THE INTERNATIONAL.

The Organ of the International Socialist League (S.A.)

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Why Are We Anti-War?

The Scottish I.L.P has adopted the Bermondsey resolution of the Newcastle Conference against all wars, as follows:

"This Conference urges the Socialist Parties of all nations to oppose wars entered into by their Governments, irrespective of the declared object of the war, and instructs the I.L.P. to bring this policy forward at the next International Socialist Conference."

The I.L.P. is a bit muddled in its outlook. The patriotic Socialists charge it with being Tolstoyan and a non-resistance party. Not without reason. For be it noted that the Independent Labour Party denies the class struggle. Nothing but the class struggle can convert opposition to war from being a religious fad into a sane practical policy. The Glasgow "Forward" falsely puts the issue as between Tolstoyan non-resistance and the League to Enforce Peace. Either turn the other cheek or have a capitalist war to prevent capitalist war, it says in effect.

The I.L.P. has done great service to the workers in opposing the war. But unless it and all other pacifists accept the tremendous implications of their opposition to war, then their service will soon turn into disservice to the workers; for it implies that war can only be opposed on religious and utopian principles.

peril, what have you to put in its place? If you oppose a war in which the immediate merits of the struggle are too unfathomable to apportion blame, and where, once entered upon, the very existence of the national entity is at stake, what larger hope have you to offer the people who have thus lost or are in danger of losing the National State?

this. We believe in the international unity of the workingclass. We believe that the workers by the immensity of their number are destined as a class, through bitter struggle with their exploiters, to bring in the era of international good will by the conquest of the vast machinery of production, which they now work, and must soon control.

We believe that they cannot do so without abolishing themselves as a class, and abolishing all other classes, and with that abolishing class quie. For where there are none to exploit, all being workers, there are none to subjugate, and there can be no war or resort to international quarrels whatsoever.

We believe that the workers can only achieve this conquest by the denial of all the principles on which the exploiting class have climbed to success. They can only achieve it by combining and not competing.

We do not believe in the mugwump internationalism of peoples. We believe in the International unity of the revolutionary working class, who must contain the people.

We do not believe in turning the other check, but we believe in the evolution of that tromendous force, which, though it can conquer bayonets and armaments, yet is beneficent to them that wield it,—the Force of the Industrial Unity of the Workers.

We believe that the workers, combining in their industries, as they cannot help but combine and co-operate in the great machine, are pointing the way to the International Industrial Republic of Labour, which must come if humanity is to live. On this road which the working class is beginning to tread there is no need for national States., with their armies, police, prisons, and bludgeons. But society will hang together internationally as the first necessity of its economic existence.

That is why we are anti-war, we believe that the things they are fighting to defend have got to go anyway.

And we therefore believe that the first job of a workers' political party is not so much to use the workers as voting cattle for sops, palliatives, and political place, but to call upon them to perform our great function as workers, to combine Industrially. For if we combine industrially the Political and International combination will come of itself.

Franz Mehring.

Franz Mehring, the veteran German Socialist, has been elected to fill Liebknecht's seat in the Reichstag by an overwhelming majority, although under preventive arrest, and although the election was fought in Potsdam, the Kaizer's own constituency.

A few week's previously Albert Taylor, a Trade Union Secretary, contested the Rossendale by e-election in Scotland as a peace candidate, and was arrested for the period of the election by orders of a military officer who in his civilian capacity was election agent for the Coalition candidate! Albert Taylor lost the election overwhelmingly.

While there are Albert Taylors and Dave Kirkwoods about all is not lost. But there is still greater hope when under the nose of autocracy a whole electorate gives the

autocràt the fitting answer as in Potsdam.

Franz Mehring is now eighty-two years old. He is recognised by all parties as the finest journalist in Germany; and he derived his Socialist inspiration from Karl Marx in the early eighties. He is an International Socialist whose political faith is based on the immovable bed rock of the revolutionary class struggle.

No doubt Franz Mehring was elected against furious cries of "traitor" in the Jingo press of Potsdam. As in South Africa, the elector would be stormed with press hysterics about winning peace by first crushing the Brit-hun. But the electors of Potsdam have shown that the best service they can give to world peace is to "embarrass" our own governments; although they, as all other belligerent peoples, believe they are fighting a war of defence.

When you have fighters like this in the very home of militarism, and when you have a people ready to back them up in the very seat of autocracy, how can we any longer keep up the fiction that the Germany of the working class is responsible for German militarism, or that England of the workingclass is responsible for British Imperialism! Again we have the proof that the only power that can vanquish German militarism is the German workingclass. Here is a message to the working class of all nations, and a guarantee from the German workers that they are ready and willing to destroy their own militarism. Here is a call to the workers of the belligerent nations not to be misled by the false appeals and hollow pretenses of the rulers, whose sole aim is the capture of markets;—a thrilling call to the workers from the enemy country to destroy militarism at home, to pursue the class war as the only way by which a happy issue can be found from the world wide atrocities of German, British, French and American militarisms.

That "Fantastic Theory"

The Materialist Conception of History.

BY J. M. G.

The so called intellectuals have repeatedly denied the Socialist contention, that the Capitalist class have always climbed to power on the back of the working class, by revolution, and through bloodshed and violence.

The Revolution in Russia is a justification of the Socialist contention. We see by the reports in the Capitalist press that they have executed the ex-Ministers and are making good their position by the usual brutish method. When firmly established in power, they will preach the usual hypocritical tale to the workers of the virtue and necessity of law and order, but will have no hesitation in using the same tactics against the workers, should they dare to organise a strike, or otherwise interfere with their system of Society. A system that when established in Russia will breed the same slums, criminality and degrading conditions as in other industrial countries.

The history of all past revolutions is a history of class struggles. One class in possession of the reins of Government in opposition to another class having control of the tools of production. The advance in the methods of production is handicapped by the obsolete form of government, and to bring the political machinery into harmony with these new methods of production the owners of the tools engineer a Revolution.

Such is the position in Russia. The rising capitalist class in that country is justifying the doctrine of the materialist conception of history, giving the lie to the learned (?) professor who has been writing in the "Clarion" telling us the war has scrapped it all.

"The Star," with that medieval wisdom so peculiar to the capitalist press, holds that "The International" is guilty "of only dealing extravagantly with theories, more or less fantastic, which obviously have very remote relationship with the facts as we all know them."

Yes, as we all know them. Mr. Bonar Law says "the last 13 days in Russia are reminiscent of the early days of the French Revolution." Just so. Like cause result in like effects. Socialists are not dealing in theories.

We deal in stubborn facts, facts as they surround us in present day society. We maintain that the material conditions control and form the politics, legalities, and ideology of society. When the material conditions, of which the economic is the greatest factor, get out of joint with the juridical superstructure, then a revolution is necessary to bring it into harmony with its economic basis.

Such is what happened in France at the close of the eighteenth century and what is occurring in Russia today. These are no fantastic theories, they are solid facts which cannot be gainsaid.

The history of human events rest before all else on its struggle against nature, on the struggle with the material surroundings for material existence. This struggle, just as it furnished the flint implements of labour and warfare, has given us the modern scientific tools of production.

The successive discovery of tools, and the development of technique, gave rise to the division of labour, to inequalities, to antagonisms and class struggles.

The development of the tools of production,—machinery that is necessary to the life of society—produced successively the different social environments.

The doctrine of the materialist conception of history gives us the key to the development of human society in the past. It has enabled us to reconstruct and criticise the genesis of the capitalist class. It points out the cause of past revolutions, and it explains those antagonisms and conflicts as a struggle of class interests.

As a revolutionary doctrine it is the intellectual consciousness of the working class movement, based on the solid material facts as they surround us in society to-day, and not on fantastic unrealities, the stuff that dreams are made of.

"Well, George,,, said the president of the company to old George, "how goes it?"

"Fair to middlin', sir," George answered. And he continued to curry-comb a bay horse.

'Me an' this here hoss," George said, suddenly, "has worked for your firm sixteen years."

Well, Well, said the president, thinking a little guiltily of George's salary. And I suppose you are both pretty highly valued, George, eh?"

"H'm" said George, "the both of us was took sick last week, and they got a doctor for the hoss, but they just docked my pay."—St. Louis Labour.

The European Socialist Minorities.

The anti-war Socialists of the German Socialist Democratic Party have now constituted themselves into a separate body within the Party, under the name of the Opposition of the Social Democracy. On January 7th a Conference of 138 delegate representing 72 sections was held in Berlin. The statement issued by it contains the following passage:

"As a democratic and International Party, the Social Democracy takes its stand on the basis of the right of peoples to dispose of themselves. But the Opposition of the German Social Democracy has not enough confidence in any of the Capitalist. Governments to recognise that any one of them has the mission of liberating nationalities by the war. The general solution of this problem can only be the work of the victorious proletariat."

The French Socialist Minority is now taking a stronger lead.

It is the first time that the dissensions in the French Socialist Parliamentary Party have assumed a collective character, writes the Paris correspondent of Avanti. Thirty-six Deputies of the Minority met and decided to present an interpellation in Parliament respecting the object of the war. For the first time the Minority has adopted an independent attitude in parliament. Only a month ago at the National Congress a common peace motion had been arranged almost unanimously between the Majority and Minority parties. The present break of the Minority party indicates that the sentiment of superfical unity so beloved of the Majority cannot long hide the deep differences between the two wings of the French Party.

During the reunion of the Parliamentary Group the Majorities stood up and left the room in a body, thus bringing to a head the moral scission that has long been existent in the Party. The two sections now hold their meetings separately.

Glasgow after his defiance of the Government and its Libour Jackals in the Manchester Conference. Now it is stated that he has been released again after signing an "honourable undertaking" to be a good boy. But "Justice" emphatically asserts that Kirkwood signed nothing. He was released because the Government wants to arrange a peace with him. Good old Kirkwood!

the world.—Plebs Magazine.

A Craft Union War Cabinet.

The Johannesburg Tramwaymen are passing through troublous times with their Union. The Executive of the old Union went so far in its "friendly" policy with the management that it organised a hurriedly called general meeting to pass a resolution allowing the executive to remain in office for the duration of the war, and suspending general meetings for the same period, This was frankly done to dish the militant section, and the resolution was carried by a sparsely attended meeting. This has practically dissolved the Union for all practidal purposes. But the militants refuse to be gagged, and have refused to allow Hicks to deal with the Management in their name under the fiction that he is speaking for the whole of the men. A new Union is the result, which was launched in the Trades Hall last week with the aid of George Mason, J. Forrester Brown, and Andrew Watson. Members were enrolled, and a provisional constitution adopted. Owing to the peculiar conditions of service, whereby a large number of men, and these mainly the special shift or casuals who labour under the worst conditions, are unable tøattend meetings, the manipulation! of the Union in favour of the Management has been a comparatively easy thing in the past. But the new Union is determined to have a constitution that is adapted to the conditions of work.

that the special shift men have to mess about to get in 8 hours pay should be exposed as a public scandal. There are instances on record of tramwaymen going on shift at 7 a.m. and finishing eighthours work at 1 a.m. next morning. In the meantime they are kept hanging about and given short shifts with intervals for which they are not paid but which cannot decently be termed leisure.

work is also a cause for grievance, the rule enforcing overtime, no matter how fatigued a man may be; and another rule stipulating that no man can lay off sick or resume work after sickness without a doctor's certificate in each case, which means more than a day's pay on top of his loss of wages through sickness. The helplessness of the men against a pettifogging, tyrannical management, after several years

of Labour control of Council Committees, speaks of the atter hypocrisy of the whole system of Labour votecatching, and of the "hearts that bleed for the workers" for two months befere an election. The Labourites on the Council know nothing of the conditions the Council employees work under. The workers' only hope is in themselves, and the strong right arm of their own power to combine.

The Capitalist Cock-a-doodle-doo

The Capitalist, or "captain of industry" as Carlyle called him, cannot conceive of the possibility of industry going forward without his control and captaincy. His attitude has been well pictured for us by Rostand in his play, "Chanticleer." Our Capitalist, noble fellow, I love his grand air and fine feeling, though he is but Rostand's "Cock-a-doodle-doo" making a grand business every morning of calling up the sun. He cannot for the life of him get it into his fine head that the sun of industry would rise and shed his fructifying beams over the earth without his crowing. But the sun of industry will shine and will gladden with prosperity the heart of every man and every woman long after the capitalist's crowing is forgotten.

T. J. HOLMES. in "Socialism"

(League Literature 3d.)

Labour Parties no longer a Terror.

The Northcliffe Press is nothing if not enterprising. It nobbled Lloyd George, knowing he was all bark and no bite. It is now proceeding to nobble the Labour Party, knowing it has neither bark nor bite.

"And if we are told with bated breath that a Labour Cabnet is a possibility of the future then we reply without hesitation that we are quite ready for it. We are satisfied that whenever it does come as, no doubt, it will in due course it will be as good as any other. Government we have ever had . . . and will have the support of the Northcliffe Press."

Muster up then, fellow workers, to the revolutionary class war under the banner of International Socialism.

This protecting arm of the State,—what does it protect. Why, the people of course, do you say? No, it does not protect people, or it would protect those people in direct and most bitter need of protection, those destitute and helpless, jobless men. The State does not protect people; it protects property.

Have you subscribed to "The International,"
5s. per annum, post free, Box 4179,
Johannesburg.

T.J. HOLMES.

The Building Workers.

The first Branch meeting of the Building workers Industrial Union will be held next Monday April 2nd. In the old Trades Hall, when enrolment of members will begin. The attempt of McFie and his Conciliation Board to form a closed guild of the Unions in the Building Trades, by their utopian co-partnership scheme of Brothers Capital and Labour, has come a bit to late. This amalgamation of all the Unions and workers not already organised in the Building Trades into one Union is the answer. The Bricklayers. Painters and Plumbers have joined up as Unions, and a large number of Plasterers, Masons and Carpenters are following suit. And the Union is based on no co-partnership outfit, but on the principle that the workers are entitled to the whole lot.

Tne Martial Law Motion

Comrade Bunting's motion in the Pr_vincial Council last Thursday, reproduced in last week's "International," condemning the censorship regulations and recommending their repeal by the Union Government, came within an ace of being carried. The voting was 19 for and 20 against. Comrades Bunting and Colin Wade were the only participators in the debate. Had certain wobbly members. such as George Hills, known that "The Star" would have given its general support to the repeal of the obnoxious regulation, no doubt they would have plucked up courage to support the motion. In any case a healthy publicity was given to Russian methods of suppression of free press in South Africa.

"A PILLAR OF THE FAITH".

As there are rumours about that Tom Mann has also buried the hatchet for the duration of the war, comrades will be pleased to learn the contrary. Under the above heading, the new British Labour paper, "Solidarity", has this to say about him:—

"At a time when most of those who are regarded as the impregnable rocks of Trade Unionism are turning out to have been nothing but sand banks (and very "shifty" at that), it isapleasure to be able to point to the towering figure of Tom Mann, who still stands "foursquare to all the winds (of war and capitalist intrigue) that blow". And it is good, also, to see how his splendid fidelity to the old Ca. . . has touched the hearts and heads of rank and file trade unionists who have been faithful too. Tom is in great request these a. is, and positively overwhelmed with invitations to address Trade Union meetings up and down the country."

Potted Pamphlets. 2.

Br S.P.B.

Two Pages from Roman History:

Part 2. The Warning of the Gracchi. The proletariat, unlike previous revolutionary classes, has no material possessions, and is thus the more exposed to sops or palliatives. In the age of the Roman Gracchi, under 2000 families possessed solid wealth, while Italy boasted 1.400,000 slaves. The condition of Society was past legislative reforms. Tiberius Gracchus forced one through, and was assasinated.

Gaius Gracchus, his younger brother, tried a constitutional change, allying himself with a section of the ruling class for the purpose. He also proposed three colonies in Africa for the relief of the landless. But the patricians "outsopped" him with twelve colonies. (which, of course, never materialized)

Only the inhabitants of Rome itself could take part in the Government of Italy, representative government not having been invented. And so the merest Post Office stiff of Rome joined with the aristocrat in violent opposition to the claims of the Italians to a share in the Government. Gaius Gracchus then offered free corn doles as a further sop, and dared to propose the Italian franchise. For that even the Roman proletariat turned and rent him, and he committed suicide.

The proletarian revolution, concludes
De Leon in language like Saint Paul's on
charity, should shun forms and reforms.—
lines that "allow the revolutionary heat
to radiate into vacancy," and open the
door to usurpers. It must be relentlessly
logical in refusing tolerance or "compensation" to the robber class. It declines
to "palliate" wrong, it commits suicide
if it accepts instalments in final settlement.
"The tiger of capitalism will protect its
superfluities with the same ferocity that
it will protect its very existence."

The Proletarian Revolution must be a law unto itself, not sheltering under "legality." "A new social system brings along a new code of morals." It be irreverent towards the must ruling class; self-reliant, not dependent on alliance, however temporary, with any hostile class; scorns sops like "Municipal ownership," which capitalism can turn to its own advantage; rests on reason and organisation, not rhetoric or sentiment; will not conceal under outward show its naked programme for the unconditional surrender of the Capitalist class. Finally, it must build up the character and moral fibre of the mass instead of debauching them with sops, and then cursing their ine vitable "ingratitude," as Gaius did.

Read "Two Pages of Roman History" by De Leon; it is more topical than a leading article in the Mail.

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The S.A. Industrial Federation is printing a large number of copies of the workers song "The Internationale" for distribution on Labour Day, and the Federation Band is practising the fine marching air to which it is sung for the same occassion.

Convict Labour.

Senate on Monday that convict labour should be used to grow foodstuffs. The motion was defeated, not because the senators disliked convict labour, but because they disliked convict labour to till government lands. The Minister of Justice offered to "lease out," LEASE OUT is what he said. prisoners for private enterprise!

Well, here the Labour Party can give a sigh of relief, get another breath as it were, for the next task. Most of its old planks have been adopted. Now its latest balm for sick society—utilization of convict labour—is in a fair way of being applied for the middle class millenium.

Mark this before we leave the subject. Prisons and private property go together. There are 8,225 convicts in the Union. That means there are about another 8,225 exploiters who ought to be convicts for robbery on a large scale. 98 per cent of crime is due to poverty or the fear of it. The capitalist system cannot hold together without prisons and police to terrorise the propertyless. These 8,225 are those who, in a small way, break the laws of sacred property. By the side of property we are all cattle, good only for "LEASING OUT."

International Socialist League (S.A.)

OBJECT: To propagate the principles of International Socialism, Industrial Unionism and anti-militarism, and to maintain and strengthen international workingelass organisation.

P. O. Box 4179

Phone 6035.

6 Trades Hall, Rissik Street, Johannesburg

General Secretary:

D. Ivon Jones.

LEAGUE NOTES.

JOHANNESBURG CENTRIAL.

George Mason was the speaker last Sunday to a hig house at the Trades Hall, choosing as his evergreen theme Industrial Unity the only Hope' He emphasised the necessity for character-building in the movement if that unity was ever to be realised; the working class as such were at present. he thought, displaying a lamentable lack of moral fibre. References to the Russian achievements, such as they are, to the obsoleteness of craft unions, and to the necessity of whites and native workers presenting a united front, were particularly well received by an audience now getting accustomed to the full implications of Industrial Unionism. As regards propaganda among natives he held that it must be done as he had done it, at the compounds. George has a knack of preaching the same gospel every time in a new way, and his sturdy 'irreverence' is always contagious.

The speaker outside was S.P. Bunting, with J. H. Andrews in the chair. It is estimated by constant observers that these outdoor meetings, besides serving as feeders for the Hall, are producing some real effect of their own on an audience increasingly regular. The 'International' sales beat the record.

BENONI.

The Benoni Comrades held a picnic in the Van Ryn Plantation last Sunday, and what with a Brass Band and games, had altogether a royal time

DURBAN.

On Sunday evening Comrade Campbell lectured on "A Bibliograph of Socialism." Comrade Mabbot took the chair before a good attendance.

Comrade Campbell dealt exhaustively with the literature of Socialism, and pointed out that many books and pamphlets boosted, even in Socialist papers, were valueless to the student, and merely a waste of time. Shewing how students could only get the true philosophy by education on the right lines and through the right means. Comrade Campbell recommended many books essential to the correct grasp of the Socialist movement. Literature sales good.

MAY DAY CELEBRATION.

The PROPAGANDA MEETING.

IN THE

TRADES HALL

Next Sunday Evening at 8 p.m.

Will be devoted to a rally of May. Day workers and well-wishers.

SHORT SPEECHES by LEAGUE SPEAKERS on INTERNATIONAL MAY DAY

And why we should all join to make it a great success this year.

ALL WELCOME.

NOTE THE DATE.

THE LEAGUE CINDERELLA DANCE

will be held

Next Tuesday, the 3rd April,

At Professor West's Academy, 125 Pritchard Street.

And not on Wednesday the 4th as previously advertized.

All friends and comrades of the League are invited.

Tickets obtainable from the Women Comrades or at the Head Office. 2/6.

ROLL UP for an enjoyable evening.

Printed by the Elite Printing Works, for the I.S.L.Box 4179, Joh'burg.