

Labour's Foreign Policy—East and West.

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IT is an unfortunate fact, no doubt, but on that account no less unavoidable by Marxists who have had their lot cast for them as inhabitants of this island of Great Britain, and who have in consequence thereof need to put their theories into political practice in this country, that the Labour movement is heir to a social and an economic problem which was not of its creation. It might be very much more agreeable if the industry and commerce of this Kingdom (why did not our ancestors make it a republic and not leave to us the choice of damning the monarchy with words since it is not opportune to demand its abolition?) had not come across generations and centuries to depend upon the import from overseas of indispensable raw materials.

But the facts of economic history are stubbornly set in a part out of which no Communist theses and no "Plebs" outlines can exorcise them. The manufactures and the trade of this country have been reared as to their entire fabrics upon the commerce of the Indies, of Africa and of America. The great urban areas, the immense populations which inhabit them have come to depend for their very existence upon the open highway of the oceans, and it is no mere figure of speech to say that the frontiers of this nation are the shores of the seven seas of the wide world. It may be anathema to pacifists, it may be blasphemy to advocates of the "class-war," but it is none the less a fact which Marxists have to admit and to which they must accommodate themselves not only in theory but in practice.

It is no use, if you are an inhabitant of this kingdom and at the same time are a convinced exponent of the theory of historical materialism, explaining your country's history without regard to the fundamental facts. It is no use letting the thought that has evolved in another and a continental environment take the place of thought generated in application to the material condition of an island like Great Britain.

This country has an economy which has become dependent on sources of raw material that, unless science can substitute them, will make it perpetually necessary to import cotton, rubber, petroleum, tea, much of the sugar, wheat, meat, wool and pit-timber, together with almost all the metals of the new alloy steels from countries across the Atlantic, at the end of the Mediterranean and Red Seas, across the Indian Ocean or away beyond Panama in the far Pacific.

If these raw materials cannot be assured, if these foodstuffs do not arrive in Cardiff and Bristol, in London and Hull and Middlesbrough, in Liverpool and Manchester, then there must inevitably come a collapse of the commerce and the industry which alone enable to live and equip with economic indispensability and political importance the teeming millions of our working class.

Russia cannot supply us with the produce of the tropics and sub-tropics. Yet, it is precisely this produce which has become the mainstay of the great manufactures of this country.

So, on the one hand there never was such fantastic balderdash talked as this of "Smash the Empire!" unless it was the childish prattle of those who would "Scrap the Navy!" On the other, it is becoming as equally monstrous an absurdity for our imperialists to insist upon maintaining invulnerably intact the long sea route from the Thames to Shanghai or to Sydney via the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Malay Straits. That is something which cannot be done by Britain with her present revenue resources, and now that the German, Austrian and Russian menace is re-

moved, France, Italy and the Turks have time and opportunity to devote to their recovery of the mastery of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

Britain cannot permanently bestraddle the world. She has got to face facts. She has got to recognise the vast changes of the last hundred years, and the rise outside of Northern and Western Europe of great Powers in Asia and in the two Americas.

She has got to understand the meaning of those immense migrations which have, in the last three centuries, slowly, and in the last half-century, at an immense rate, transplanted the civilisation of Europe from one side of the Atlantic to the other, until now it stretches essentially one from the Carpathians to Chili and to California.

The League of Nations is, like the International Federation of Trade Unions in its setting of Amsterdam, and the Labour and Socialist International at Zurich, an anachronism. It belongs to an old man's world. It may profess to comprise, as do they, peoples of non-European location. But that is only a polite fiction. Essentially, they belong to Europe. Essentially, they include in an effective manner only those who live on the eastern shores of the near Middle

A Reply to Snowden!

(SLIGHTLY ALTERED.)

"The continued existence of the S.D.F. is necessary if a Socialist Movement is to be maintained in this country. The S.D.F. shall remain in the closest and most harmonious relationship with the Labour Party, and its best contribution is the maintenance of its own work in an efficient condition."

(What Francis Johnson did not quite say!)

Sea. They do not really attach and engage the allegiance of the Americas from the Great Lakes to the Straits of Magellan.

These are the nations with which a cultural union and a political entente must be established. They and we are of one stock, of one culture, of one tradition across not hundreds but thousands of years. Material conditions have made us what we are. Racial affinities have knit us closely together. Ideas and institutions we have so long shared in common or, in separation, yet in such sympathy, that we can think and we can feel as one civilisation.

Not so is it between us and the peoples of Asia. With them, our contacts have been those of conquest and of the exchange of commodities. There has been no colonisation save on their side in parts of America where their presence is racially and, I think, rightly resented, but whence they cannot be excluded unless there is to be a *quid pro quo*. There has only been on our side the establishment of garrisons and of trading stations.

There is nothing more certain than that in this century the peoples of Asia will, acting on the example of Japan and under the inspiration of that other Asiatic Power, Russia, aspire and attain to nationhood. Whether we like it or not is of no real matter. It is the logical outcome of the material basis which has there been built in.

It is an arrogance on the part of us Europeans or Americans to interfere whether in one way or in another. These are another

series of peoples, of another race and tradition and culture, of another set of ideas and of institutions.

When in Moscow, it seemed to me that I was at the half-way house between my Europe and their Asia. The rivers flowed slowly away from this continent into that. The peoples in the street were, like the public buildings, secular as well as religious, less European, as we understand Europe, than they were Asiatic.

Not so, in America. Far as the shores of Georgian Bay, down at St. Louis, over the river from Cincinnati. I was never out of Europe, never away from home, just as I never am in Milan or in Marseilles.

Culturally, in this twentieth century, we must think as men and women of the Atlantic nations.

Now that we are consciously beginning to adapt our economic life to our intellectual life, socially as well as individually, we must not forget the tremendous limitations, and, indeed, inhibitions of race and of tradition.

We must as constructive rather than imaginative, as realist internationalists, not seek to go ahead of our scientific knowledge of human relations. We shall some day come to an all-inclusive internationalism, but that day is not yet.

Let us gradually (and no more gradually than we need to carry our fellow countrymen with us) canvass as a policy the evacuation of the East.

Economically, we cannot afford to scuttle out. But out, right out, out as far as the Straits of Gibraltar has Britain to get!

(To be continued.)

HYNDMAN LITERARY COMMITTEE.

By the time these notes appear in "The Social-Democrat" I hope we shall have ready collecting cards for clubs for the Hyndman Biography. These cards will be found helpful to those comrades who are engaged in collecting weekly subscriptions for the volume. These cards will be sent on application to me.

I am sorry the Hyndman Literary Committee are not yet in a position to announce the date of the publication of the Hyndman Biography by F. J. Gould. The publication will be hastened as much as is possible. But the change of publishers has caused an unavoidable delay, which has not been lessened by Christmas and the New Year. Moreover, there are certain times and seasons for the issue of publishers' lists, and we have to fall in with those times and seasons. Those comrades and friends who have ordered copies which they expected to receive before now will please accept this explanation of the delay.

I did not expect a large sale for the pamphlet "Ernest Belfort Bax: Thinker and Pioneer," which Robert Arch wrote and which has been published by the Hyndman Literary Committee, but the sale has not come up even to my modest expectations. There must be a very large number of readers of "The Social-Democrat" who have not provided themselves with a copy of this excellent pamphlet. Surely the memory of Bax deserves at least this little recognition on the part of Socialists in this country. The price of the pamphlet is 6d., post free, 7d., and can be had from the Hyndman Literary Committee.

The football section of the Hyndman Club and Institute has won a match—their first success, I believe—and it was played with only ten of the team on the ground. I understand that the Hyndman Football Club is now third from the bottom of the league list. I hope I am right in these observations, but when it comes to the game of the ball-at-the-foot, I am, as Lord Balfour said on a certain memorable occasion, "a child in these matters." Anyhow, the secretary of the football club, J. McCarthy, will be very glad indeed to hear from any London comrade willing to join the Hyndman Football Club. They will receive a hearty welcome.

Whist drives are held at the Hyndman Club on Tuesday evenings. Since their recent resumption they have been well attended. After the New Year it is hoped to arrange whist drives on two other evenings in the week—two solo and one progressive drive.

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