transformation of agriculture will of course be brought about, not simply by means of co-operation as a mere form of organisation but through co-operation based upon the introduction of machinery into agriculture, its electrification, and generally its industrialisation. This signifies that both the technical and socialist progress of agriculture cannot be separated from the growing relative importance of industry in the general economy of the country. And this in its turn means that, in the further economic



development, the dynamic coefficient of industry will, at first slowly, and then more and more rapidly, overtake the dynamic coefficient of agriculture, until there will no longer be any opposition between them.

VI.

*Conclusions*

The output of industry in 1924-25 exceeded the output of the previous year by 48 per cent. In 1925-26, the output is estimated to exceed that of 1924-25 by 33 per cent., if the reduction in prices is not taken into account. But the various branches of industry are not developing at exactly the same rate. The large-scale enterprises increased their output by 64 per cent. ; the second group, which we may call the middle group, increased their output by 55 per cent. ; whilst for the small enterprises the increase was only 30 per cent. We have thus reached a position when the advantage of the large enterprises over the middle and small ones is already very apparent. This, however, in no way signifies that we have already reached the possible limit of development of a socialist economy. In so far as it is a question here of the greater productivity of the large enterprises in comparison with the middle and small ones, we are here only reaping advantages such as are inherent in the nature of big enterprises even under capitalism. We are only just entering upon the fundamental problems of socialist industry, such as the standardisation of products on a national scale, the specialisation of enterprises, the conversion of factories into powerful sections of a unified All-Union productive organisation, and the establishment of systematic material relations in the productive processes of all branches of industry. All this will provide us with the possibility of exceeding the old scale of our production within a few years. But this is a task of the future, and need not be discussed now.

So far the advantages of State direction of national economy were not utilised in the sphere of production itself, that is to say, in the organisation and co-ordination of the material processes, but in the sphere only of productive distribution, *e.g.*, the supplying separate branches of industry with raw material, equipment, and so on. Or, to speak in the language of the market, it has been limited to supplying industry with working, and to a certain

extent with basic, capital. Not bound by the limits of private property, the State was able, through its State Budget, through the State bank, through the Industrial Bank and similar organisations, to transfer at any given moment its resources wherever they might be most necessary, for the support, for the restoration, or for the development of the economic process. This advantage of socialist economy within the last few years proved a veritable salvation for the national economy. In spite of mistakes often made in the distribution of funds, we have nevertheless distributed them on the whole far more economically and expediently than could possibly have been done had the restoration of industry been proceeding under capitalist forms of production. Only thanks to this have we been able in such a short period to reach the present level without the help of foreign loans.

But this does not exhaust the question. The economy and therefore the social expediency of socialism has also shown itself in this, that it has freed the process of the restoration of our national economy from the overhead charges of a parasitic class. We are approaching now the level of output of 1913, whereas the country is now considerably poorer than it was before the war. This signifies that we are attaining a corresponding productivity with less social overhead charges : such as the monarchy, the nobility, the bourgeoisie, the privileged section of the intelligentsia, and finally, the frenzied friction inherent in the capitalist mechanism itself<sup>2</sup>. It is precisely thanks to our socialist methods that we have been able to mobilise the still very limited material resources directly for productive purposes, and in this way to facilitate the raising of the

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<sup>2</sup> Deposits and current accounts in 1924-25 consisted on an average of not more than 11 per cent. of the deposits of 1913. At the end of the next year, this proportion will reach, it is estimated, 36 per cent. This is one of the most striking signs of the paucity of our savings. But precisely this fact that, with our deposits and current accounts only 11 per cent. of the pre-war, our industry has reached 75 per cent. of pre-war, proves most clearly that the workers' and peasants' State administers the public resources far more economically, expediently and in a more orderly manner than does the bourgeois régime.

The fact that the rate of development of the transport system is slower than that of agriculture and industry, is explained to a large extent by the fact that, in pre-war days, imports and exports played a far more important rôle than they do at present. This is another witness to the fact that we are approaching the pre-war level of industry, although we have more moderate national resources, but at the same time also more moderate overhead expenses than in 1913.

standard of living of the people of our country during the next stage of development.

We have, therefore, on the nationalised land, a heterogeneous peasant economy, the commodity production of which only slightly exceeds one-third of the value of the commodities circulating in the market. The nationalised capital of agriculture constitutes but 4 per cent. of the total.

The basic capital of our industry is nationalised to the extent of 89 per cent., and it is this nationalised industry which yields 79 per cent. of the total gross industrial output. The 11 per cent. of non-nationalised industrial means of production yield, therefore, 21 per cent. of the gross output of industry.\* The share of the State industry in the total output is increasing.

Railway transport is nationalised to the full 100 per cent., and is continually being extended. In 1921-22, the transport system carried out only 25 per cent. of the volume of work of pre-war days. In 1922-23, it carried out 37 per cent. ; in 1923-24, 44 per cent. ; and in 1924-25, it will have been over 50 per cent. ; whilst in 1925-26, it is estimated that the proportion will be 75 per cent.

In the sphere of trade, nationalised (that is to say, State and co-operative) capital constitutes 70 per cent. of the total capital engaged in trade, and this proportion is growing continuously.

Foreign trade is completely nationalised, and the State monopoly of foreign trade forms a cornerstone of our policy in this sphere. The value of the total turnover of our foreign trade in 1925-26 is estimated to reach 2,200 million roubles, and the private capital invested in this, even if we add contraband to it, which would be quite correct, will scarcely reach 5 per cent. The banks and the credit system in general have been nationalised almost to the full 100 per cent., and this powerful and growing credit machinery is becoming more and more flexible, and is performing its task of accumulating all the spare resources of the country for

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\* This want of correspondence between the means of production and the output is explained in the first instance in the difference of the organic constitution of capital. It is natural if, in the small and handicraft industries, equipment is comparatively insignificant as compared with the amount of living labour power indiscriminately employed. To this must be added, on the other side of the picture, the fact that our largest enterprises, such as our giant metallurgical workshops, are not working to anywhere near their full capacity.

the purpose of nourishing the productive processes in a very capable manner.

The State Budget now amounts to 3.7 milliard roubles, forming 13 per cent. of the gross national income (29 milliard roubles) or 24 per cent. of the value of the mass of commodities (15,200 million roubles). The Budget is more and more becoming a powerful factor in the economic and cultural growth of the country.

Such are the figures of the Gosplan tables. The facts given there are of world historic importance. The continuous activities of the socialists, which began with the utopian socialists, and developed subsequently into a scientific theory, and which have lasted for over one hundred years, have for the first time been verified by a mighty economic experiment, now in its ninth year. All that has been written on socialism and capitalism, on liberty and compulsion, on dictatorship and democracy, all this has gone through the furnace of the October Revolution and the Soviet economic experience, and is now confronting us in a new and far more concrete form. The Gosplan figures sum up, may be in a rough and only a preliminary form, the first results of the first concrete experiment seeking to transform bourgeois society into a socialist society, and we see that this summing up is completely in favour of socialism. No country in the world was so ruined and exhausted by a whole series of wars as Soviet Russia. All the capitalist countries, without exception, however much they suffered from the war, were restored with the help of foreign capital. Only the Soviet country, which in the past was the most backward, and which was most ruined and exhausted by the war and by revolutionary upheavals, recovered from its complete destitution by its own efforts and in spite of the active antagonism of the whole capitalist world. Only thanks to the complete expropriation of the large landowner, the abolition of bourgeois property, only thanks to the nationalisation of the fundamental means of production, only thanks to the State socialist methods of mobilising and distributing all the most necessary resources, has the Soviet Union risen from its chaos, and becomes an ever more powerful factor in world economy. The comprehensive tables of the Gosplan lead back in an unbroken thread to the *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, and they lead forward to the future socialist society. Over all these dry columns of figures hovers the spirit of Lenin.

# LABOUR RESEARCH

By MAURICE H. DOBB

**I**N the individualist class society of the nineteenth century research was a matter left to the haphazard whims of a few learned individuals of leisure. Indeed, the free and leisurely life of the "older universities" is often praised as giving scope for the browsing "don" to pursue untroubled his contemplative researching way. One has a love for the cloudy realms of "probability" and the "why" of the universe—problems which only assume perfect clearness in an atmosphere of old port and college ivy. Another has a feeling for the parchments of mediæval monasteries or the tablets of the ancient Nile; and of his browsing among these precious things in his grey hairs he produces a tome. And the more evidently is the work a product of leisure—erudite, polished and recondite—and the further removed from the clamouring needs of the dusty paths of life, the more honourable is the learning deemed to be.

With the coming of monopoly capitalism, when the big capitalist discovered the need for means to bring whole continents under his sway, a new tendency appeared. The capitalist clamoured for science to be made his servant, while the appearance of Big Business provided bodies with the funds available for financing research for specific industrial ends and employing scientists directly as their servants. Heavy-booted science began to elbow the slippered classic in the "seats of learning"; and the economist and sociologist in a new zest for the "practical" came down from the clouds to invent ways of scientifically exploiting backward countries, conciliating and scientifically managing labour, perfecting the arts of sale and advertisement, and improving the working of the money and credit system. To the joy of Fabian collectivists a new function was found for the State in financing and encouraging scientific research. Scientific workers began to form their professional organisations (*e.g.*, the National Union of Scientific Workers) to further the interests of science with a capital S, and to agitate for the endowment of science in the same way as the capitalists of, say, the silk industry might agitate for the protection

or subsidisation of their trade. Smiled on by collectivists and hailed by scientific workers themselves, science became the handmaid of monopoly capitalism (in Germany most notably of all) and the scientific worker the pampered slave of Big Business.

Faced with this situation, the workers' movement, strange to say, almost entirely failed to adopt any definite and independent attitude of its own towards scientific research. On the one hand, the official leaders of the movement, being collectivists, merely joined in the general appraisal of science with a capital S and of the endowment of research by Big Business and the capitalist State. The rank and file worker, on the other hand, seeing the scientist everywhere aligned against him in service to the capitalist, tended to be obstinately independent in brave contempt for all such things.

It needs little argument to show that in a workers' State, when the workers control the economic life of the community, science will be even more needed in the service of the State and of production than it is needed by Big Business to-day. It will be even more needed precisely because the workers' State will not merely take over the technique of industry which capitalism has developed, but will need to plan and organise economic life in a more perfect way—planning and organising consciously what capitalism leaves to the chance of the market—and because it will have new needs to fulfil in the lightening of human toil and the raising of the standard of life of the masses. And only the attainment of power by the workers, setting up a workers' State, can divorce science from its present unholy union and turn it to the service of the workers. This latter problem, therefore—the problem of the workers' struggle for power—must take precedence over every other problem, and must at the present stage dominate our attitude towards science and research.

How, if at all, can research be utilised in the service of the workers to this end?

In answering this, the question of science in the wider sense does not at the moment arise: the work of the chemist and the engineer, the mathematician, the geologist and the physicist can only be utilised by the workers when the workers themselves control industry for the collective good. At present the problem is

confined to the work of the statistician, the historian and the realm of social research. The official collectivist sees here no problem at all; for he regards the enrolment of the scientist in the service of the capitalist State as his ideal, and the question of power means no more to him than the task of securing for himself a parliamentary majority. Hence "research work" in the cause of Labour comes to be regarded from a mainly parliamentary, legislative and electoral point of view, starting with an office for the production of propagandist notes for speakers—notes which will always point the moral: "Vote Labour at the next election"—and developing later into a department for the preparation of electoral programmes and plans of legislative reform, to combine popularity with the electorate and "practicability" under existing conditions of capitalist control of finance and industry. True, the additional need is acknowledged for "information" to be supplied to trade unions engaged in wage disputes. But this is a subordinate matter; and strikes are only of importance (and in the eyes of Messrs. Webb and MacDonald only to be supported) if they point the moral of State intervention or the need to vote Labour at the next election. Of bodies of this kind, devised mainly with this parliamentary aim, we find good examples in the I.L.P. Information Committee, and the official Joint Research Department of the Labour Party and T.U.C. at Ecclestone Square.

If, however, we regard the essential problem before the workers as that of the workers' struggle for power, it follows that a much more comprehensive aim than this is needed. Since the struggle takes place wherever the workers are in conflict with capitalist power, workers' research must not be confined to electoral propaganda or subordinated to a parliamentary and legislative aim. Research must give guidance to the struggle all along the line, facing frankly the fact that it is a struggle. There is the need to unearth the true facts about capitalist imperialism as a system of exploitation—facts which bourgeois researchers do not or are not allowed to reveal in a form which shows their real significance. There is the need for the continual examination of the actual objective conditions under which the workers' struggle proceeds and is likely to proceed in the future, generally in the economic conditions and tendencies of Europe and the world as a whole,

specifically in the state of trade, profits and conditions of work and employment in particular industries. There is the need to collate the experience of the workers' struggle in other countries and in our own history, and to draw from that experience the lessons for the future of our movement from time to time. There is the need in this or that struggle to counteract the propaganda of the employers and the Press and the Government by spreading among the masses as a whole the facts from the workers' point of view, whether it be a parliamentary struggle, or a trade union question, some workshop dispute, a rent strike, or an affair of Fascists, of Poplar or West Ham.

To achieve its function along these lines effectively, a workers' research department needs to be as closely as possible in touch with the rank and file of the organised workers, as intimately connected as can be with the centres where the fight is joined most keenly. This is required for a double reason. First, in order that what our research reveals may be easily made available to all the active workers in the movement. Second, in order that the research workers themselves may quickly sense the changing needs of the struggle, instead of obstinately pursuing doctrinaire fancies in defiance of the urgent and the important. (For, unlike the cloistered "don," the researchers in our service must seek not merely the true, but what is both true *and* important.)

Of the three important research bodies of the Labour Movement, the third to be mentioned is the Labour Research Department. Starting as a group of intellectuals attached to the Fabian Society, it later emancipated itself from its doctrinaire parent, and in recent years has spread its roots fairly deep and wide in the workers' movement with its direct affiliations from 645 trade union branches and national organisations, local Labour Parties and Trades Councils, co-operatives and socialist societies and unemployed organisations, with its detailed special inquiries conducted for various sections of the movement, such as the comprehensive surveys recently undertaken for the M.F.G.B. and A.E.U. and R.C.A., &c., and with its periodic conferences on general issues in various parts of the country. In this respect it certainly approximates to the ideal that we have been describing. As regards general surveys of economic conditions, it collates statistics and material



from trade reports in periodic reviews of world trade and finance and production in its *Monthly Circular*—work which might well be extended. It provides specific surveys in its studies of labour and capital in various industries, and information about the movement abroad in such publications as V. Gordon Childe's *How Labour Governs in Australia* and the *Labour International Handbook*—another branch of its work that could profitably be systematised and developed. It gives the facts of specific struggles in its *Labour White Papers* which appear from time to time. As a special sideline it has provided a valuable series of educational syllabuses (or “textbooks-in-little” as they have been called) as guides to worker students and workers' classes. Nor does it neglect the needs of electoral contests, as the leaflet, *Capital or Labour?* and the special *White Papers* prepared for the last two elections show. Its virtue is that its work is not confined to, or disproportionately dominated by, these electoral issues.

One of the most urgent needs of the Labour Movement is a considerable expansion of Labour research of this kind, if our movement is to match the forces of monopoly capitalism with all the wealth of subsidised science and research at its disposal. There may, of course, also be need for departments of information which concentrate on the needs of a particular section, or on purely legislative requirements (preparing programmes and Parliamentary Bills, &c.). But July 31 showed that crucial issues of the struggle are finding their field more and more outside Parliament, and that at such times the parliamentary wing of the movement becomes of comparative insignificance. Moreover, Liverpool has shown how the parliamentary wing, dominated by an electoral machine, may provide a soporific rather than a tonic for the struggle. What is needed is a department of research which shall have the widest possible and most intimate connections with the organs of the workers' struggle in every field, and with the corporals and lance-corporals in the movement as much as (or perhaps more than) with the movement's generals and brigade headquarter staffs.

But if the movement is to have the fruits of such research, it must learn the lesson that Big Business has already learned, that such research work needs to be financed in no niggardly and sparing fashion. In business language, research is of the nature of a capital

investment—an outlay which has to be made in order to yield results in the future. The Labour Movement, mainly because it is poor, likes to see in the very near future a full return for every £. If the possibilities of Labour research are to be explored at all adequately this habit must be broken to the extent of taking a rather longer view. The greater part of the work of any research department must be preparatory work, often of a routine and seemingly purposeless character—for instance, the collection of press cuttings, statistics and a multitude of odd and insignificant facts. Their usefulness comes later and incidentally in fitting into some specific scheme of inquiry. In these special inquiries, accordingly—for instance, an inquiry into mining profits and wages, or into combines in the oil industry, or the intricate workings of the Dawes Plan—it is not simply a matter of the direct or prime costs involved in the labour of this particular piece of work. There are the costs of the preparatory work, perhaps involving laborious collection and preserving of material over several years; and a due share of these “overhead costs” have to be reckoned in.

Further, in the case of all scientific research, much preparatory work must be undertaken, of which the practical usefulness is for the time being distinctly *uncertain*. But the work needs to be done because it *may* be useful, and if it is neglected some future piece of research may be incomplete for lack of it. Have not nearly all scientific inventions—take steam and electricity, for instance—been merely the culmination of a long series of previous researches, the result of one final link in a chain of other links, each of which by itself had little purpose? So also in the case of Labour research we shall only secure the valuable results that we ought to get from it if we are far-sighted in its endowment.

First and foremost, however, the results of Labour research will not be of the *kind* to be valuable for *our purpose*, if the research is haphazard, if it merely imitates bourgeois research, or is dominated by purely parliamentary issues which in a crisis may be of small or no importance. It must be planned and organised according to a purpose—the workers’ struggle for power; and it must be kept closely in touch, both organically and in spirit, with all the sections of the workers’ front where the fight rages strong.

# The World of Labour

GERMANY :	Situation in the Communist Party	..	..	..	..	755
	Trade Union Congress	..	..	..	..	760
INDIA :	Textile Workers' Strike	..	..	..	..	761

## GERMANY

### The Situation in the Communist Party

A FURTHER important stage in the evolution of the Communist Party of Germany has now been reached. After the events of October and November, 1923, a profound reaction took place within the Party against the leadership of the Brandler group. With the assistance of the International, which exhaustively discussed the matter in January, 1924,<sup>1</sup> the opposing Left and Centre groups united, and at the Frankfurt Congress in April secured an overwhelming majority.<sup>2</sup> Among other matters on which the congress laid stress as being important for the new leadership were:—

- (a) A correct understanding of the United Front Tactic ("United Front from below").
- (b) Organisation of the Party on the basis of factory groups.
- (c) Work within the trade unions, in spite of difficulties due to mass expulsion of Communists, &c.
- (d) Correct revolutionary use of Parliament.

It was agreed at the Fifth World Congress of the Communist International in June and July of that year, that the efforts of the Executive had been successful and salutary in that they had achieved a practical unity of the Party against the danger of opportunism and had prevented a split. The acknowledged leaders of the Left majority in the new Central Committee were Ruth Fischer and Maslov.

During the following year the process of stabilisation of German capitalism was successfully initiated, the Dawes Plan carried out, and the German bourgeoisie were steadily drawn towards a rapprochement with the Western Powers. The new circumstances were extremely difficult for the Communist Party, and it became plain that with the recovery of capitalism went the relative recovery of the influence of the Social-Democratic Party over the workers. The Presidential elections in the spring of 1925, and the resulting monarchist danger, were an additional source of great difficulties.

It began to be clear, however, that the Party was not doing as well as was possible in the circumstances, in particular its influence in the Trade Union movement fell off. An "Ultra-Left" group (whose chief figure is Rosenberg)

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<sup>1</sup>See THE LABOUR MONTHLY, April, 1924, Vol. VI, No. 4, page 247.

<sup>2</sup>See THE LABOUR MONTHLY, July, 1924, Vol. VI, No. 7, page 438.

developed, as was to be expected in a period of disappointment and triumphant reaction, and the Left leadership showed an approximation to the same point of view. The Executive of the International endeavoured to prevent this, and since the session of the National Council of the Party in May has held joint meetings with the Party Central Committee, and in other ways attempted to influence its policy. At the Congress of the Party at Berlin in July, the representatives showed a genuine desire for a united and firm progressive policy, and a decision in general accordance with the proposals of the International were passed. Once again, however, this had no effect upon the policy actually pursued; the situation grew worse—as was illustrated by the composition of the A.D.G.B. Congress in August, at which the Party fraction numbered three, as opposed to over eighty at the Congress three years before.

Finally the International intervened decisively and a letter, signed by the Executive and by the Central Committee, was addressed to all organisations and members of the C.P. of Germany, and published in the Party organs on September 1. The letter, which is very long and detailed, consists of an introduction and seven sections. The introduction sets forth briefly the history of the negotiations between the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the Central Committee of the German Party, from the time of the meeting in March, 1925.

The most important question, the question of the German Party, was at that time, and still continues to be, the problem of increasing the recruiting powers of the Party, the problem of winning the masses, especially the masses of Social-Democratic workers. Our general political line has been determined from this standpoint, and from this standpoint we shall consider the other questions. Among these we find the following tasks: Work in the trade unions; convincing the Social-Democratic workers (questions of propaganda, change of tone, &c.); the "normalising" of Party life (inner Party democracy, employment of the former opposition, freedom of discussion, election of Party functionaries, employment of new leading forces, &c.) was regarded by us at the same time as a pre-requisite for the establishment of correct relations with the masses outside the Party; the liquidation of the hidden fight against the International (cessation of the custom of so-called independent emissaries in other parties; sincere carrying out of the real Bolshevik line).

Later, in discussions with a delegation, before the Party Conference in July, the chief questions were gone into again.

- (1) The Executive pointed out the existence of certain Right deviations in the leading group of Fischer and Maslov: the adoption of a too parliamentary attitude, &c.
- (2) It was decided that a really new course should be pursued in the trade unions; that a strong and capable trade union department be openly elected at the Party Conference, or instructions to this effect given to the new Party Centre.
- (3) The representatives of the Executive insisted that fresh leading forces are to be elected to the Centre, especially comrades familiar with trade union work, and including some comrades of the opposition, not for the purpose of dragging the Party over to the Right, as has been deliberately wrongly asserted, but in order to create a means of access to the vacillating members of the Party.

/ At the Party Conference, and later, these decisions were not wholly

carried out, and the leading group took a decided turn once more against the Executive, in alliance with the Ultra-Left group. Further delegations passed to and fro and further discussions were held, in which the Executive vindicated its position, but without avail. This was the situation at the time of the publication of the letter, of which a summarised text follows.

(1) *The General Situation*

This section points out that while at the time of the installation of the present leadership conditions made losses to the Party inevitable ("the October defeat, six months of illegality, the MacDonald Government, Left elections in France, and the Dawes report, with its resultant reformist illusions among wide strata of the working class"), nevertheless during this year conditions have been much more favourable. The international situation is extremely critical. Against the relative stabilisation of Central Europe are to be set: the rapid growth of the Soviet Union; the decline of Britain; the successes of the international United Front (Anglo-Russian Trade Union bloc, and the struggle for unity; the delegations to Russia; the workers' and peasants' congresses in France; the revolutionising of the British Labour Movement, &c.); the increase in the acuteness of the colonial national struggles (Morocco, Syria, China); the concentration of the Imperialist forces against the Soviet Union (the military-diplomatic "ring" round Russia, agitation in the bourgeois Press, the Security Pact, preparations for war and blockade, the attitude of Kautsky and the Social-Democrats). The German bourgeoisie has turned towards the West, and there is at the same time a wave of sympathy among the workers for the Soviets (*cf.* the delegation to Russia) accompanied, it is true, by a certain anti-Moscow tendency, shown even in the Communist Party itself by the Ultra-Left group.

"Although the general situation is by no means unfavourable, the number of members in the Party, at best, only maintains its level; there is a serious falling off in the trade unions; there were serious losses at the political elections; the recruiting powers of the Party are insufficiently developed, despite the apparent unity, which is by no means a Bolshevik unity. This is the point which has now been reached. The Party leaders have not proved capable of winning over the Social-Democratic and non-party workers."

(2) *Trade Union Work, &c.*

The most obvious defect in the leadership has been in trade union work. This was obvious even at the Frankfurt Congress (April, 1924) when the Ultra-Left tendency to abandon the unions was combated only in a half-hearted manner. The general international policy of trade union unity has also been misunderstood, and even described as a move in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. In so far as the International decisions have been carried out, this has been done too much by "disciplinary" methods, expulsion from the Party, &c. The consequence has been a severe loss of the Party influence in the trade unions, even when, as recently has been the case, the conditions are favourable.

"For some months there have been signs of the gradual reawakening of political activity among large sections of the German working class (the building workers' strike, and various other wage struggles in the various branches of industry, the wood-workers' struggle, great demonstrations in various cities, successful Red days, &c.). The Party leaders have not shown themselves capable of reacting to these new phenomena, above all, they have not been able to take advantage of them for our trade union work."

The trade union department of the Central Committee had been dissolved, and although it was agreed at the recent Party Congress to re-establish it, this was not done.

"One of the reasons why the leading comrades of this group neglect the trade union question is their lack of faith in the political power and activity of the masses, both of the members of their own Party, and of the working class in general. . . . These ideas have nothing in common with either a correct estimate of the actual situation, or with Bolshevism. They are an attempt on the part of the leading group to substitute a false criticism of the totality of the Party members for self-criticism."

### (3) *Relations to the Communist International*

This section goes at some length into the writings of the German Party leaders, especially Maslov, showing that they betray a lack of understanding of the International's policy from the time of the Third World Congress (1921). That Congress, recognising the slowing down of the revolutionary process, discussed the tactics of the individual parties, and came to the conclusion expressed by the slogans "To the Masses" and, later, "The United Front." This was denounced by Maslov as a "swing to the Right," and his conduct since has shown that he has never really understood or agreed with this fundamental line.

The leading group has, however, not merely disagreed, but has prevented interference by the International, by simulating agreement with its decisions and then failing to carry them out.

### (4) *The Inner Life of the Party*

An important reason for the failure of the present Party leadership is the wrong methods adopted within the Party. This was discussed in March, 1925, when "the representatives of the Executive pointed out that the over-centralism, the mechanical pressure, the predominantly administrative measures, the lack of propaganda and of any methods of spreading conviction, the dread of fresh forces, &c., were bound to be absolutely disastrous in effect. At this consultation it was decided to strengthen the inner Party democracy. We were of the opinion that after the victory over the Right has been won, and the Left has the upper hand in the Party, the organisatory guarantees for an all-round correct general policy are given and the problem of Party education comes to the foreground."

The necessity of a wider choice of Party officials was stressed, and the desirability of using members of the former opposition. This was not done, however. Further:—

"this question formed for us a part of the question of the relations towards the non-party and Social-Democratic workers. For when purely administrative methods are employed in the Party, the same policy is applied on a larger scale to the workers outside the Party, and the result is the cutting off of the possibility of winning over fresh workers."

Although the Party delegation agreed to this, it was not carried out. It was proposed, and agreed, that new members, in close touch with the workers, should be elected to the new Central Committee, but the Congress failed to do this also.

### (5) *The Danger of Lack of Principle*

It is pointed out how untenable is the position of a leadership whose theory and practice are inconsistent. The point of view of the group of Maslov and Fischer is one of undue pessimism, of under-estimation of the revolutionary

possibilities and of the activity and ability of the working class. This exaggeration explains the Ultra-Left tendencies of these leaders, and its conflict with the views and instructions of the International explains the mechanical and half-hearted manner in which some activities have been carried out, and the shifts to which the leaders have been reduced to avoid carrying out others.

## (6) *The Tasks of the Party*

The most important task of the Party is to take advantage of the present changes in the mind of the German working class—the reaction against the “Western orientation” of the German bourgeoisie, and the mood of sympathy towards Soviet Russia. The increase of recruiting must always be kept in mind, and with this in view, the tone to be adopted towards the Social-Democratic and non-party workers, the material of agitation, &c., should be determined. Questions of high politics as well as ordinary economic demands should all be utilised, and particular attention paid to parliamentary work from this same point of view.

The existing hostility between Communist and Social-Democratic workers must be liquidated, and the difference between the leadership and the rank and file of the Social-Democratic Party must be made perfectly clear. Factory newspapers, &c., err in this respect.

Trade union work must be taken up in a whole-hearted way, and a trade union department re-established in the Party Centre. The campaign for Trade Union Unity should be pursued, and a Left wing developed after the British pattern. The visit of the German delegation to Soviet Russia should be utilised.

Further, the reorganisation of the Party on the factory basis must be carried out.

Other tasks are the establishment of working fractions in other non-party organisations (sports associations, tenants' leagues, &c.), the adoption of a correct attitude towards the youth, and work among the peasantry and other petit-bourgeois sections of the population. Finally, a thorough system of Party education is essential for the combating of the Right and Ultra-Left dangers, which are still considerable, and the confirmation of the membership on the right road.

## (7) *Why must the Change be made in the Party now, and why must the Change be rapid?*

The last section declares that the change in policy of the Executive is made so suddenly because, after the Berlin Party Congress, it came to the conclusion, on the one hand, that no effect could possibly be produced upon the existing leaders, and on the other that the nucleus of an opposition has begun to appear among the Left rank and file, which will be capable of carrying on the leadership.

“The main defects are not to be found in the thoroughly sound proletarian membership of the Party, but among the leaders, who have proved incompetent. The Party is confronted by great new tasks. The situation is not developing against us, but for us. For some months the class struggle in Germany has been no more on the downward, but on the upward line.”

The publication of the letter immediately produced an intense discussion throughout the Communist Party, and even outside it, which has continued ever since. Within a few weeks it became clear that the membership, even in the most Left districts, Berlin and Hamburg, was coming over to agreement

with the Executive, and at a special National Conference of the Party on October 31, a resolution completely approving the letter was passed by 217 votes to 30, with only one abstention.

This resolution acknowledges the main faults in the previous political line of the Party, as pointed out by the Executive, and declares that positive gains have already accrued from the discussion, and will continue.

#### Trade Union Congress

THE 12th Congress of the German T.U.C. (the A.D.G.B.), which meets at intervals of three years, was held at Breslau on August 30-September 4. Since the last Congress political and economic events of the greatest importance have occurred, exercising a profound influence on the German working class. The eight-hour day has been lost for large sections of the German workers, wages have been enormously reduced, social legislation abrogated, the rights of factory councils abolished. The A.D.G.B. has throughout pursued a policy of almost complete passivity, and practically no effort was made at the Congress to alter this state of things.

Largely because of this spineless policy, and the inflation, which destroyed Union funds, the membership has fallen to a disastrous extent. At the Congress of 1922 a membership of 7,874,000 was represented, and in the course of that year a total of over eight millions was attained. In December, 1924, the official figures give 3,975,000 as the total, but this has since increased to approximately 4,500,000. The Communist fraction at the Congress numbered two, a fall from over eighty in 1922.

The proceedings were largely devoid of interest, and were completed in a period two days shorter than had been expected. The Dawes Plan and Trade Union Unity were excluded from the agenda, as motions on these questions received the support of fewer than fifty delegates. No concrete policy was decided upon on wages and hours, questions which, owing to the effects of the Dawes settlement, are affecting almost all unions at the present time. Instead, vague resolutions were passed, expressing "encouragement" to the workers in their struggles.

On the subject of "industrial democracy" a resolution was passed on the recommendation of the executive, in favour of the immediate setting up of local and national economic councils, with equal representation for the two sides. This crystallises the policy of class collaboration, which the executive has in fact practised since 1914, and in conjunction with resolutions in favour of craft union organisation, and on the control of industrial disputes, represents a crushing defeat for independent working-class action. The "left wing" section, headed by Dissmann (an old "independent" Socialist) opposed both these resolutions, but accepted a compromise on the former. The whole metal workers' delegation opposed the second resolution, which includes the clauses:—

In a general wage dispute which concerns a number of unions, the lead must be given to the union with the largest membership.

In a wage dispute in which only one craft is engaged the leading union must be consulted before action is taken, in view of the danger that other unions may be affected. If the leading union refuses to support the craft in question, then the other unions must refuse also.



## INDIA

## Textile Workers' Strike

THE workers in the cotton mills of Bombay are again engaged in a fierce struggle with the federated owners of all the eighty-four cotton mills of that district. It will be remembered<sup>3</sup> that a wage reduction of 20 per cent. was inflicted upon these workers after a lock-out of three months in 1924. Before that date, according to an official report issued by the Government of Bombay, the average earnings per day of men in these mills were Rs. 1.7.2., which gives, after a reduction of 20 per cent., approximately 1s. 8½d.

In July, after long consideration of the condition of the industry, the committee of the Mill-Owners' Association recommended a wage reduction of 11½ per cent., to take effect from September 1. It was expected that trouble would occur when the reduced wages were paid, on October 15, but the workers, with surprising determination, struck when the previous wages were paid, *i.e.*, on September 15. Twenty thousand workers struck on that day, and the number increased to 135,000 in a week, and later rose to 154,000, the total number in the industry in Bombay. It should be remembered that there is no union organisation, and these results have been brought about almost spontaneously, by workers who are mainly illiterate, and without resources of any kind. Their sufferings are naturally intense. Epidemics have broken out in the overcrowded tenements where a large proportion of the workers live, and a considerable percentage are reported to have left the city and gone back to the villages.

Officials of the All-India Trade Union Congress, representing the workers, put their case before the Governor of Bombay on August 12, but their demand that he should intervene, or set up a committee of inquiry, was met with the reply that there is no legal authority enabling him to do this. The workers' offer of short time, instead of reduction of wage rates, has also been refused by the owners.

The European trade unions are in this case, almost for the first time, showing their appreciation of the importance of the struggles of the colonial workers. The All-Russian Textile Union sent financial assistance, and was followed by the British Trades Union Congress, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Amalgamated Weavers' Association, and the Amalgamated Society of Dyers. The Textile Workers' International and the Workers' International Relief have also subscribed, and the International Federation of Trade Unions has appealed to its national centres for funds.

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<sup>3</sup> See THE LABOUR MONTHLY, May, 1924, Vol. VI, No. 5, p. 293.

# Index to Volume VII

January—December, 1925

## I.—AUTHORS

		<i>pages</i>
ABDULLAH, M.	The Trust of Empire and Mr. Macdonald a Trustee	222-226
ARNOT, R. PAGE	The Capitalist Offensive and the Mining Crisis	530-537
BARBUSSE, HENRI	The Far-Eastern Tangle	617-621
BRAUN, P.	The Roy Case : A Protest	294-295
	Problems of the Labour Movement	332-346
	Scarborough and Liverpool	667-678
CARTER, HUNTLY	What the Theatre could do for the English Labour Movement	38-43
	Art and the Labour Movement	420-425
	Language and the Labour Movement	622-627
COLE, MARGARET	The I.L.P. Past and Present	364-372
COOK, A. J.	The Problem of the Hour—Is Unity Possible ?	410-411
DOBB, MAURICE H.	Labour Research	749-754
DOBBIE, W.	Problems of Trade Unionism	586-590
DORIOT, JACQUES	The New War in Morocco	354-356
DUTT, CLEMENS	Indian Politics : an Analysis	399-409
DUTT, R. PALME	Trade Union Unity and the Class Struggle	79-103
EWER, W. N.	The Red Plots	347-353
	The Writing on the Chinese Wall	412-419
	Hatching a War with Russia	538-547
	Getting Mosul into Perspective	679-691
	Locarno and Aix-la-Chapelle	729-735
	The Great Boyg Gets Panicky	443-445
G. A. H.	The Industrial Crisis and the Co-operators	606-616
HARRISON, J.	The Riff War of Independence	489-496
HUTT, G. ALLEN	On the Road to Insurrection:—	
LENIN, V. I.	IV The Freedom of the Press	35-37
	V The Bogy of Civil War	157-171
	VI The Aims of the Revolution	210-219
	VII The Bolsheviks Must Seize Power	219-221

# Index to Vol. VII, January-December, 1925 763

		<i>page</i>
LENIN, V. I. ( <i>continued</i> )	On the Road to Insurrection:— VIII Marxism and Insurrection IX The Approaching Catastrophe and How to Avert it <i>Continued</i>	289-301 302-303 426-435
LONGDEN, FRED L. W.	The I.L.P. Programme of Work Italian Co-operation	44-51 508
MARX, KARL M. E.	India Under British Rule Dramatic Art in the Workers' Republic	717-728 249-250
M. H. D.	Trees and No Wood!	314-315
MURPHY, J. T.	The Drive into the Factories	692-698
NEARING, SCOTT	The Labour Situation in Western Canada	288-293
NEWBOLD, J. T. WALTON	Diddling Them with Dawes Loyalties	118-120 184-188
NORMAN, C. H.	The Political Defeat of the Working Class	172-179
"OUTPOST"	The Failure of the <i>Daily Herald</i>	275-282
PAUL, WILLIAM	Capitalism, Labour, and the Press	560-569
POLLITT, HARRY	The Scarborough Conference	601-605
PRICE, M. PHILIPS	The New Machiavelli The Great Retreat	28-34 357-363
PURCELL, A. A.	The Burning Question of International Unity	524-529
RADEK, KARL	Lord Curzon and the Soviet Union Two Deserters	270-274 151-156
ROBERTSON, A. M.	Independent Working-class Education	553-559
ROY, M. N.	Some Questions for J. R. Clynes The Empire and the Proletariat	180-183 13-22
ROY, EVELYN R. P. D.	Indian Political Exiles in France The Workers' Alliance "Mirrors of the Kremlin"	205-209 396-398 376-381
SMITH, HERBERT SPECTOR, MAURICE	The Strategy of the Miners' Struggle The Empire Labour Conference	465-473 548-552
STANLEY, E. "STUDENT"	The Unemployed In the Light of Marxism <i>Continued</i>	227-233 482-488 628-632
TANG CHIN CHE TIEN SEN SHIAO	Sun Yat Sen's Life and Work "Face Pidgin," The Chinese Struggle	283-287 474-481
TROTSKY, L.	Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism I II	659-666 736-748
U.D.C.	The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay Mac- Donald <i>Continued</i>	23-27 104-117

		<i>page</i>
VALETZKI, G.	The Twenty-one Points of the Second International	591-600
W. N. E.	Trotsky and His "Friends"	373-375
	The Twilight of Trotsky	250-251

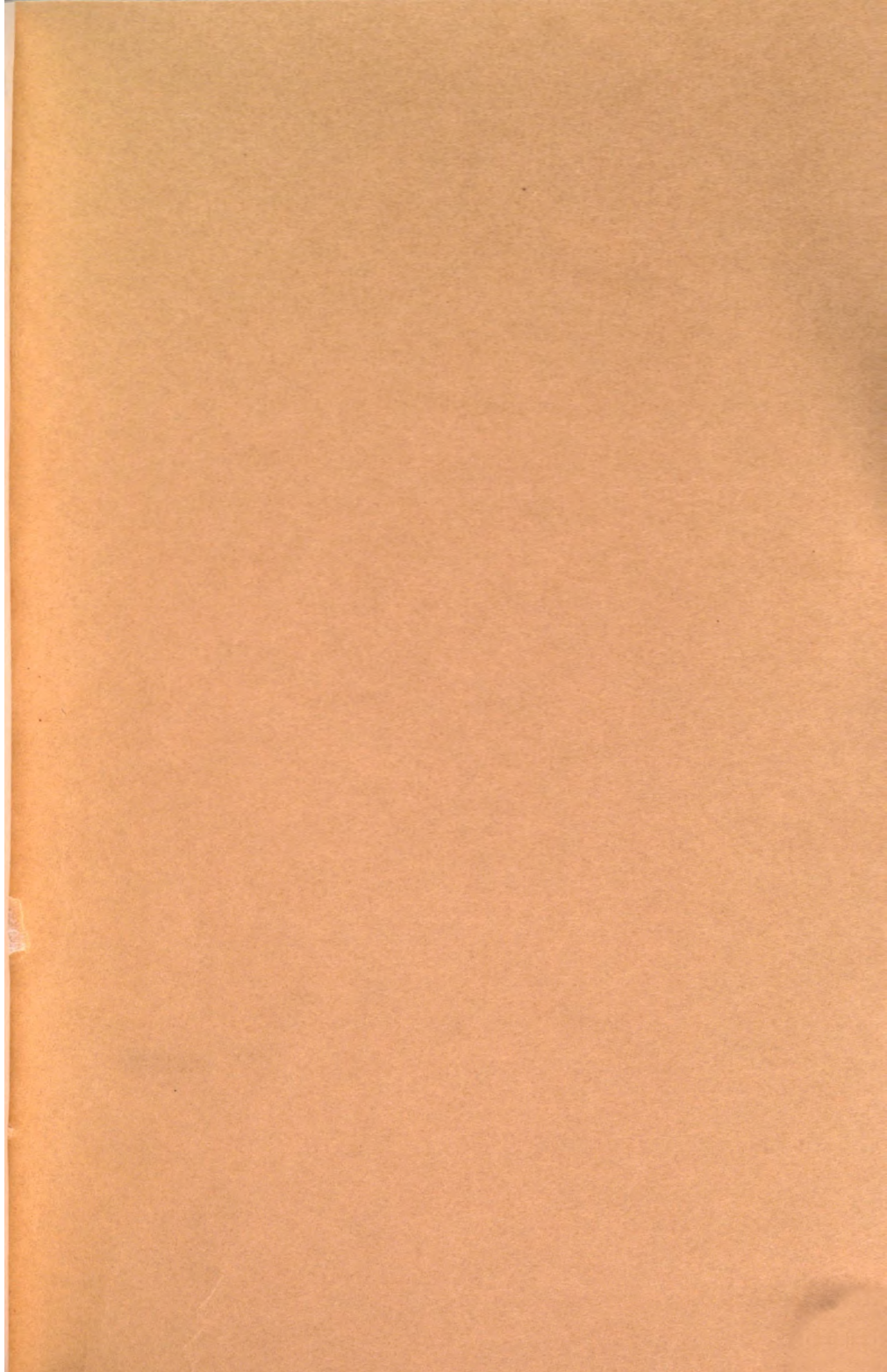
## II.—SUBJECTS

AMERICA	American Federation of Labour Counter-Manceuvre	60-62
BOOK REVIEWS	249-251; 314-315; 376-381; 443-445; 508	
BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT	After Liverpool	641-658
	Art and the Labour Movement	420-425
	Capitalism, Labour and the Press	560-569
	Independent Working-class Education	553-559
	Language and the Labour Movement	622-627
	Loyalties	184-188
	Problems of the Labour Movement	420-425
	Scarborough and Liverpool	667-678
	Some Questions for J. R. Clynes	180-183
	The Diplomacy of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald	23-27; 104-117
	The Drive into the Factories	692-698
	The Empire Labour Conference	548-552
	The Failure of the <i>Daily Herald</i>	275-282
	The First Round	513-523
	The Labour Party Choice	577-585
	The Labour Party Outlook	195-204
	The Political Defeat of the Working Class	172-179
	The Scarborough Conference	601-605
	The Unemployed	227-233
	The Wage War	321-331
	What the Theatre Could Do for the English Labour Movement	38-43
BULGARIA	Social Democratic Attitude	570-572
CANADA	The Labour Situation in Western Canada	288-293
CHINA	Diary of Events	497-500
	"Face Pidgin," The Chinese Struggle	474-481
	Sun Yat Sen's Life and Work	283-287
	The Far-Eastern Tangle	617-621
	The Seamen's Struggle	436-438
	The Writing on the Chinese Wall	412-419

*Index to Vol. VII, January-December, 1925* 765

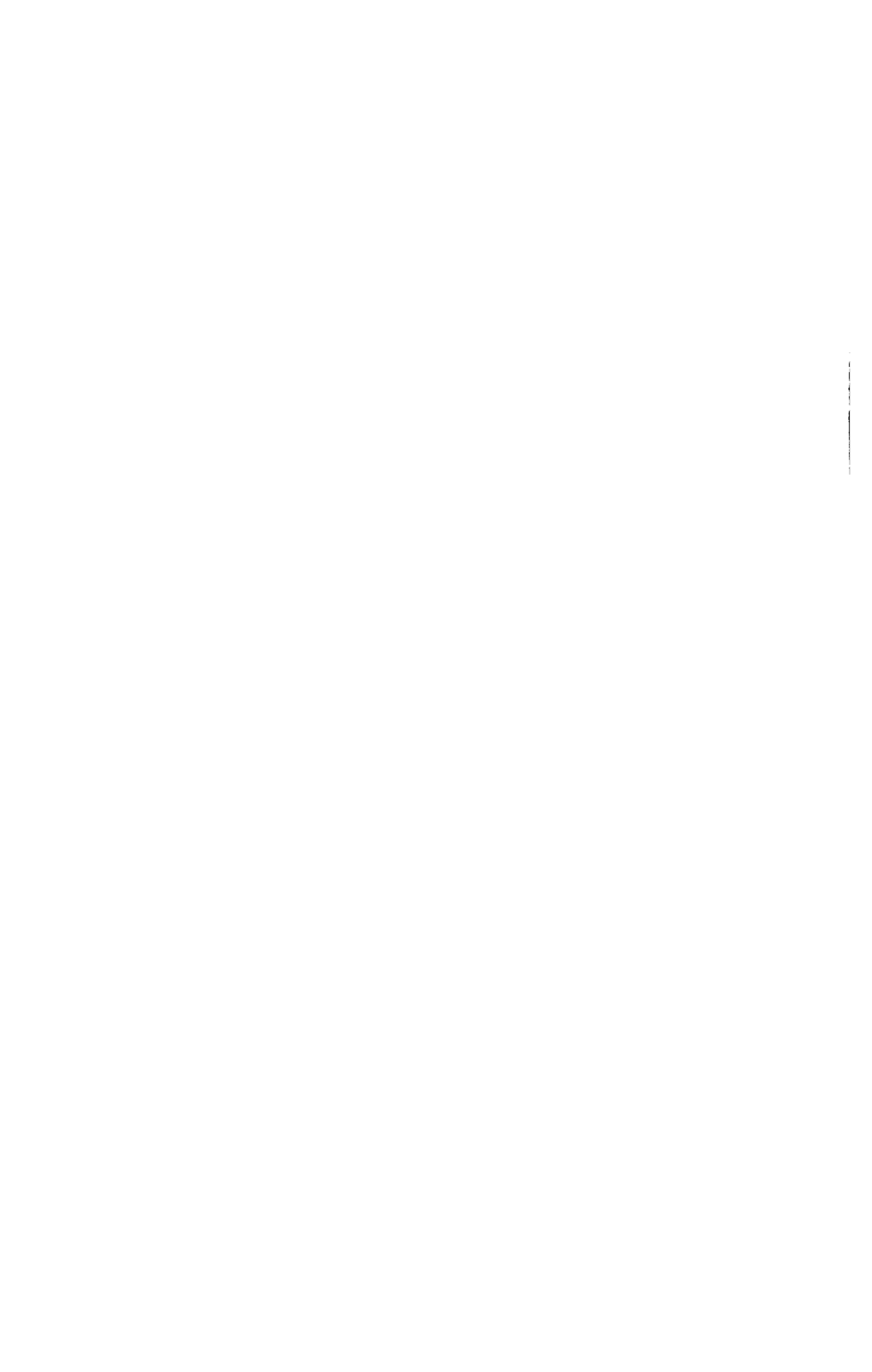
		<i>page</i>
DAWES PLAN	Diddling Them with Dawes	118-120
	The New Machiavelli	28-34
	Two Deserters	151-156
DENMARK	General Lock-Out	500-502
EGYPT	The Empire and the Proletariat	13-22
ESTHONIA	The White Terror	240-241
	Social-Democrats Enter Government	241-242
	The <i>New Leader</i> and Fascism	464
FASCISM	British Fascism	385-396
FRANCE	C.G.T. Congress	635-636
	C.G.T. Meeting	309-311
	C.G.T.U. Congress	635
	Socialist Congress	239-240
	Socialist Party Congress	634-636
	Unity Congress	636
GERMANY	Communist Tactics	502-504
	C.P. Situation	755-760
	Presidential Elections	311-312
	Reichstag Elections	52-56
	The Great Retreat	357-363
	Trade Union Congress	760
HUNGARY	Social Democrats' Treaty with Govern- ment	242-244
	I.L.P.	I.L.P. Past and Present 364-372 I.L.P. Programme of Work 44-51
IMPERIALIST POLICY	The Gold Standard	131-150
	Pacts, Protocols, and —?	257-269
	The Restoration of Europe	67-78
INDIA	Indian Politics : an Analysis	399-409
	Indian Political Exiles in France	205-209
	North-West Railway Strike	504-505
	Textile Workers' Strike	761
	The Trust of Empire and Mr. MacDonald a Trustee	222-226
INTERNATIONAL	L.S.I. Conference	699-701
	Red Plots	347-353
	Two Deserters	151-156
	The Twenty-one Points of the Second International	591-600
ITALY	Metal Workers' Strike	312-313
	Trade Union Congress	189-190
MARXISM	In the Light of Marxism	481-488
	<i>Continued</i>	628-632

	<i>page</i>	
MINERS	The Capitalist Offensive and the Mining Crisis	503-537
	The Miners' Fight for Life	449-463
	The Strategy of the Miners' Struggle	465-473
MOROCCO	The New War in Morocco	354-356
	The Riff War of Independence	489-496
MOSUL	Getting Mosul into Perspective	679-691
NOTES OF THE MONTH	3-12; 67-78; 131-150; 195-204; 257-269; 321-331; 385-396; 449-464; 513-523; 577-585; 641-658; 705-715	
POLAND	Stabilisation and the Anti-Trade Union Campaign	506-507
	The Lantutzky Case	245-248
	Trade Union Congress	633-634
TRADE UNION UNITY	Anglo-Russian Agreement	438-442
	Anglo-Russian Negotiations	304-309
	Anglo-Russian Report	701-702
	Anglo-Russian Trade Union Relations	56-60
	Attack on the British Trade Union Delegation	123-126
	Campaign Against Unity	237-238
	French C.G.T. Meeting	309-311
	International Trade Union Unity	121-123
	Joint Meeting of I.F.T.U. and L.S.I.	124-126
	Metal Workers' International	126
	Problems of Trade Unionism	568-590
	Russian Reply to I.F.T.U.	440-442
	The Amsterdam Meeting	234-238
	The Burning Question of International Unity	524-529
	The Great Boyg Gets Panicky	443-445
	The Problem of the Hour—Is Unity Possible?	410-411
	The Turning Point	3-12
	Trade Union Unity and the Class Struggle	79-103
	Workers' Alliance	396-398
	U.S.S.R.	Hatching a War with Russia
Lord Curzon and the Soviet Union		270-274
TOWARDS SOCIALISM OR TOWARDS CAPITALISM	Towards Socialism or Towards Capitalism	659-666 and 736-748
	THE WORLD OF LABOUR	52-62; 121-126; 189-190; 234-248; 304-313; 436-442; 497-507; 570-572; 633-636; 755-761



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