

India's Struggle for Independence.

An Appeal of the League Against Imperialism to the Workers of Europe.

India has today become the focus of the struggle for freedom of the hundreds of millions of colonial slaves oppressed and exploited by British imperialism. The movement for national independence has within the last few months been developing with lightning rapidity from a constitutional movement under bourgeois leadership into a revolutionary mass movement of the workers, peasants and radicalised petty bourgeoisie. Under the terrible and increasing pressure of imperialist exploitation, and after years of betrayal by leaders consistently seeking compromises with imperialism, the Indian masses with the industrial workers in the forefront are now breaking out into open revolt for the attainment of their full national and social liberty.

The revolutionary energy of the masses that had already found expression in a series of determined and protracted strikes of the industrial workers, is daily gaining in extent and intensity. Hundreds of thousands of workers — railwaymen, miners, textile, jute and dock workers, etc. — are on strike throughout India; peasants are openly flouting the laws and organising committees to conduct the movement for the non-payment of taxes to the Government; hundreds of village officials are resigning their posts; students are leaving their colleges and universities and the youth leagues are actively taking part in organising the movement of civil disobedience. Notwithstanding the efforts made by the official leaders of the Indian National Congress to restrain the revolutionary energy of the masses by preaching non-violence, the masses have taken the initiative into their own hands and are offering increasingly active resistance to the police and the military. Thousands of workers stormed the imperialist law courts at **Karachi**, hundreds of thousands demonstrating in **Calcutta** against the arrest of their leaders have been rallying again and again to the fight against the rifles of the police and the armoured cars of the military. Revolutionaries stormed the arsenal at **Chittagong** and derailed the trams. Despite the brutality of the armed police, tens of thousands demonstrated in the streets of **Lahore** in support of those who had deliberately defied authority. In the military centre of **Peshawar** there have been bloody conflicts with the armed forces of the Macdonald Government. In the districts of the United Provinces and Allahabad, peasants are disobeying the laws and offering active resistance to the police. In the garrison town of **Poona** there were stormy demonstrations, while in **Bombay** — the centre of the revolutionary workers' unions — the advanced industrial proletariat is leading the struggle for freedom notwithstanding the fact that the armed forces of British imperialism have been mobilised against them.

Faced with this All-India mass movement and anxious to keep India in continued subjection to British imperialism, the "Labour" Government of Ramsay MacDonald is resorting to the most extreme and brutal forms of repression that have ever been adopted in India. The same Ramsay MacDonald who in 1924 was responsible for that reactionary measure known as the Bengal Ordinance, is today using machine-guns, armoured cars, police oppression and torture, martial law, special repressive legislation and the machinery of the imperialist law courts against the working class and its leaders, in whom he sees the real menace to the continuance of British imperialist exploitation. Thirty-three of the real leaders of the working class have been kept for over a year in the **Meerut Gaol** to undergo the mockery of a trial deliberately aimed at sentencing them to heavy terms of imprisonment. The leaders of the G.I.P. railway strike including Deshpande, the General Secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress, have just been sentenced to terms of rigorous imprisonment. The leaders of the S.I.R. strike were sentenced last year to ten years' rigorous imprisonment. Santiram Mondal of the East India Railway Union has received the monstrous sentence of five years' hard labour for having told the truth about the police assault on the railway workers.

That the non-violent doctrines of Gandhi are not regarded as a serious menace to British imperialist domination is shown by the comparatively light sentences passed upon his followers, as well as by the Viceroy's Ordinance discriminating between the non-violent movement and the revolutionary movement against which the MacDonald Government has empowered the police and the soldiery to proceed with ruthless brutality.

In this heroic struggle of the Indian masses, the proletariat of Europe and America and particularly of **Great Britain** must give immediate proof of their active solidarity. They must demand the release of the working class leaders on trial in Meerut, among whom is **Thengdi**, the President of the League Against Imperialism, and they must extend the campaign for the Meerut Prisoners' Defence into the factories. They must protest against the arrest and imprisonment of the fighters against imperialism, including **Deshpande**, General Secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress, and of **Jawaharlal Nehru**, President of the Indian National Congress and member of the Executive Committee of the International League Against Imperialism. They must mobilise the whole force of the working class to expose and denounce the regime of terror established in India by the MacDonald Government which has converted Indian cities into armed camps, which is governing India by martial law, which is arresting and shooting workers en masse and inflicting vindictive sentences on a hitherto unprecedented scale. They must organise mass meetings in support of the Indian struggle for independence, and they must do their utmost to prevent the dispatch of troops and munitions of war to India.