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'The Greatest Turning Point in History.'

"No greater turning point had taken place in history since the great Roman Empire had been shattered," said Colonel Creswell at his reception last Monday, sitting "between the Mayor of Johannesburg and the Bishop of Pretoria." How does the Labour Party and its leader interpret this great est turning point in history? Whither do they consider it is 'turning' the workers?

"It is a great war, my masters, a very great war; the greatest war in history. Come, let us make it greater!" That is all the wisdom we get out of a "leader" of the working class at this 'greatest turning point in history!

We have no wish to carp at Colonel Creswell in the hour of his personal triumph. For he has taken a "turning point" in mental outlook which leads him, and the party of which he is the only asset, into the bosom of the ruling class, and away from the true working class movement.

Let us trust that Colonel Creswell's unconscious diagnosis of the present world cataclysm is correct. The fall of the Roman Empire meant the FALL OF OLD-WORLD SOCIETY BASED ON SLAVE LABOUR.

The present war is a "turning point in history" because it is the prelude, we believe, to the fall of all capitalist Empire, and with it THE FALL OF SOCIETY BASED ON WAGE SLAVERY.

Persons are reclaimable; but there is absolutely no hope for a Party that, for the laudations which bestrew its path to-day, chooses to side with the downfalling world, the wreck of old society, its corrupt ruling class, its wars and universal atrocity, as against the coming free Republic of Labour, which can rear up on no war, no oppression, no blood, no manner of exploitation of human flesh whatsover, yet must come if humanity do no perish from the earth.

The Internationals belong to the To-morrow. That is why we do not grudge Colonel Creswell and the Labour Party their brief To-day with the Prelate of Pretoria.

The Mine Workers' to be made a Scab Union.

Chamber of Mines in love with Craft Unionism.

As a result of the present unrest among the white mineworkers on the Rand, a Conference has been sitting of representatives of the Mineworkers Union and the Chamber of Mines. The Chamber of Mines now issues the fruit of the Conference in a statement containing its offer of a "permanent" working agreement with the Union. Summarized, it amounts to this:

(1) A Standing Conciliation Committee is proposed representative of the Chamber of Mines and the Mineworkers, o which all disputes shall first be submitted. In the mean-

time a minimum wage of 12/6 is guaranteed to every white worker after six months work un derground.

- (2) With-reference to the Colour Bar, the Chamber is non-committal, emphasizing the right of the coloured population "to work and to progress." But the Chamber is prepared to recommend to the mines that the status quo be maintained in the proportion of coloured and white labour, all disputes to go to the Standing Conciliation Committee.
- (3) An offer is made of 48½ hours bank to bank, "from the first skip down to the first skip up" The Saturday shift to be one hour shorter. The Union not to raise the question of working hours again within five years.

(4) With regard to the strike against non-union labour on the Meyer and Charlton, the Chamber of Mines is not prepared to force men into the Union, BUT; here comes

the crux of the offer, the hook under the bait:

"At the Conference the representatives of the Union emphasised the advantage to the employers, as well as to the employes, of a sound, properly conducted and thoroughly representative Union, and they asked that the employers should assist in attaining such a Union, by granting facilities for the collection of subscriptions from Union men, permitting the Union Stewards to come to the surface half an hour earlier once a week in order to collect the subscriptions, the Stewards being given a shelter in which to sit, or, alternatively, by the companies deducting the subscriptions for the wages of such men as requested by them to do so, in the same way as boarding-house

dues, etc., are deducted."

"The Chamber has already intimated that it will not agree to coerce non-Union employes to join the Unions. but it is in sympathy with the desire for a strong, wellconducted and responsible Union, the establishment of which is indeed a necessary corollary to the success of the principle of collective bargaining, which principle has been accepted by the Chamber for some time. The Chamber's representatives, however, pointed out that it would appear that the Constitution of the South African Mine Workers' Union permitted separate action by its various branches, and that the Meyer and Charlton strike was an instance of the result of such provisions, as the Union, in its reply to the Chamber, had stated that the strike had occurred without the knowledge of the Executive Committee of the Union. In these circumstances, therefore, unless this were remedied by the necessary amendments to the Constitution of the Union, it was useless to enter into an argreement with the Executive Committee of the Union if any one of the various local branches were permitted under the Constitution to adopt independent action, contrary to any such agreement. The representatives of the Union concurred in that view, and stated that if the Chamber acceded to their request for the facilities mentioned the Constitution of the Union would be altered so as to forbid such sectional action. Subject, therefore, to satisfactory alterations being made in the Constitution of the Union, the Chamber will recommend to its members that the Union subscriptions of those employes who authorise it should be deducted from their pay and handed to the Union nominated."

What has happened between January 26th, when the Chamber of Mines gave a back-handed, don't-argue kind of slap in the face to the Union, and February 26th, when it makes the above tempting offers. Nothing has happened. All has been ordained. The little strike thater in the meantime has not frightened the Chamber. It is well award that the men are not yet organised sufficiently for a general.

(Continued from page 1.) stoppage of work. But they will be, and now is the time to nobble the Union.

In all other belligerent countries industrial conscription, or the initial stages of it, are being applied. In this country that is not practicable, because of the mixed population; and not necessary, because the bulk of the working class, the unskilled natives, are already industrially conscripted.

NOT THE IRON CHAIN OF INDUS-TRIAL CONSCRIPTION THEREFORE, BUT THE GOLD COLLAR OF THE BUM; SLAYE, is the thing for white South Africa, di Here is an attempt to create a closedin endur workmates, and get what we want guild of favoured white workers to police it over the bottom dog, the great mass of the unskilled.

The idea of getting the employer to collect Union dues is a sinister one. Coming, as it is alleged in the statement, from the representatives of the men, it is simply monstrous. Shaft Stewards are to be given facilities in the jolly time to come, an office on the property, perhaps a special uniform, and official authority to button hole every contumacious worker. How different from the old victimization days! In the new system, it is the agitator who will be refusing his Union dues. The man who refuses to pay will be the victimized one. Because, make no mistake, such a Union, deriving such facilities, would be a Bosses Union, a Scab Union of suborned well-fed slaves, the like of which' has not yet been seen in South Africa.

The war has shown the Capitalist the beauty of collective bargaining THROUGH A CRAFT UNION. Unfortunately, the Mineworkers Union last year "devoluted" a lot of its control to autonomous branches. The result was an immediate large increase in membership; followed by the Van Ryn and Meyer and Charlton local strikes.

This will never do. Collective Bargaining is only good with a Union whose head officers have control. Under the local, industrial union system, there are too many to be bought. That is why the Chamber demands. that all or none of the offer be accepted. It must be "accepted or rejected as a whole." THE "WHOLE" MAKES A ROUND NOOZE!

Are the Mineworkers going to humiliate themselves to the extent of allowing the employer to change their constitution to his own ends? Are they going to disgrace themselves and betray the rest of the workingclass by becoming co-partners, accessories,

bought out accomplices, privileged police-boys with the Capitalist to exploit the rest of the workingclass? Depend upon it, the Employers cannot give favours to all the workers. It only extends them to a section in order to disrupt and divide.

To-day the miners stand at the parting of the ways. They may accept the bribe and become another Engine Drivers Union, privileged and petted. and—hated by the workers. Or they may take the only other alternative: Recognise their solidarity, their common cause with all the rest of the wage-workers on the mines whatever colour their 'skin beneath the grime of labour; and say to the employers: "To hell with your gold collar and pigwash. We will stand side by side with these by the power of industrial solidarity."

The Carpenters Moving.

The Durban Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners has passed the following resolution:

. "That in the opinion of the Durban Branch the time is now opportune to reconsider the question of admitting coloured carpenters into our Union, provided they can comply with Rule 6, clause 2, and other rules relating to the qualifications for membership. The reasons why we deem it advisable to admit coloured carpenters are

briefly as follows:

"In practically all industrial centres in South Africa there are numbers of coloured carpentere. These men up to the present ws have refused to admit as members of our organisation, notwithstanding the fact that we have to work in the same shops and jobs with them. It we continue to pursue this policy it can only react on ourselves to our detriment, for in the event of any industrial dispute we have no moral influence over the coloured carpenter, and he can seriously imperil the success af our endeavours to improve our economic conditions by remaining at work while we are on strike. Another point is that owing to the ; fact of his being unorganised he falls a ready victim to be exploited by unscrupulous employers, who, knowing he is refused admittance to the white workers' organisations, induce him to work for less than the recognised standard wage, thereby presenting a serious menace to the existing standard of living. Further, since the outbreak of the war and me conscquent withdrawal of a large number of skilled workers from their industrial occupations whose places have been filled by women the English Unions recognising the danger of their introduction in an unorganised state, have taken steps to organise them, thereby securing their own position. This in our opinion is an example we should hasten to

to follow.

The Intellectuals (?) and Materialism.

BY J. M. G.

The insidious and in many instances, open attacks made on the doctrine of the Materialist Conception of History, by the so-called intellectual hirelings of the ruling class, and sown broadcast in the capitalist press and in many of the so-called socialist papers, is bringing to clearer light the confusion in the minds of these muddlers, their want of knowledge of the subject they so eagerly attack.

This confusion is so great that one is led to the conclusion that their want of perception of the great truth at the base of this doctrine, is caused by their environment, the greatest factor of which is their economic dependence upon the Capitalist class to whom they as a body have prostituted their so-ealled mighty and superior intellects. Their main argument against materialism is that nothing counts but moral, intellectual and spiritual values. They keep repeating these catch-words without telling us anything as to the basis upon which they found their ideas.

We Socialists who accept the materialist conception of history believe that man is a product of the material world—nature,—that society is the product of two material causes, man and nature. All man's consciousness and conceptions are formed by the action of his material surroundings, and his endeavour to bring them into subjection to nis will.

This struggle against nature has ever moved onward, it has led to and: developed his inventiveness. There has ever been a constant change of circumstances that has led to a change in the tools whereby man exploited nature to produce the necessaries of life. The varying methods of procuring these necessaries has given form to Society. They have been the basis upon which Society was and is formed. And the form of society has given colour to all conceptions and ideas in morals, intellectuality, art, religion and science.

Ideas do not fail from heaven; but are the product of the material surroundings of society; the most important of which are the economic methods of production, that is the immediate means of life. The form this takes determines and form the morality of

society, gives rise to the subjection of man by man, and gives birth to the State to enforce law to maintain the authority of the ruling class. It also determines the ideals of society by the antagonisms between the ruling class and the class that is held in subjection.

Moral, intellectual and spiritual ideas do not fall from heaven, they are as varied as mankind, they have changed with every form of society. Societies have existed where chattel slavery was quite moral. Others again have held serfdom and villeinage as the ideal form of society. And today we have a system of wage slavery that is lauded to the highest skies as the most perfect form of society, because it suits the ruling class.

The intellectual ideals of society in Art, Religion and Science are not formed apart from the economic. structure of society. They are not the fantastic subjective ideas of the free will of the individual. These ideals are formed by and are the product of the environment. All our acts are subject to and determined by our material surroundings; the most important of which is the position men stand in relation to the tools of production. All history rests upon contrasts, antagonisms, struggles and wars, the basis of which is a struggle for control of the tools of production. All societies at a certain stage of their development, developed a conflict between the old forces of production and the new forces springing up within the old. This conflict gave rise to revolution sooner or later. To-day we have the same process going on, we have a form of society based upon the private ownership of the tools of production, that is, the machinery. The conflict going on is a conflict of interests between Capital and Labour, a conflict that must ultimately lead to a change in the form of present day society. This conflict, these antagonisms, control our ideals. We Social ists are the advocates of a higher moral ideal of justice for all in opposition to the ruling class morality of everyone for himself and the devil takes-the hindmost. This struggle gives colour to our intellectual activitive and controls our spiritual outlook.

No, ideas do not fall from heaven, no more than bread. They are the product of our material surrounding, and have their roots firmly planted in the economic structure of society.

Have you subscribed to "The International,"

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Johannesburg.

The Farce of 'Free Countries.

It is remarkable how those countries which were reputed to be the freest are the ones which in the progress of the war have come most abreast of Russia in their repression of the working class.

The workingclass have been lulled to sleep by the lure of "representative institutions." They acquired the illussion through these that they had something to defend. Take New Zealand, its workingclass leaders are being put into jail without bail and without decent trial by the dozen. And New Zealand has been lauded as the laboratory of "social reform." To oppose or demand the repeal of the Compulsory Military Service Act is a crime in that free country. So much so that the other day the "Maoriland Worker" sighed for the freedom to hold meetings and conduct peace agitation enjoyed by the workingclass in Germany!!

France, "the country of the revolution," has excelled all others in its repressive measures against antiwar Socialists and strike leaders. While America, "free America," although not yet at war, is becoming notorious for its gunmen, its thugs, its sandbagging and garotting of strikers with the full connivance of the authorities. Consider the following statement of an official commission:—

"In some/localities the control by employers of the entire machinery of government is such that lawless acts on the part of the agents of employers go unpunished, while vindictive action against leaders of the strike is accomplished by methods unparalleled in civilized countries."—United States Industrial Relations Commission's Report.

The fact of the matter is that America is a fully developed Capitalist country. All other countries are developing their capitalist industries to the American pitch. And in all other countries therefore will it become more and more the rule to throw over the fiction of civil liberty as applied to the worker, unless the workingclass organised as it never organised before.

For civil liberty is a principle which the capitalist class conquered for its own purposes, for free trade and free exploitation. It is not going to extend that principle to the working-class a minute longer than it can help.

The working class of Europe are dying by the million to defend their "free institutions." In the mirk and blood and smoke and hell-fury of war they are as yet unaware of the fact that those, "free institutions" were never theirs.

The League to Enforce Peace.

World Capitalism is in a dilemma. It was well illustrated in a speech by President Wilson (quoted in the Cambridge Magazine) quite recently. He was speaking to a meeting whose object was to promote a "League to enforce Peace, (not now, but after-the-war). In one breath he exclaimed: "Peace is the thought of the modern world," (for "modern world" read "modern capitalism"). In the next he said, "This is the last great war America can keep out of."

The subtle imperialism of foreign investments has taken the place of the imperialism of foreign possessions. World peace is therefore becoming feasible, even necessary to capitalist commerce. But here is the rub, world war is becoming increasingly necessary to keep the workingclass in subjection. Without national wars capital cannot mobilize the force necessary to terrorise the wage-slaves.

That dileinma is solved in the "League to Enforce Peace," an International Police force to keep order,

Robert Williams, the General Secretary of the Transport Workers Union in England, reported the other day in The Hudders field Worker, gives a very good reason why the workers should fight shy of all schemes such as "International Courts," and "Leagues to Enforce Peace,"—Utopian solutions of capitalist war:—

Dangers of League for Peace.

"In this war there might be degrees of fault as between the belligerents, but what was really responsible was not Prussian militarism or British navalism, but the thing called capitalism. Some people now proposed a sort of super-national council to deal with future disputes, but he was seriously afraid if we allowed capitalist development to go on unchecked, and allowed the disputes of the world to be determined by such a council representing the capitalist States of Europe and the world, it might mean an end to all ve called progress. When our pastors and masters desired to quell a strike or other rising they employed the police first and their the armed forces; but they would never use a Yorkshire regiment in the Colne Valley; but, say, a Welsh regiment. He could imagine a state of affairs arrising if we got an international police force which would be a military instrument, that the capitalist and predatory class would go to the length of using coloured troops and the Cossacks of Russia to suppress a rising of the textile workers of Colne Valley."

Why the Workers don't Know they are Robbed.

Mark Starr, an able writer on Socialist economics in the Merthyr Pioneer and other English Labour papers, having undertaken a term of study at the Central Labour College in London, describes in the Plebs Magazine his enhanced interest in the workings of capitalist industry after he returned to work in a South. Wales colliery. He makes the following apt use of a quotation from Marx's Capital, a masterly distinction between slavelabour and wage-labour:-

"The pay-docket on a Saturday is viewed in a different light than before if one has read in Vol. 1, Chap. 19, of the concealment of surplus-labour in the wage-form of payment:—

The wage-form thus extinguishes every trace of the division of the working-day into necessary labour and surplus-labour, into paid and unpaid labour... All the slave's labour appears as unpaid labour. In wagelabour, on the contrary, even the surplus-labour or unpaid labour appears as paid. There the propertyrelation conceals the labour of the slave for himself; here the moneyrelation conceals the unrequited labour of the wage-labourer.

I could go on, but it is like bringing coals to Newcastle to fling chunks of Marx at Plebeians, for they know the way in which the founder of Scientific Socialism dealt with every possible phase of the system of capitalism

in his writings."

Manufacturing the Proletariat.

An Astounding Bill.

Under the above title we shall publish next week an article by S. P. B. on the Native Affairs. Administration Bill 1917, now before Parliament.

Although white protest meetings have been held and addressed by natives in other parts of the Union, in Johannesburg, the seat of High Capital, the silence regarding the Bill can be cut with a knife.

In short, without anticipating S. P. B's article too much, the Bill proposes to scrap all existing native laws, provides for a Native Affairs commission to advise the Governor General, who may then repeal all existing laws, except certain penal and another "necessary" ones, affecting the native, may even repeal the whole of this law barring a couple of clauses, and govern the four and a half million natives of South Africa by Proclamation.

Is this of no concern to the white worker of South Africa? Time will shew that it is indeed a matter on which they will wish they had, in their own interest, set up a violent agitation. For it is nothing less than a conspiracy to hand the whole of the native population over to the exploiter of cheap labour in the chains of industrial conscrip-

tion.

LEAGUE NOTES.

JOHANNESBURG.

Last Sunday, W. Reid and S. P. Bunting spoke to a good audience outside the Town Hall.

At the Trades Hall, Ivon Jones spoke on 'Labour knows no Union Jack'. There was a fair attendance, and the feeling of the meeting was excellent.

On account of last Wedesday's dance, the monthly Branch meeting has been postponed from last night until Thursday next the 8th. instant.

Members should keep this date in mind and roll up to the meeting without fail: Trades Hall, 8 p.m. next Thursday. Bring your subscriptions with, as the Dutch say.

This Sunday evening the 4th. the subject of the indoor meeting at the Trades Hall will be "Gold in its bearing on Capitalist production," an unfamiliar but very topical matter to-day.

Those of the public who feed on Creswell or Waterston had perhaps better stay away: or no-let them come and hear something with some bite in it.

At the open air meeting beforehand it is hoped that J. P. Anderson will this time be favoured by the weather. Subject: 'The Coming Struggle'.

The Sunday School library is now established at Com: Neppe's, with 100 books already in an imposing bookcase. Parents send your youngsters along on Sundays at 11, corner of Fox? and Maclaren Street.

John Campbell Lectures.

DURBAN.

On Sunday Evening Com. Campbell gave the Second lecture series, "The Class Struggle."

The large Hall of the Trades Hall was kindly placed at our disposal by the Social Democratic Party for the evening, and it was a good thought on their part as the number who came along to hear our Comrade would. have crowded our own room to an un. comfortable extent. Com. Empbell assumed at the outset that all present had sufficient grip of working class economics to realise that the class war was not merely a theory but a cast iron fact. He pointed out that although many considered that things were better to-day with the working class than in the times of our grandfathers, that was a fallacy carefully nursed by the pulpit, press, politicians etc, at the instigation of the Capitalist masters to keep the attention of the massss off the vital fact, the Class Struggle. The masses are more docife, degraded and cowardly to-day than ever they were, and the Craft Unions had so deterioriated and the members so misled by the leaders that whatever usefulness they might have had one time had vanished, until they were mere machines used by the Capitalist Class in the struggle to throw craft against craft and distin trict against district. The lecturer pointed to Industrial Unionism as the means of emancipation from the struggle; which he predicted would become so acute that unless the masses bestirred themselves, and quickly they would find themselves parading

with their bread ticket. The questions were keen and the discussion, which was open, reached a high level and altogether everyone present spent a profitable evening.

The S.D.P. are co-operating with us in making these lectures a success by closing their outdoor meeting in good time to allow of us starting sharp at 8.15. and in other ways are assisting us to carry on our educative propaganda.

CAPETOWN

Comrade Harrison's case has bee remanded on £10 bail till March 5th.

Comrade Pick having returned from his tour round the various sections of the Socialist movement in S.A. gives an account of his experiences, and personal estimates of their strength and activits.

KEEP IT GOING:--Comrades have done better in getting new subscribers and names and addresses of likely readers of the paper during the last fortnight. Kee pit going even better, and swell the irresistible throng of revalutionary Socialism.

Delay in the postal Delivery of "The International" last week is not the fault of No. 6. Trades Hall. It was posted on Friday as usual. Subscribers and other readers, whose copies fail to reach them; please notify.

Bertrand Russell, eminent English mathematician and philasopher:-The hopes of peaceful progress in which our earlier years were passed are dead and can never be revived. Terror and savagery have become the very air we breathe. The liberties which our ancestors won by centuries of struggle were sacrificed in a day, and all the nations are regimented to the one ghastly end of mutual destruction.— Peace plea to Pres. Wilson, pub, Dec. 23.

There is still one hope, Bertrand Russell. It is that the wage-labourers of the world, who have nothing to lose but their chains, and no world market, but a world to win, will combine as workers instead of as soldiermurderers; and, as workers, bring in the civilized era of the Industrial Republic.

Having inherited \$1,500,000 in Standard Oil stock from his father, one of the early associates of John D. Rockefeller, in less than thirty years, up to his death last May 1, Chas. W. Harkness had accumulated over \$45,000,000. The appraisal of his estate has just been made. Appreciation of stocks and bonds since his death has added \$15,000,000 to the total.

So says our Weekly People. What Oi want to know, says the office Dooley. is where that 15,000,000 dollars came from, when Hackness was dead. Was it the product of directing apility, or the wages of supervision, or the reward of abstinence. That's it—the reward of total abstinence.