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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 5

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Number 1

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Notes of the Month

LABOUR CONFERENCES AND INTERNATIONAL WORKING-CLASS UNITY

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NOTES of the MONTH

*Unity—Disunity—The Alternative—Back to Reality—War and
Fascism—Inaction and Reaction—The Left Wing—
Communist Affiliation*

UNITY of the working-class movement, both within each country and internationally, has been an acknowledged aim of most sections of the movement since European Socialism first took shape. Yet unity has never been achieved. In Britain two great institutions, the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, stand out as representative of the organised workers in politics and industry ; but neither of these bodies can be said to have succeeded in mobilising for action, whether "political" or "economic," more than a fraction of the energy latent in the masses of this country. They have failed to secure, not a neutral consensus of political opinion as to aims, but an actual rallying and rousing of energy for the tasks immediately ahead. Internationally, the new Labour and Socialist International and the Amsterdam Trade Union International are formed of, and controlled by, elements in the movement that have already shown themselves unable to arouse mass enthusiasm for even the most elementary and obvious needs of the European working class. When, from time to time, some development of the long agony of the decay of capitalism, or some new effort of the capitalist rulers of Europe to make their position more secure at the expense of the working class, has aroused the anger of the conscious workers in one country or in many, the leaders of the new international have been found restraining the workers from action. They have not attempted to organise their spontaneous movements into a concerted effort. And this failure—apart from considerations of intellectual honesty and courage that are not easy to measure accurately—is due only to a very slight extent to the inevitable difficulty of securing agreement as to ultimate aims or the ideal constitution of a Socialist State ; it arises directly from the failure to fight for the immediate and dominant interests of the working class.

THE word "failure" recurs in this summary of the most important reality in Europe to-day—the disunity of the working class. It is a word that has to be written across the working-class movement as a whole—the movement that in the end can know no failure. Parliamentary successes and a measure of acquiescence gained from the bourgeoisie, by the sacrifice of specifically working-class items of policy, are nothing in the balance as against the continual retreat in face of the capitalist offensive. But before we go on to consider the policies of disunity and their results, it is necessary to deal first with an event that is of extraordinary present importance and holds out a wide promise for the future. We refer to the international conference of the transport workers at Berlin, at which effective unity for action was achieved.

AT this conference differences of political tendency or theory were not discussed, and no new international union or federation was formed. Instead, a Council of Action was set up to perform certain definite tasks and to prepare for the greater tasks that can be clearly seen ahead. The policy worked out, agreed upon, and immediately put into practice was directed against the dangers that definitely threaten the European workers, or are already oppressing them with an intolerable burden—militarism, the threat of war, the continuance and spread of Fascism. The reasons for this policy are obvious : *War and Fascism are realities*. The hopes of peaceful reform fostered by Labour and Socialist politicians are seen, from Poland to France, to be unreal ; in Britain where moderate Labour has had to face the realities of local government disillusion has been immediate and sweeping, and nationally the illusions of reformism are dying slowly as the Labour Party in Parliament grows more and more out of touch with the workers and elaborates a technique of class co-operation that differs little from that employed by Mr. Lloyd George, the arbitrator *par excellence*, before the war. But while the illusions of reformism fade, and the workers pass to indifference or despair, the forces that are bringing down the fabric of European economic life grow stronger and more violent.

THE conditions under which the masses of the people live and work are ruthlessly depressed. Armaments weigh continually more heavily on those who can gain nothing whatever from any war. (Two columns of a recent issue of the *Manchester Guardian* contained a detailed statement of the first steps that are being taken to put Britain on an equality with France in air power, a description of the reorganisation of the Rumanian army by General Lerond, and the reasons why Yugo-Slavia is planning to build a navy. It is scarcely possible to read any newspaper to-day without coming across similar details.) And while, for the moment, Lord Curzon and Mr. Urquhart have failed to carry the British bourgeoisie with them in a crusade against the Soviet republics, the possibility of war in the autumn, when the harvests offer loot, draws continually nearer. The running sore of the Ruhr still festers. In Czecho-Slovakia, the one centre of comparative stability apparent in Central Europe, the forces of aggressive nationalism are only withheld by the prestige of President Masaryk, who is seventy years old and is stated by *The Times* to be in failing health. (Benes, whose international reputation looms so large, could not hold the Czecho-Slovakian bourgeoisie together owing to his personal unpopularity with the nationalists.) The issues of Lausanne are undecided still, and in Bulgaria a bourgeois nationalist Government has replaced the dictatorship of the richer peasants. While war is thus an overwhelming danger, the menace of Fascism in Germany continues, and Lord Curzon's policy of offering no resistance to the French seems to be based on the calculation that a nationalist reaction will be provoked in Germany strong enough to crush the workers, and sufficiently right minded to make it possible to add Germany to the Anglo-Italian Alliance. These are the dangers that any international working-class policy inevitably has to face.

THE striking lead given by the transport workers shows that there is an alternative to the policy of inaction pursued by the Amsterdam International as a whole. If the Amsterdam Transport Workers' Federation can meet the Russian unions (who, in this case, represented all the transport

unions affiliated to the R.I.L.U.) and find agreement on a policy of action, it is possible to work out a programme of immediate tasks, by the execution of which the trade union movement of Europe might become the dominating factor in the international situation. But the executive of the Amsterdam International has disassociated itself from the action of the transport workers. The Hamburg Conference of the new political International refused even to give a hearing to the representatives of the International Council of Action established at Frankfort. Instead of moving towards unity, all the forces of official socialism, trade unionism, and Labour seen to be concentrated upon opposition to the Communists.

THERE are, however, sections and tendencies within the new International whose aim it is to secure a working agreement with the Communists. Representatives of the Independent Labour Party are said to have made an attempt, within the Organisation Commission of the Hamburg Conference, to secure an invitation for representatives of the Communist International. Their desire for unity was not strong enough to lead them to make any statement or protest in open conference, but this may have been due to the fact that the declared policy of most sections of the conference was to avoid discussion of points on which differences of opinion might arise. This policy—which is certainly one way in which any amount of unity can be obtained—was specially in evidence when Fritz Adler's final report of the Organisation Commission came up for discussion. A French delegate at once put forward the opinion that, as Adler's report was of extraordinary importance, and as there were differences of opinion among the various sections on many points in this report, no discussion should be held; the report should be adopted unanimously. To this example of socialist logic the conference, in all solemnity, agreed. A precedent was perhaps created at Hamburg that will tie the hands of the left wing organisations within the Labour Party, and prevent them risking that Party's fictitious unity of inertia in an attempt to secure a real unity of action. But if the political left wing is content to decay slowly in

this way, the workers are not. The Labour Party Conference is not easily influenced by the rank and file of the working class ; the opinions of Mr. J. H. Thomas have more effect on the conference than any number of resolutions from branches of the N.U.R. But none the less, the rank and file will be directly represented in the conference discussions.

THE representatives of the rank and file come to the conference mainly from the local Labour Parties and the Trades Councils. Amongst them will be members of the Communist Party, sent by organisations that are unwilling to accept dictation from Eccleston Square in respect to the delegates that they elect. In a few cases Communists will be present as executive members of national trade unions. And although the block vote of the great unions, controlled largely by the union officials, may be used to out-vote the rank and file delegates—even if joined by sections of the Independent Labour Party—the delegates from the local bodies can be relied upon to put up a fight. This is important, for the leaders of the Labour Party are not deceived by their own stratagems. They know that a direct attack on the Communist delegates, a refusal of credentials, or an attempt to exclude them in other ways would bring into being a rapidly growing opposition which could rob the further proceedings of the conference of any appearance of tranquillity or agreement. If they meet with a determined opposition they are likely to mould their policy towards the Communists during the coming year on lines of tolerance, in order to avoid widening the breach within their own ranks. They might even remember suddenly that Mr. Henderson said last year, at Edinburgh, that the resolution now being used to justify the exclusion of Communists was not intended to apply to them. It has to be admitted that, faced with the alternatives of growing division within their own ranks on this question, or of ceasing their attempts to drive Communists out of local Labour organisations, the leaders of the Labour Party are quite capable of choosing disunity. That course will only be chosen, however, if they feel that they can afford to disregard the opposition. It is for the delegates to the London Conference who

believe in working-class unity to make it clear that they cannot be disregarded. The question of Communist Party affiliation is the most important that can come up at the conference, because the realities of the present position in Europe make working-class unity imperative.

T. L.

The cartoon, reproduced below, illustrates, from the working-class point of view, the latest phase in the relations between the capitalists of France and Germany, as described by M. Philips Price in his article in this issue.

LUTTERBECK and STINNES : "HELP, FOCH, HELP!"



- (a) "Lend us your sword against the Communists."
 (b) "Guarantee offer" of 'Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie' (the Federation of German Industries)."

—*Rote Fahne*, June 5

A NEW PHASE IN THE RUHR STRUGGLE

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

THE disorders at the end of May in the Ruhr can have been unexpected only by those who did not see from the first what was going on behind the scenes. It will no doubt come as a surprise to those in the British Labour Party who have not yet cast off their Liberal skins that the resistance to the invader has been from the first inspired not by a mystic nationalism, uniting all classes against a militarism which is a monopoly only of France, but by a complex series of motives, often conflicting, in the different sections of the Ruhr population. As far as the German Socialist movement is concerned, what has happened will dash the hopes of those crusted bureaucrats at the head of the German trade union machine and of the Social Democratic mandarins who are dreaming of a great Coalition Government in Berlin from Stinnes to Scheidemann. Not that the "great coalition" is not a possibility even now, but if it comes into existence it will be fixed up in the lobbies of the Reichstag without the knowledge of the rank and file and will be paraded to the public as the last trump card to save the sinking Fatherland. For the new phase in the Ruhr struggle has brought the Reformist Labour leaders in Germany up against the hard facts of the class war. For the first time since the French occupation there is abundant evidence that the Ruhr workers, without perhaps understanding the true significance of what they are doing, have thrown down the glove not only against the French militarists and the Comité des Forges, but also against the Cuno Government and the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie." The "united front against the French militarists" has been shown to be a myth.

What are the developments which have led up to this new phase in the Ruhr struggle? The Ruhr has seen many military occupations in the last four years. When Noske marched his White Guards in March, 1919, to suppress the general strike and arrest the Workers' Council leaders, and a year later when the notorious

General Watter marched in to disarm the miners in the name of President Ebert, who had just been reinstated in his Presidential chair largely as the result of the actions of these miners, a bloody massacre and wholesale imprisonments were the lot of the working-class population of the Ruhr. The French invasion, on the other hand, was a mere bagatelle to begin with. The French military chiefs did everything in their power to favourably impress the workers and to assure them that they would even agree to socialisation of the mines if the miners would agree to work reparation coal. A competition between the German and French bourgeoisie commenced, as to who could offer the most tempting terms to the workers, the one to work on reparations account and the other to refuse to carry out any orders of the invader. The German employers and State officials granted 100 per cent. wage rises immediately after the Ruhr occupation, and agreed to an unemployment benefit amounting to two-thirds of a normal wage. Enormous credits were opened by the State to the employers, so that they should have no difficulty in meeting these promises and paper money began to flow like water. Seven billion marks were printed in less than two and a-half months. It was a paradise—of paper and on paper!

But these halcyon days were obviously not going to last for ever. The mere fact that the German industrial capitalists were fighting, not over the principle of whether the future form of industrial organisation on the banks of the Rhine should be a Franco-German trust or not, but on the percentage which the French and German shareholders should receive in the new combine, already accepted in principle, prevented them from allowing the struggle to develop to a point where an agreement might be compromised and where they might fail to receive a share of the booty. Moreover, amongst the small middle classes and the better-paid sections of labour, where the consciousness of the class struggle was but feebly developed, the "no more war" feeling was uppermost and the struggle was carried on half-heartedly. Among the vast majority of the working-class population of the Ruhr the feeling was strong from the first that the whole affair was the concern of two capitalist groups, and that in any case they would be the loser.

Meanwhile the German industrial chiefs had decided to fight for their percentages on the combine by using the credit of the

State to support the mark and gain the sympathies of the English business world against France by making a pretence at stabilisation. The mark was suddenly pushed down from 30,000 to 20,000 to the dollar, and held there till nearly the middle of April. This was done by the Reichsbank, which threw during this period a large amount of gold and foreign values on the money markets. How large the amounts sacrificed for this purpose were is not publicly stated, but from the returns of the Reichsbank it is possible to see that the gold reserves of the Reichsbank during this period diminished by 160 million gold marks, while the amount of foreign currencies sold amounted to 600 million gold marks. Not all of this should be regarded as Reichsbank gold reserve, for a part of these sums were found by the sale of currencies accumulated on reparations account and diverted for this purpose immediately after the French invasion. The German bankers, however, made no secret of the fact that they regarded this whole action as artificial and one which was only intended to bring about a political effect to keep the Ruhr workers quiet and interested in the maintenance of passive resistance. Speaking before the Parliamentary Commission for Inquiry into the Fall of the Mark, Herr Loeb, from the banking house Mendelssohn, on June 4 said: "It was clear from the first that by the technical method of selling foreign currencies and the gold reserve it was impossible to continue the action indefinitely. Therefore there was general agreement that the action must be supported by a rigid curtailing of credit by the Reichsbank. This point of view was predominant during the first two months. In March, however, a change was observed and money began again to be plentiful. The only thing, then, to save the situation was the successful floating of the Gold Dollar Loan, secured on the remaining gold of the Reichsbank. With the failure to float this loan confidence in the possibility of continuing the action departed and everyone began to buy foreign currencies to lay up for future eventualities." Reduced to ordinary language this is an admission that powerful interests began to get to work in Germany about the end of March to gradually liquidate the state of economic war which had been going on between France and Germany since January. Someone had proved stronger than the bankers, and that someone was the heavy industry trusts, particularly the Stinnes

Rhine-Elbe Union. Credit had suddenly become plentiful about the end of March, because the industrial trusts had threatened to throw large blocks of marks on the market if credits were not forthcoming. The Gold Dollar Loan was unsuccessful because the industries had passed round the word to boycott the one remaining chance of maintaining the mark for a few months longer at its then-existing level. The industrial chiefs in Germany had proved stronger than the financial chiefs, and particularly the chiefs of heavy industry had taken the lead to defeat the financiers. They were interested in a fall in the mark, partly because they wanted to pay back the three billion marks which they had borrowed from the Reichsbank since January in still more depreciated paper currency and partly because they felt that the time was coming to prepare the way for the Franco-German heavy industry combine.

The German heavy industries were, from the first, never interested in a fight to a finish. The "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie" has had, since its foundation in April, 1919, two wings: one of them representing the interests of the heavy and the other of the finishing industries. Already before the war there were two capitalist organisations in Germany, the "Zentralverband der deutschen Industrieller," which comprised the heavy industries, and the "Bund deutscher Industrieller," which comprised the finishing industries. These two bodies used to represent two conflicting policies in the industrial world. The heavies were supporters of a high protective tariff against foreign coal and iron products, while the finishing industries wanted cheap raw material, and hence free trade. This same conflict of interest between the basic and finishing industries has appeared since the war in another form. The manipulation of the exchanges has taken the place of the raising of tariff walls, because, after all, a low exchange is one of the most effective means of counteracting foreign competition. The heavy industry trusts in Germany to-day are in a position to make large profits on the export of coal and on half-finished iron products by forcing the mark down. On the other hand, the finishing industries, who have not got the same independent source of raw material as the heavies, are interested in a relatively stable currency, because they have often to buy from abroad. The struggle, therefore, which before the war was fought out between

the two separate industrial organs, has since 1919 been fought out within the ranks of the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie," which was a union of forces to meet the revolutionary dangers of the years 1918-19.

During the last three years the German finishing industries have been emancipating themselves somewhat from the monopoly of the heavies. They have extended their operations into the raw material industry. One of the most powerful industrial federations in Europe to-day is that of which the A.E.G., Krupps, and Otto Wolff (Cologne) is the centre. It has acquired large coal and iron properties in Germany and has international banking connections. But in spite of this its main interest is in the sale of finished products, and here the success of its operations is dependent less on a falling mark than on high technical efficiency. The Wiesbaden agreement in 1921 between Loucheur and Rathenau represented the policy of this German industrial group to secure a share of the profits of the electrical reconstruction of the devastated areas of France with a French heavy industry group, and to secure a gradual stabilisation of the mark through payments in kind. It was fought tooth and nail by the Stinnes trust, whose main activity has always been the sale of coal and iron products on the world markets. For him a falling mark was and is a necessity. Thanks to his efforts the Wiesbaden Agreement became abortive. In recent months the Stinnes trust has extended its sphere so as to absorb several industrial undertakings in Upper Silesia with a view to preventing his rival, the finishing trust, from getting control over fresh sources of raw materials. He has also tried to corner the oil trade in Germany by forming a new oil trust. The A.E.G.-Krupp-Wolff concern has replied by concluding, through the Roland A.G. (Bremen) and the Kosmos Dampfschiffahrlinie, an agreement with the Harriman Steamship Line, thus cutting off Stinnes from an important international connection.

This struggle between the two trusts, between the heads of the raw material and finishing industries in Germany, is reflected also in the reparations policy of Germany, and particularly in the struggle on the Ruhr. Stinnes wants to come to terms with the heads of the Lorraine industries. His coke has its natural outlet there and he requires the Lorraine minette. The de Wendel group

of French heavy industry is interested in the same solution, and both are ready on certain terms to agree to an exchange of shares in each other's undertakings. The whole reparations question for them is little more than an interchange of shares and an agreement to combine forces in a common price policy and a common attack on labour. A falling mark and franc has no terror for them once they are secured of raw materials in abundance. Not so the A.E.G.-Krupp-Wolff concern, which has influential connections in England and America, and can obtain large credits from the City and Wall Street through the bank of Kleinwert and Kuhn, Loeb. It would continue the fight against the French occupation of the Ruhr, and continue the action for the support of the mark, if necessary by negotiating an international loan, as part of a reparation settlement.

Again the Stinnes trust will not hear of any reparation settlement on the basis of an international loan in which the German industries are to contribute their share of the guarantee, unless it gets the railways of the Reich into its hands. This is bitterly opposed by the competing concern, because the conversion of the German railways into a private monopoly would be of advantage only to the heavy industries, which are the chief purveyors of coal and metal for this public undertaking. These, then, were the two opposing policies in the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie" during the month of May. The successful attempt of Stinnes to obstruct the Gold Dollar Loan and to put an end to the stabilisation of the mark by the Reichsbank enabled him to force his point of view on the Reichsverband, which in the last week of that month accepted his proposals to "offer" a guarantee to the German Government if it gave up the railways to private monopolies. The victory of Stinnes means the gradual liquidation of the resistance on the Ruhr, the opening of negotiations with the Lorraine industrialists, and the setting up of an economic dictator in Germany. The pro-French heavy industries have for the moment at least triumphed over the finishing industries, allied with international banking capital.

The same developments have taken place in France, where, at the end of April, de Wendel was elected president of the Comité des Forges in place of J. and Eugene Schneider. Now Schneider-

Creusot is the centre of a big finishing industry trust and has no material interest in a settlement in the Ruhr, based on an exchange of coke and minette. On the contrary, this group is much more interested in continuing the struggle till the Ruhr metallurgical industries capitulate and can be taken over after paying off the German holders in cash. There is no chance of an amicable agreement between Schneiders and the Ruhr industry chiefs. But the rejection of Schneider by the members of the Comité des Forges shows that the policy of the French coal and minette owners is dominating. The way for a Franco-German capitalist solution of the Ruhr struggle has been prepared both in Germany and in France. Can London City and Wall Street upset the plan? The next few months will show.

But now a new factor has come upon the scene, quite apart from the international banking interests of London and New York, who would like to hinder this settlement. The Ruhr workers have begun to move. Is it the awakening from sleep or only the last convulsions before death? The liquidation of the struggle on the Ruhr and the creation of the Ruhr-Lorraine industrial combine requires political preparation in the public mind. Someone has to bear the responsibility for the political retreat; somehow the blame for failure to secure the unconditional withdrawal of the French army of occupation from the Ruhr has to be shifted on to somebody's shoulders. The legend of the "stab in the back" has to be revived and the workers of the Ruhr provoked to take such action that the front of the passive resistance will be broken through. The German Communist Party is in possession of information to the effect that during May an understanding was reached between prominent members of the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie" and the Minister of Finance of the Reich, a nominee of the former, that no further credits would be forthcoming for the payments of increased wages for the next two months. Having secured this the Stinnes group at once began to force down the mark by buying large amounts of foreign currency. In a few days the dollar rose from 40,000 to 80,000 marks, and was quickly followed by the prices of food and necessities, which in the Ruhr rose 100 per cent. in ten days. The heavy machine of the trade union bureaucracy began to work, and negotiations dragged on in Essen and Berlin.

with the employers and members of the Government. Meanwhile the Reichsverband was preparing its "offer" of reparations guarantee to the Government, the acceptance of which was to be the condition of permitting a rise in wages to cover the collapse of the mark. The game, however, was spoiled by the metal workers and miners in a number of towns spontaneously and together downing tools and electing a strike committee to enforce unconditionally their demands for an adequate rise. Impelled by instinct, the rank and file knew that while their social democratic leaders were frittering their time away in the Government and employers' offices, someone was selling the pass. At the same time a number of control committees sprung up in the strike areas to supervise the prices on the local markets and punish by confiscation local profiteers. In this way some acts of plunder were committed. The employers got their Fascist organisations to work at once and bands of "bürgerwehr" began to clear the streets, arrest strike leaders, and reinforce the police. The strikers replied by creating a local labour militia of organised trade unionists, who disarmed the Fascists and took over the responsibility for local order. This took place in Gelsenkirchen and Bochum. In other places the Fascists withdrew voluntarily and no labour militia was formed. The whole thing was spontaneous and the victory over the Fascists was complete; plundering was sternly suppressed, and the strike continued under perfectly orderly conditions. For the first time since the Kapp days in March, 1919, it has been shown that the German workers can by mass action overpower the armed thugs of the German employing class. The leadership of the movement fell naturally to the Communists, the "Union der Hand und Kopfarbeiter," the Syndicalists, and the "Allgemeine Arbeiter Union." The first union is largely under the leadership of the Communists, and the latter of the Syndicalists and Anarchists. The Communists in the Ruhr actually paying party fees are about 40,000, and the "Union der Hand und Kopfarbeiter" has about 70,000 paying members in the whole industrial area of Westfalia. The Syndicalists and their union are very difficult to number, but they certainly have less. It is doubtful if there were more than 150,000 leading a strike which was affecting up to three-quarters of a million. All the rest were members of the Social Democratic

Unions, the Catholic and the "Hirsch-Dunker" (Democratic) Unions. Yet although the leaders of these latter unions condemned the strike, refused strike pay, and continued their negotiations with the employers, their rank and file to a man followed the lead of the Communists and Syndicalists. The disarming of the Fascists by the labour militia, however, so put the wind up the representatives of the trusts that they quickly patched up a truce and agreed to an immediate advance of 50 per cent. in wages as from June 1. At once the order went out from the strike committees to return to work. The Ruhr workers had won their first big victory on the internal front since November, 1918. The plans of the Reichsverband were for the moment scotched, and the "offer" with the demand for denationalising the railways was published to the world with the Ruhr workers in possession of their wage advance. The Reichsverband will now have to engineer another mark collapse (which it is doing) and fight another strike with all its risks for themselves, if it is to make good its claim that the Ruhr workers have broken the Fatherland's front.

In order to prepare for the future the Reichsverband and the German Government, through its representative Herr Lutterbeck (the secretary of the "Socialdemocratic," Oberpräsident, Herr Grützner), had written an astounding letter to the French Commander-in-Chief in the Ruhr, which must for ever remain a classic in the history of the class struggle. Its principal passages are as follows:—

Since the disarming of the German Green Police by your orders in February, the increase of disorders in the Ruhr has been everywhere noticeable. A large number of thefts and burglaries have taken place. The elements which are hostile to the State, the Communists and Syndicalists, have used this situation to their advantage and have been organising their "corps of hundreds." . . . I consider it my duty to tell you the true position. The French command seems to be under the impression that the Gelsenkirchen rebellion was only an episode. Nothing could be more dangerous to imagine that in a repetition of the same thing in future it would remain a local disorder. The success of the rebels in Gelsenkirchen can only encourage the elements hostile to the State to make new attempts, and so threaten the bases of "kultur" and of the productive system in such a way as to endanger their very existence. France is playing a dangerous game if she thinks she can control the situation in this way. The whole world at the present moment fears the situation, and if the

French command thinks that it can allow a rebellion to go unpunished, then it will come under the suspicion that it wishes at all costs to undermine German authority in the Ruhr, even at the expense of allowing European civilisation to be threatened by mob rule in the Ruhr. It is a dangerous game for France herself. The French army of occupation is not merely a collection of rifles, guns, and tanks, but these instruments are served by human beings who have eyes and ears for what is going on about them. They will bring the seeds of a new learning home with them, and this seed may bear bitter fruit on French soil. It is, therefore, the duty of the French command, even if it does not take action itself, to give a free hand to the German authorities to carry out their duties. . . . I should like to remind the French command that in the rebellion of the Commune in 1871-2 the German High Command allowed the French authorities every freedom for the purpose of suppressing the rebels. We are only asking the same facilities now in case of future developments. I ask, therefore, for agreement to the principle that we send armed police from the towns of Dusseldorf, Duisburg, and Hamborn to danger points of the industrial areas.

Comments on this amazing document are needless. It will, one may hope, dispel the illusion that the events on the Ruhr are part of a struggle of two nations. For in actual fact it shows like a flash of lightning in a dark forest the grim outlines of the class struggle.

The German heavy industries are preparing for the capitulation on the Ruhr on the condition that they become junior partners to the plunder in future. No doubt the process will need some stage-managing. An ultimatum from a united Entente will probably sooner or later be asked for by the German Government in order to make the retreat easier, and another juggle with the exchanges, another raiding expedition on the real wages of the Ruhr metal workers and miners may, perhaps, provoke the disorders necessary to drown the coalfield in a sea of blood and throw the blame on the workers. But should the German Communists succeed in keeping the masses in hand and repelling the attack in whatever form it comes, a new chapter will have opened in the post-war history of Germany.

THESES ON INDUSTRY

By L. TROTZKY

(The following Report was presented to the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party at Moscow in April, and was unanimously adopted)

§ 1.—*The General Rôle of Industry in the Socialist Structure*

THE mutual relations which exist in our country between the working class and the peasantry rest in the last analysis on the mutual relations between industry and agriculture. In the last resort the working class can retain and strengthen its rôle as leader not through the State apparatus or the army, but by means of the industry which gives rise to the proletariat. The Party, the trade unions, the youth associations, our schools, &c., have for their task the education and preparation of new generations of the working class. But all this work would prove as if built on sand did it not have for its basis a continually expanding industry. Only the development of industry creates the unshakable basis for the dictatorship of the proletariat. At present agriculture is of primary importance in the economic life of Soviet Russia, although the technical level on which it stands is still very low.

Only in proportion as industry makes real progress and as the heavy industries—which form the only firm basis of the proletarian dictatorship—are restored, and in proportion as the work of electrification is completed will it become both possible and, indeed, inevitable to alter the relative significance in our economic life of agriculture and industry and to shift the centre of gravity from the former to the latter. The Party must work systematically and perseveringly, whatever the sacrifice or labour, to accelerate this process, especially as regards the rapid restoration of heavy industry.

How long the period of the predominant importance of peasant economy in the economic system of our federation will last will depend not only upon our internal economic progress, which in view of the general conditions mentioned above can be but very gradual, but also upon the process of development taking place beyond the boundaries of Russia, *i.e.*, before all, upon the way the revolution in the West and in the East will proceed. The overthrow

of the bourgeoisie in any one of the most advanced capitalist countries would very quickly make its impress upon the whole tempo of our economic development, as it would at once multiply the material and technical resources for socialist construction. While never losing sight of this international perspective, our Party must at the same time never for a moment forget or omit to keep in mind the predominant importance of peasant economy, when it is estimating the consequences of any step it is on the point of taking.

Not only ignoring but even paying insufficiently close attention to this circumstance would involve incalculable dangers, both economic and political, since it would inevitably undermine or weaken that unity between the proletariat and the peasantry—that feeling of trust of the peasantry towards the proletariat which during the present historical period of transition is one of the most fundamental supports of the proletarian dictatorship. The preservation and strengthening of this unity is a fundamental condition for the stability of the soviet power and consequently represents the most fundamental task of our Party.

It is necessary to remember the resolutions passed by former Party congresses which very justly emphasised that the support of the peasants for socialist methods of production can only be won by actual ocular demonstration, during a number of years, that such methods are economically more advantageous, more rational, &c. In the domain of finance, the policy of economising State resources, of a correct system of taxation, of a correctly constructed budget—which we have now adopted and which must and shall be unflinchingly adhered to—will only achieve decisive results on the condition that the State industries show energetic development and substantial profits.

Owing to the extreme diminution of the army, now practically reduced to skeleton formations, and the consequent gradual transition to a militia system, the problem of national defence is reduced to a question of transport and war industries.

Consequently, the construction of our budget, the State credit policy, the measures taken with a view to the military protection of the State, in fact all State activity in general, must bestow its first and greatest care upon the planned development of State industry.

In view of the general economic structure of our country, the restoration of State industry is narrowly bound up with the development of agriculture. The necessary means for circulation must be created by agriculture in the form of a surplus of agricultural products over and above the village consumption before industry will be able to make a decisive step forwards. But it is equally important for the State industry not to lag behind agriculture, otherwise private industry would be created on the basis of the latter, and this private industry would in the long run swallow up or absorb State industry.

Only such industry can prove victorious which renders more than it swallows up. Industry which lives at the expense of the budget, *i.e.*, at the expense of agriculture, could not possibly be a firm and lasting support for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The question of creating surplus value in State industry is the fateful question for the soviet power, *i.e.*, for the proletariat.

An expanded reproduction of State industry, which is unthinkable without the accumulation of surplus value by the State, forms in its turn the condition for the development of our agriculture in a socialist and not in a capitalist direction.

It is therefore through State industry that the road lies which leads to the socialist order of society.

§ 2.—*Active and Passive in the First Period of the New Economic Policy*

The healthy effect of the new economic policy on the economic life of the country is incontestable. It is expressed in the revival of industrial activity, in increased production in many important branches of industry, in the rise in the productivity of labour and in the quality of the products, in the indubitably very considerable improvement in the position of the workers, and, above all, in the much more correct approach to both fundamental and detailed economic problems.

And this latter is the basic condition for their effective solution in the future. Nevertheless, the actual position of industry remains very serious. The revival of light industry, which naturally finds its explanation in the fact of the restoration of the market in conjunction with the satisfactory harvest, is very far from implying that all enterprises and branches of light industry can be guaranteed

a further healthy development. In spite of the fact that the prices of the products of light industry are extremely high, especially in comparison with the prices of agricultural products, these high prices are often far removed from the price of reproduction, that is to say they do not guarantee the expansion of production. An increase in the activity of a whole number of trusts has been achieved at the expense of old stocks of raw materials, the replenishing of which is at the present time one of the most acute problems of State economic policy.

On the other hand, heavy industry has barely come into contact with the market. It depends essentially upon State orders, and needs for its restoration that the State should make large and well-thought-out investments in it. This also applies to a considerable extent to railway and water transport.

Thus, as a result of the total economic conditions, a healthy regulation of prices in light industries remains as yet unattained. This, and the backwardness of heavy industry in comparison with light industry, represents the chief items of the debit side of the first period of the new economic policy. It is as much the result of the general economic conditions, existing before the new economic policy, as of the inevitable crippling of economic relations during the transition to the new economic policy.

The attainment of a price regulation, on the basis of the market, better corresponding with the needs of industrial development, the establishment of more normal correlations between the branches of the light industry and those branches of industry and agriculture which provide it with its raw materials, and finally the straightening out of the front of the heavy and light industry—these are the root problems of the State in the sphere of industrial activity in the second period of the new economic policy now beginning. These problems can only be solved by a correct correlation between the market and the State industrial plan.

§ 3.—*The Problems and Methods of Planned Industrial Activity*

In Soviet Russia, where the chief means of industry and transport belong to one owner, the State, the active interference of the latter in industry must of necessity take the form of a State industrial plan. In view of the predominating rôle of the State as an owner

and a master, the principle of a uniform plan acquires at the very outset an exceptional importance.

The whole of previous experience has shown, however, that a plan of Socialist economy cannot be established *a priori* in a theoretical or bureaucratic manner. A real Socialist economic plan embracing all branches of industry in their relations to one another, and in the relation of industry as a whole to agriculture, is possible only as a result of a prolonged, preparatory economic experience on the basis of nationalisation, and as the result of continuous efforts to bring into practical accord the work of different branches of industry, and to correctly estimate the results achieved.

Thus for the coming period our task is to determine the general direction, and is, to a considerable extent, of a preparatory character. It cannot be defined by any single formula, but presupposes a constant and vigilant adaptation of the guiding economic apparatus, of its basic tasks, methods and practice to the phenomena and conditions of the market. Only at the final stage of their development can and must the methods of planned industry subordinate the market to themselves, and by this very fact abolish it.

Hence we can perceive quite clearly two dangers accompanying the application of State methods of planned industry during the present epoch, viz., (a) If we try to outstrip economic development by means of our planned interference, and to replace the regulating function of the market by administrative measures which have no basis in actual experience, then partial or general economic crises are inevitable, such as occurred in the epoch of military communism ; (b) If centralised regulation lags behind the clearly matured need for it, we shall have to solve economic questions by the wasteful methods of the market in cases where timely economic-administrative interference could obtain the same results in a shorter space of time and with a smaller expenditure of effort and resources.

In so far as we have adopted marked forms of economy, the State is bound to grant to individual enterprises the necessary freedom of economic activity in the market without trying to influence this free activity by administrative means. But if, on the one hand, each trust, in order to function successfully, must feel free to orientate itself and be conscious of full responsibility for

its work, the State, on the other hand, must regard the trusts and other associations as organs subordinate to it, by means of which it is able to sound the market as a whole, and thus render possible a number of practical measures which transcend the market orientation of individual enterprises and associations. A central economic organ may, for instance, come to the conclusion that it is necessary to liquidate a certain trust long before experience brings home to the latter the hopelessness of its position.

The question of the mutual relations between light and heavy industry can by no means be solved in accordance with supply and demand, since this would lead in a few years to a smashing up of heavy industry with the prospect of its subsequent restoration as a result of market pressure, but, in that case, on the basis of private property.

Thus, in contra-distinction to capitalist countries, in our country the principal plan is not confined to individual trusts and syndicates, but embraces industry as a whole ; more than that, the State plan must cover the mutual relations of industry, on the one hand, to agriculture, finances, transport, trade—home and foreign, on the other.

In other words, in so far as the State remains not only the owner but the active master-spirit with regard to the majority of the productive forces of industry and transport, and with regard to the means of credit, the principal plan under the conditions of the new economic policy will remain much the same as obtained during the epoch of military communism, but it differs in the most radical manner in its methods. The administration of the chief committees is substituted for economic manœuvring.

In its administrative application the campaign must develop in this sphere with extreme cautiousness by way of a very careful sounding of the ground.

The preparation must be based on economic foresight and consist in conveying instructions to the corresponding economic organs with regard to various phenomena which will either inevitably or in all probability arise at such and such an economic juncture (in connection with the appearance of corn of the new harvest on the market, with the flow of money to the village, &c., &c.), and in making such foresight as definite as possible in its

application to individual branches of industry or to particular districts, in publishing model calendars supplying directions as to the necessary measures which are to be taken in order to make the best use of the expected situation.

It is quite evident that the fundamental planning of industry cannot be attained within the industry itself, *i.e.*, by way of strengthening its guiding administrative organ (the Supreme Council of National Economy), but must form the task of a separate organisation which stands above the organisation of industry, and which connects the latter with finance, transport, &c. This is the function of the State Planning Commission. It is necessary, however, to define more clearly its position, to organise it more strongly, to give it more definite and incontestable rights and, especially, duties. It ought to be established as an immovable principle that not a single economic question which concerns the State as a whole may be dealt with in the higher organs of the Republic without consulting the State Planning Commission. This latter must in all cases, whether the initiative is taken by itself or by some other department, analyse the new question, form some project or proposition in connection with the whole of the remaining economic work, and by the means of this analysis define its specific gravity and its importance. It is necessary to take note in the most unflinching manner of the efforts of various departments and establishments, be it at the centre or in the provinces, to obtain this or that decision by a roundabout way under the pretext of urgency, of pressure of circumstances of improvisation—considering such efforts as manifestations of lack of economic foresight and as the most pernicious remnants of administrative partisanship.

In estimating the success of the work of each department, one must very largely take into consideration whether it presents its proposals in good time to the State Planning Commission for their detailed elaboration; the success of the work of the State Planning Commission itself must be estimated from the point of view of the timeliness with which it starts economic questions, of the correct foresight of what will take place to-morrow, and of how insistently it spurs other departments to a timely estimation of the forms of collaboration to be arranged between branches of their work.

It is necessary to fight by the means of the State Planning

Commission against the creation of all sorts of temporary and casual commissions of inquiry, together with directive, advisory, and provisional committees, which are the greatest evil of our State work. It is necessary to secure regular work through normal and permanent organs. Only thus the improvement of these organs and the development of the necessary suppleness becomes possible—by way of their many-sided adaptation to the tasks allotted to them on the basis of continuous experience.

Without deciding beforehand the question whether it will be necessary to confer upon the State Planning Commission—the general staff of the State economy—this or that administrative right, it seems to be sufficient for the near future to lay it down that if compulsory force is necessary in order to exact conformity to the plan decided upon, the sanction for such compulsion must be obtained from the corresponding organs of the central power (from the individual economic commissariats—the Council of Labour and Defence, the Council of People's Commissaries, the presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee).

§ 4.—*The Trusts, Their Rôle, and the Necessary Reorganisation*

The State is the owner of the basic means of production and transport. Individual economic departments, and inside these departments the separate organs, establishments, and associations (the trusts), manage the sections of the State economy entrusted to them with that degree of independence which the requirements of management under present market conditions necessitate and which is determined from above, *i.e.*, by the superior State organs.

The right of the State to dispose of the whole property of those trusts which are free from obligations and of the railways, &c., remains absolute. In practice the limit and form of State interference with the present work of the economic organs and of these latter with the present work of the independent establishments of the trusts, &c., are determined exclusively from the point of view of economic expediency and are regulated by corresponding statutes (or standing orders).

The greater part of State industry is organised in the shape of trusts, *i.e.*, as associations which are endowed with a wide measure of economic autonomy and which appear on the market as free

trading organisations. The fundamental problem of these economic associations, as well as of the separate enterprises of which the former are composed, is the extraction and the realisation of surplus value for the purpose of State accumulation which alone can guarantee the raising of the material level of the country and the Socialist reconstruction of its whole economy.

The State enterprises which work for the immediate satisfaction of the most important needs of the State, as, for instance, its military needs, must also be completely subordinated to the requirements of the increase of the productivity of labour and of the decrease of the cost on each unit of production.

In view of the fact that the transition itself from military Communism to the new economic policy proceeded to a considerable extent by methods of military Communism, the grouping of the enterprises, their breaking up into trusts, the distribution of means among the trusts, possessed, and to a considerable extent possess even to the present day a provisional and bureaucratic character. From the point of view of economic work according to plan, these are but rough-draft essays, and it is not by speculative methods that they can and must be corrected and reshaped, but on the basis of examining them in the light of experience, in the light of the combined elements of commercial and administrative experience from day to day.

Complaints of the lack of means of circulation do but bear testimony to the fact that on the introduction of the new economic policy the State undertook the management of too great a number of industrial enterprises so that its strength was overtaxed, enfeebled as it was by several years of civil war and blockade. As a consequence, there is the instability of the enterprises, the work going on by fits and starts, and, what is still more important, the freighting is insufficient, which in its turn leads to a great increase of the cost of production and to the narrowing down of the market with all the economic difficulties ensuing therefrom.

The way out of the difficulty is a radical concentration of production on those enterprises which are technically the most perfect and geographically the most conveniently situated. All sorts of indirect and secondary considerations put forward against it, however essential they may be in themselves, must be pushed aside

in front of the fundamental economic problem, namely, the providing of the State industry with the necessary circulating means, the lowering of the cost of production, the expansion of the market, the extraction of profit.

The re-examination of the construction and composition of the trust, both from the purely productive and from the commercial points of view, must be perfectly free from the prejudices in favour of a bureaucratic uniformity in the work of combining the enterprises either only according to the horizontal or according to the vertical principle alone. We must be guided in our revision not by formal but by material considerations with regard to the connection and the mutual dependence of the enterprises upon one another, to their relative geographical situations, and with respect to transport and market (combinations, &c.), and so on and so on. While sweeping aside departmental or local claims in so far as they come into conflict with the principle of a more advantageous and a more profitable organisation of production, it is necessary at the same time to take into careful consideration and listen attentively to the voice of the interested trusts and separate factories, in so far as their living experience has proved the necessity of withdrawing from some of our organisation projects.

The lowering of the cost of production must be aimed at, not for the sake of transient successes in the market, but with a view to the regeneration and the development of the economic power of the country.

A mode of calculation in which the prices of raw materials are falsified by being given according to out-of-date quotations, nothing to do with the lowering of cost, must be severely punished as a dissipation of State property.

Equally wrong and ruinous would be a policy of temporarily lowering prices at the expense of causing a direct or indirect loss to heavy industry. Without the restoration of the latter, light industry, as well as the whole process of economic construction, would be deprived of its foundation. Coal, naphtha, metal—these are the branches of industry the successful development of which will insure both the economic prosperity of the Republic and its external safety.

Only a firm and constant guidance of the trusts on the part of

the Supreme Council of People's Economy, uniting—in the spirit of the above directive principles—all the basic elements of industry ; foreseeing and preparing their necessary combinations ; guaranteeing the timely, full, and proper use of all the factors of production at every stage (fuel, raw material, semi-manufactured articles, machines, labour power, &c.), will insure not only partial but general progress on the industrial front.

(To be continued)

SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

By MAX BEER

I

(We intend to publish from time to time the most characteristic selections from the literary remains of Karl Marx, as far as they have not yet been translated into English. We have particularly in view the three volumes, Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, taken mostly from Marx's newspaper work on the Neue Rheinische Zeitung, 1848-9, and republished by Franz Mehring, 1901-3; then the four volumes, Marx-Engels Briefwechsel, edited by Bebel and Bernstein, 1913-4; finally, some of the scattered letters republished at various times in the Neue Zeit. The selections, translations, and notes have been undertaken by our contributor Max Beer.—Ed. LABOUR MONTHLY.)

THE DEFEAT OF THE PARIS PROLETARIAT, JUNE, 1848

AFTER many years of democratic, republican, and social reform propaganda, the opposition elements, headed by the Paris workers, broke out in revolution on February 24, 1848. King Louis Philippe took to flight; a Provisional Coalition Government, consisting of republicans, radicals and two socialists, was formed, at the head of whom was Lamartine, poet and orator. Instead of social reform the workers got national workshops or workhouses at large. The general election, April-May, 1848, resulted in an anti-socialist Government who finally provoked the Paris proletariat to a social revolutionary upheaval in the last week of June, 1848. It was ruthlessly crushed by the republican General Cavaignac. Here are the comments of Marx on those events:—

“ COLOGNE, JUNE 28, 1848.¹

“ The workers of Paris have been crushed by superior numbers, but they have not succumbed. They are beaten, but their republican enemy is defeated. The momentary triumph of brutal force has been paid for with the destruction of the illusions and conceits of

¹ *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. III, p. 115 sqq.

the February revolution, with the disappearance of the old Republican Party, with the open disruption of the French nation into two nations—into a nation of owners and a nation of proletarians . . . The old remnant of the February revolution, the Labour Commission, has melted away like a hazy scene before the reality of things. The pathetic oratorical rockets of M. Lamartine have been transformed into the scorching and tearing shells of General Cavaignac.

“The *fraternité*, the brotherhood of the classes, of which one exploits the other, this *fraternité* which was proclaimed in February and which blazed up in big letters on the brow of Paris, has found its true, frank, and unmistakable expression in the civil war, in the war between Labour and Capital. This *fraternité* reflected its lights from the windows of Paris on the evening of June 25, when the Paris of the bourgeoisie illuminated, while the Paris of the proletariat was burning, bleeding, and agonising.

“Pedants of the old revolutionary tradition of 1793; socialist system makers who, like modern mendicant priests, were begging at the doors of the rich on behalf of the poor and who were allowed to deliver pathetic sermons as long as the proletarian lion had to be lulled to sleep; republicans who demanded the whole bourgeois order *minus* the crowned head; legitimists who do not wish to put away their livery, but to change its cut—all these elements were the allies of the proletariat in the days of February. What it instinctively hated in Louis Philippe was not Louis Philippe himself, but the crowned rule of a class, or of capital on the throne. Generous as the proletariat always has been, it believed itself to have destroyed its own enemy, while in reality it had destroyed only the enemy of its enemies, the common enemy.

“The February revolution was the glorious revolution, the revolution of mutual sympathy, because the antagonistic elements were wrapped up in a general enmity against royalty, because the social war which formed the background had only an aerial existence, the existence of a phrase, a word. The June revolution was the infamous revolution, the repulsive revolution, because in the room of the phrase there stepped in the real thing, because the republic revealed the head of the monster by striking off its protecting crown.

"Order! This is the battle-cry of General Cavaignac, as it was before the watchword of Guizot, and as it is now the brutal echo of the National Assembly and the republican bourgeoisie. None of the many upheavals of the French bourgeoisie since 1789 was an attack on 'order,' for they left undisturbed the class rule, the slavery of the proletariat, and the bourgeois order in general, no matter how many changes they may have wrought in the public organisation of society, in the form of government or the mode of slavery. The June revolution did assail that order. Hence woe to the June! . . . The deep social gulf that was before our eyes must not mislead us into questioning the value of struggles for political reforms or for changes in the form of government. Such struggles are not meaningless or illusory. Only weak, petty minds can seriously raise such questions. The collisions which spring from the conditions of bourgeois society itself must be fought out, they cannot be burked. The best form of government is that in which the antagonistic social forces are not obscured nor forcibly, that is, artificially, suppressed. The best form of government is that in which they are brought to a head and thus to their natural solution."

II

GERMAN REVOLUTION AND OPPRESSED NATIONALITIES

When the Frankfurt National Assembly was discussing the relations of Germany to Poland, Italy and Bohemia, Marx called upon the representatives of Germany to prove their revolutionary ardour by giving freedom to Poland, Italy and the Czechs, that is, by renouncing all ambitions to govern their neighbours.

"COLOGNE, JULY 2, 1848.²

"To set nationality against nationality, to use the one to oppress the other and to secure by this means the continuance of despotic rule, this has been hitherto the whole art and science of kings and their diplomats. The German principalities have in this respect distinguished themselves. Taking but the last seventy years into account we see that the German princes sold their subjects for gold to the British Government, who employed them

² *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. III, pp. 108-113.

to fight the North Americans engaged in battle for independence; when the first French Revolution broke out it was again Germans who were let loose like a pack of mad hounds upon the Frenchmen; it was a German princè, the Duke of Brunswick, who in his manifesto threatened to have Paris razed to the ground; it was Germans who conspired with the French nobility against the new order in France and were paid for this by England under the title of subsidies. When the Dutch conceived during two centuries the only reasonable idea of putting an end to the miserable mess of the House of Orange and proclaiming their country a republic, it was again Germans who turned into executioners of liberty. Switzerland can tell the same tale. Even as far as Greece did the Germans go to support the little throne of dear King Otto. And the Holy Alliance Congresses after 1815; the Austrian expeditions against Naples, Turin, the Romagna; the imprisonment of Ypsilanti; the support lent to the Portuguese and Spanish reactionary princes, like Don Miguel and Don Carlos; the arming of Hanoverian troops in the service of English reaction; the mangling and "Thermidorising" of Belgium, the bolstering up of Tsarist despotism by German bureaucrats and nobles; the flooding of Europe with Coburgs, Wettins, and other scions of German dynasties! With the assistance of German soldiery was Poland despoiled and parcelled out; with German blood and treasure were Lombardy and Venitia enslaved and robbed, and the whole Italian movement for liberty and independence kept down by Austrian bayonets, gallows, prisons, and galleys. The black book of Germany contains many more pages—let us close it!

"The responsibility for these misdeeds does not rest on the shoulders of the Governments alone: the German people must share it. Without its infatuation, its servility, its fitness for soldiering, its willingness to serve as tools of the princes 'by the grace of God,' the German name would not be as hated, cursed and despised abroad, and the nationalities oppressed by Germany would have long ago entered on the path of full development. Now, when the Germans are about to shake off their yoke, their whole policy towards other nationalities must change. Germany will only be free in the same proportion as she frees her neighbouring countries."

III

ENGLAND AND REVOLUTION

In a retrospect on the eventful year 1848, Marx deals with the meaning and effects of the European upheaval. He expresses the opinion that even a successful proletarian revolution in France could have for its result only the political emancipation of Europe, that is, freeing the oppressed nationalities and sweeping away the remnants of feudalism and absolutism, while a social revolution on the Continent depends on a victory of organised English Labour. Marx writes:—

“COLOGNE, DECEMBER 31, 1848.”³

“The country, however, which transforms whole nations into proletarians; which with its gigantic arms encompasses the whole globe; which has already once defrayed the cost of the European counter-revolution; and in which class antagonism has reached a high degree of development—England appears to be the rock on which the revolutionary waves split and disperse and which starves the coming society even in the womb. England dominates the world markets. A revolution of the economic conditions of any country of the European Continent or even of the whole Continent, is but a storm in a glass of water, unless England actively participates in it. The condition of trade and commerce of any nation depends upon its intercourse with other nations, depends upon its relations with the world markets. England controls the world markets, and the bourgeoisie controls England.

“The [political] emancipation of Europe, either in the form of raising the oppressed nationalities to independence or of the final overthrow of feudal absolutism, is conditioned upon the victorious rising of the French working class. But any social revolutionary upheaval in Europe must necessarily miscarry, unless the English bourgeoisie or the industrial and commercial supremacy of Great Britain is shaken. Any aspiration for a lasting, though partial social transformation in France or any other part of the European Continent must remain an empty, pious wish. And old England will only be overthrown in a world war, which alone would give the Chartist Party, the organised English Labour Party, the possibility of a successful rising against its stupendous oppressor. The

³ *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. III, p. 230 199.

Chartists at the head of the English Government—only from this moment would the social revolution emerge from the realm of Utopia and enter the sphere of reality. . . .”

IV

IMPORTANCE AND WEAKNESS OF ENGLISH LABOUR

In 1869, the General Council of the International Working Men's Associations, who also functioned as Regional Council of England, was assailed from two opposite sides—from Baknuri Cintro's Geneva paper, *Egalité*, and from some English members, both opposition elements demanding a division of function, that is, the severance of the English Regional Council from the General Council. In a meeting, held for this purpose on January 1, 1870, the General Council rejected the motion of the Baknurists in the following reply formulated and drafted by Karl Marx:—⁴

“Long before the *Egalité* was founded the motion to sever the General Council from the Regional Council was repeatedly brought forward and supported by two English members of the Council. It has always been rejected with practical unanimity. Our opinion is that, while the revolutionary impulse may perhaps come from France, it is surely England only that can be made into a lever for a lasting economic revolution. It is the only country which has no peasantry to speak of, and where landed property is concentrated in a few hands. It is the only country where the capitalist form, that is, combined living and mechanical labour on a large scale controlled by capitalist employers, has got hold of the whole production. It is the only country where the great majority of the population consists of wage workers. It is the only country in which the class division and the organisation of the working class through the trade unions have attained a certain degree of maturity and comprehensiveness. Owing to her predominance on the world markets England is the only country where a transformation of its economic conditions must immediately react on the whole world. If landlordism and capitalism have their classical seats in that country, so are also all the material conditions of their destruction

⁴ Reprinted in *Neue Zeit*, Stuttgart, Vol. XX, part 2, p. 475. This article (“Importance and Weakness”) was a “Confidential Circular” of the General Council to the branches of the International.

most highly developed there. The General Council, by functioning also as Regional Council, is in a position to get immediate hold of that great lever of proletarian revolution. How stupid, how criminal would it be to surrender such an instrument into English hands only!

"The English possess all material requisites of the social revolution. But they lack the spirit of generalisation and revolutionary passion. Only the General Council is able to inspire them with those qualities and thus to speed the revolutionary forces in that country and consequently everywhere. The only means to attain that object is to secure an unbroken contact of the General Council with English Labour. As General Council and Regional Council we can set on foot movements (as, for instance, the Land and Labour League) which appear in the eyes of the public as spontaneous manifestations of the English working class.

"Should a Regional Council be formed apart from the General Council, what would be the immediate effect of such a step? What authority would it enjoy when placed between the General Council of the International and that of the trade unions?

"England cannot be looked upon as simply a country like any other country. She must be considered as the metropolis of capitalism."

THE DOMINION OF CANADA—II.

(Concluded)

By H. P. RATHBONE

IN a previous article we showed the influence of American capitalism on the policy of the Canadian bourgeoisie, and indicated that this was due not so much to the geographical situation of Canada and racial differences within as to the increasing hold of United States capital upon her rapidly-developing industries. This last development has resulted in a conflict of interest with British capitalism and has also provided an impetus to the nationalistic feelings of the Canadian bourgeoisie—their desire if not for a complete break with the British Empire at least for a greater degree of independence within it. These influences and these desires have reacted on the bourgeois political parties of Canada ; so that the Liberals, who before the war with their policy of reciprocity with the United States, could be defeated on the charge of disloyalty to the Imperial connection, are now considered to express in that policy “Canadian national feeling ;” while the Conservatives in turn, who until the end of the war could be relied upon for their loyalty to the British Empire, are now definitely questioning the right of Great Britain to dictate the policy of the Canadian bourgeoisie.

In this article we will describe the result of these reactions and will show how the policy of the Canadian bourgeoisie towards the British Imperial Power has produced conflict after conflict between the Canadian and British Governments.

VERSAILLES, &C., AND CANADA'S SIGNATURE

First of all, we will take the Peace Treaty. In the *Manchester Guardian* for October 20, 1919, there appeared certain quotations from the correspondence published in Canada between Sir Robert Borden, the Canadian Prime Minister, and the British Government with regard to the signature by Canada of the Peace Treaty.

As the *Manchester Guardian* put it in their Canadian Supplement, issued in June, 1920:—

By her claim to debate the Peace Treaty for herself, to rank at least with Haiti and Venezuela in the counsels of the world, and to have her own ambassador in the capital of her great neighbour, she (Canada) has taken the lead in pioneering a change in imperial relationships, of which the full significance is not yet seen.

The means adopted by Canada to obtain these rights are clearly set forth in this correspondence. It appears that when Lloyd George cabled to Canada on October 27, 1918, foreshadowing an early conclusion of an armistice and suggesting the immediate attendance of Sir Robert Borden, the latter replied pointing out certain features of the situation ; he suggested that there might be possible difficulties as to the representation of the Dominions, and he warned Lloyd George of the " dangerous feeling " that would be aroused if " these difficulties are not overcome by some solution which will meet the national spirit of the Canadian people. The new conditions," he said, " must be met by new precedents." Lloyd George replied, refusing to discuss the position any further by cable and declared that Sir Robert Borden's departure was more imperative than ever. When the latter arrived, this discussion was resumed, and, as Mr. Arthur Sifton, Canadian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, admitted in a Treaty discussion at Ottawa, after considerable debate and in face of the objections of " the most conservative representative of the British Government and the representative of the most conservative people in Great Britain," the points raised by Canada were admitted. The Dominions were accorded the status of minor nations, and their plenipotentiaries attached their separate signature to the Treaty.

The second stage in the controversy arose over the ratification of the Treaty. Lord Milner, the British Colonial Secretary, on July 14 advised the Canadian Government that he expected the ratification of the German Treaty by three of the Allied Powers by the end of July, the British Empire being one of them. Sir Robert Borden pointed out in reply that he was pledged to submit the Treaty to the Canadian Parliament before it could be ratified by Canada ; he concluded the cable somewhat tartly as follows :—

No copy of the Treaty has yet arrived, and Parliament has been prorogued. Kindly advise how you expect to accomplish the

ratification on behalf of the whole of the British Empire before the end of July.

The idea, as the *Manchester Guardian* points out, that the Canadian Parliament should be allowed to discuss the Treaty, evidently came as a complete surprise to Lord Milner. In a further cable he urged the immediate necessity of ratification, asserting that there was nothing in the British Constitution which makes it necessary for the King to obtain the consent of Parliament before the ratification of the Treaty; "With perfect constitutional propriety the King can ratify on the advice of his Ministers." If, however, Sir Robert felt that he must carry out his pledge, he urged him to summon Parliament at once. But Sir Robert in his reply said :—

There is considerable doubt whether, under modern constitutional practices, the King could ratify without first obtaining the approval of Parliament.

In a further reply to another cable urging haste, Sir Robert finally stated that:—

I cannot emphasise too strongly the unfortunate results which would certainly ensue from ratification before the Canadian Parliament has had an opportunity of considering the Treaty.

Thereupon, according to the *Manchester Guardian* version, Lord Milner capitulated. The *Manchester Guardian's* comments on this controversy emphasised that :—

It reveals the Conservative Premier of Canada insisting with great determination upon absolute equality of status and treatment for his own country. Sir Robert Borden has long been claimed by imperialists in Britain as their faithful ally, and if words have any meaning they can count on him no longer, and he can henceforth be regarded as quite as sound a Canadian Nationalist as Mr. Henri Bourassa or Mr. J. S. Ewart. He has had no criticism from Conservatives for his attitude.

Thus it would appear that the Conservative Party, which had always been looked upon as loyal supporters of the British Empire, and who had showed themselves as such in their attitude to the 1911 reciprocity agreement (mentioned in our previous article), had already in 1919 gone well on the way towards becoming almost as much a Nationalist Party as the Liberals themselves.

The significance of this controversy on its obverse side came out clearly enough in a debate in September, 1919, on the ratifica-

tion of the Treaty in the Canadian House of Commons. In this debate Mr. Lapointe, a leading Liberal and afterwards Minister of Marine Fisheries in the Liberal Government of December, 1921, objected to the Treaty on the grounds that the Canadian Parliament should be the only arbiter as to whether Canadian soldiers should take part in a war declared by the British Government. He said :—

It must be made clear that no Canadian soldier can ever be forced to go to war or sent anywhere but by the consent and authority of Parliament. . . . I am strongly opposed to any schemes of centralisation which would result in Canada being governed by a Central Imperial body. Canada would never consent to be governed in any place but Ottawa.

PARTICIPATION IN BRITISH WARS

Subsequent events have proved that this statement by Mr. Lapointe was no empty outburst by the Liberals in opposition of a difference of opinion with the British Government, but was, indeed, an accurate reflection of the growth of Canadian Nationalist feeling. For on two occasions since has Canada recently come into conflict with Great Britain on questions vitally affecting the strategy of Britain's aggressive foreign policy. The first fracas took place over the proposed renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty to which Canada displayed such hostility as to compel the British Government to give way. The second fracas occurred in 1922, when Lloyd George issued his appeal for the supply of troops from the Empire to fight the Turks. Canada's attitude, though not appearing to be actively hostile, showed no signs of unquestioning assent to a war decided on by the Home Government.

The position of Canada in relation to the problems of Imperial defence has been kept undefined like many other of the aspects of her relationship with Great Britain. According to Professor Berriedale Keith (a recognised exponent of imperialist constitutionalism, closely connected with the Colonial Office), while military organisation in Canada is well advanced, no settlement has been reached so far as to the share or responsibility of Canada in Imperial naval defence, except that Canadian ports are accessible to the British navy.

Following on the precedent insisted on by Sir Robert Borden, described above in the section on the Peace Treaty, that the Treaty

must be submitted to the Canadian Parliament before ratification, and further, owing to the fact that under the League Covenant, as members of the League, the Dominion's territorial integrity and existing political independence are guaranteed by the other members of the League under Article X., certain important reservations were made in the Anglo-French Treaty of June 28, 1919. This Treaty—though the Dominions were not made parties to the engagement—expressly provided that it should impose no obligation upon any of them unless and until it was approved by their Parliaments.

Early in 1920, Lord Jellicoe, Governor-General of New Zealand, made a tour of the Dominions on behalf of the British Government with the object of arriving at an undertaking with the Governments on the naval defence of the Empire. "He considered," according to the *Statesman's Year Book*: 1920, "that the interests of the Empire were likely to demand within the next five years a Far Eastern fleet, comprising vessels of the Royal Navy, the East Indian Squadron, and the Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand Navies." His reception in Canada was very doubtful. *The Times* of February 17, 1920, took pains to point out that in consequence of the fact "that it was not made clear enough at the outset that Lord Jellicoe came at the invitation of the Canadian Government, the autonomists were quick to discover a plot to betray the country into the hands of the centralisers in England." It seems more than probable, however, in view of the real object of the visit, that the invitation to Lord Jellicoe from Canada was merely "formal," and that in reality he had been sent by the British Government. The fears of those whom *The Times* calls the "autonomists" seem, therefore, to have been well grounded. These fears expressed themselves in many protests against the project of an Imperial Navy under central control, advocated by a body called the Canadian Navy League. The Nationalist opinion expressed by John S. Ewart (an advocate of complete sovereignty for Canada under the British Crown), argued "that the British Government opposes our limitation of Japanese immigration, and that, while we may count on the United States to concur with us in the policy of exclusion, we cannot be certain in case of trouble with Japan that the British Navy will not be fight-

ing on the side of our opponents." "Few other writers," proceeds *The Times* "take such an extreme view as Mr. Ewart, but many influential journals pronounce against an Imperial Navy and any premature commitment of Canada to a system of Imperial organisation upon which the Dominion have not been consulted." In conclusion *The Times* stated :—

The weight of opinion, in so far as there is expression of public feeling, clearly favours a Canadian Navy, but there could be no greater mistake than to think that all those, or many of those, who oppose a navy under central authority are uneasy under the imperial connection or opposed to the assumption by Canada of its fair obligation for defence. . . . There is also a general underlying recognition of the great fact that the next Imperial Conference probably will finally determine the political destiny of Canada. And it would be foolish to deny that *in Canada there are advocates of independence, and even those who favour political union with the United States.*

The Times of December 2, 1920, quoted from an interview with General Smuts, published in the *Toronto Mail and Empire*. In this interview he was reported to have declared that the idea of an Imperial Cabinet with legislative or administrative functions was untenable, and that at the Conference of Dominion Prime Ministers in 1917, he and Sir Robert Borden were of one mind. Referring to the fact that war was declared in 1914 without consultation with the Dominions, he said :—

I do not think that it can happen again. The self-governing Dominions in future must exercise the right to say whether, after full deliberation, they will join in a war in which any part of the Empire is engaged.

The *Toronto Globe* (which, although a Liberal paper, had backed conscription when Sir W. Laurier was trying to stave it off), in discussing the proposal for an Imperial Council, favoured the retention of the power which it said Canada now possessed "to determine the measure of aid she should give to the Mother Country." In practice, so it said, "in any Imperial Council the Dominion opinion would always be overruled by the sheer weight of numbers of the Mother Country." In any case "what representations" the *Globe* added, "would Canada or any other Dominion make on questions like Anatolia, Greece, Russia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Persia, or any one of the problems which are now engaging British diplomacy."

Finally, in discussing the agenda of the meeting of the Imperial Conference in 1921, the Canadian Parliament, though it rejected a resolution prohibiting any decision to change the relationship of Canada with Great Britain or to embark on a policy which would involve Canada in new expenditure for naval or military affairs, nevertheless, according to *The Times*, made it quite clear that it was opposed to either of these two questions being dealt with at the Conference.

When the Imperial Conference met (in June and July, 1921), the Canadian Prime Minister, Mr. Meighen, laid down two conditions of success for the preservation of what he called "the Britannic Commonwealth of Nations." One was that such conferences should be held as frequently as possible, and the other that there should be the widest publicity to their proceedings. Though there might be certain questions which needed privacy he contended that "it was better in the long run to err on the side of publicity than on the side of secrecy." That this contention was not complied with is proved by the fact that after the Japanese Alliance incident, claimed by *The Times* to have been disclosed by itself alone (described below), Mr. Meighen entered a second protest against the veil of secrecy which had enveloped the Conference.

On June 30 *The Times* reported that Mr. Meighen spoke against the renewal of the Japanese Alliance, pointing "to the geographical position of Canada with her frontier marching with that of the United States, and laid stress on the importance of this fact in relation to any policy by which the United States might conceivably be, or might consider itself affected." From then onwards the Conference went completely underground. *The Times* understood, however, that Mr. Meighen had said that if the Treaty were renewed, the military clause in the existing Treaty should be omitted from any new Treaty : further, that the Dominions should not be bound by any new Treaty unless and until it had been ratified by their Parliaments.

Then came the incident which closed any further discussion of the Treaty. According to an article which looked very much as if it had been inspired by Mr. Meighen himself in the *Manchester Guardian* (July 4, 1921), it happened as follows. In the discussion

it was found that both General Smuts and Mr. Meighen were against any form of renewal. Despairing of their conversion, Lloyd George then summoned the Lord Chancellor and, as the *Manchester Guardian* implies, told him to say that the Treaty, as it had not been denounced twelve months beforehand, automatically continued for another year. The *Manchester Guardian* points out that there are many reasons why Canada does not want to agree to anything which might offend the United States. "In-harmonious relations between the two neighbours must be fraught with unpleasant consequences for both and particularly for the weaker State. . . . Under such circumstances Canada cannot be expected to endorse any move in foreign policy which the United States will interpret as directed against themselves." That Mr. Meighen in this instance received the support of the Liberals is confirmed, said the *Manchester Guardian*, by a leader in the *Manitoba Free Press*, "perhaps the most influential paper in Canada," which declared that :—

Canada is united behind Mr. Meighen in opposition to the Japanese Treaty, and her people will ratify no Japanese Treaty to which the United States does not give its assent.

The second incident in which Canada quite clearly did not see eye to eye with the British Government arose out of Lloyd George's appeal in September, 1922, to the Dominions for troops for his Turkish War.

According to *The Times* of September 19, 1922, Mr. Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister in the Liberal Government, was reported to have asserted that the communication received from the British Government was not sufficiently informative, and that therefore he had asked for further particulars. In the same issue below this statement, *The Times* printed various messages purporting to prove that the whole Canadian nation were united in urging the Cabinet to take immediate action to support Lloyd George. "There is no hesitation in accepting responsibilities," said the report. "There is a clear recognition of Canada's obligations as a signatory of the League of Nations." However, the very day after these messages were sent, *i.e.*, on September 18, it appeared to be necessary for Mackenzie King to issue an official statement, reported in *The Times*, September 20, 1922, saying that "Parliament must

authorise the dispatch of any contingent:" Apparently to counter-balance the effect of this message it first produced quotations from the French Canadian Press, throwing doubt as to the advisability of responding to Lloyd George's appeal and then contrasted them with the following :—

The English (as opposed to the French-Canadian) Press is alive to the gravity of the situation, and is *almost* unanimous as to the necessity of Canadian recognition of its treaty obligations and practical co-operation in measures essential to the welfare of the Empire (our italics).

The machinations of *The Times* were only equalled by those of the British Government itself. According to statements made in the Canadian House of Commons by the Prime Minister on February 1, the Canadian Government first heard of the appeal by Lloyd George from the Canadian papers. Further, when the dispatch arrived, the Canadian Government, having asked the opinion of the British Government as to the desirability of summoning Parliament, received the reply that the British Government "saw no necessity" to do so. Finally Mackenzie King stated that the Canadian Government had :—

repeatedly asked the British Government if it might be at liberty to bring down the correspondence (*i.e.*, to publish it). The British had, in the most clear and emphatic way, indicated its wish that the correspondence should not be laid before Parliament.

E. D. Morel, on questioning the British Government in the House of Commons as to the position in reference to this statement, was told that "it had been thought advisable, in the public interest, not to publish the text of these communications, many of which were of a secret and confidential nature."

THE SIGNING OF THE HALIBUT FISHERIES TREATY

The most recent, and in some respects the most significant, evidence of the strained relations existing between the Canadian ruling bourgeoisie and the British imperial power has been provided by the Canadian signature of a seemingly inoffensive Treaty with the United States for the regulation of the halibut fisheries on the Pacific coast. The Canadian Government maintained, to the hardly-veiled disapproval and alarm of the British Government, that owing to the recognition of Canada's attainment to full nation-

hood in the separate signature which she appended to the Versailles Treaty, there was no need for Sir Auckland Geddes, the British Ambassador at Washington, to sign the Treaty as well as the Canadian Government's representative, Mr. Lapointe, the Minister of Marine Fisheries.

The fisheries on the Pacific coast had long been a source of controversy between Canada and the United States. Territorial as well as commercial questions had been involved owing to the serrated nature of the coast of British Columbia and to the existence of the American State of Alaska to the north. Consequently in this case the British Government maintained that the proposed Treaty was of a political nature, and therefore necessitated the direct adherence of the British Government through their American Ambassador as well as the adherence of the Canadian Government. The latter, however, considered that as the points to be settled directly concerned Canada alone, the signature of the British Ambassador was unnecessary.

The controversy arose in the following manner, according to correspondence which was published on March 16 by the Canadian Government, and summarised in the British Press. A draft Treaty, the terms of which had been negotiated by Mackenzie King in a visit which he made to Washington in July, 1922, had been submitted by the American Secretary of State to the Canadian Cabinet. In a telegram from the latter dated January 2, 1923, Sir Auckland Geddes was requested to substitute the words "Dominion of Canada" for "Great Britain" as one of the signatories of the Treaty. After repeated telegrams Sir Auckland Geddes at last replied that he had sent a message to Mr. Hughes, the United States Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs :—

omitting to mention the substitution of the words "Dominion of Canada" for Great Britain.

A few days later Sir Auckland Geddes sent another telegram intimating that he had been instructed by the British Government to sign the Treaty in association with Mr. Lapointe, the Minister chosen by Canada as its representative. Meanwhile the Canadian Government had been endeavouring to obtain full plenipotentiary powers for Mr. Lapointe from the British Government. The latter delayed, but these powers eventually were given.

But when the Canadian Government received the above quoted telegram from Sir Auckland Geddes, they immediately sent off a cable intimating that Mr. Lapointe's signature was considered sufficient ; that in view of Sir Auckland Geddes's message evidently the British Government assumed that the action he was instructed to take was their wish. "The view of my Ministers, however," the message concluded, "is that the Treaty being one of concern only to Canada and the United States, and not affecting in particular any Imperial interest, the signature of the Canadian Minister should be sufficient." On this the British Government capitulated, and Mr. Lapointe signed the Treaty on March 2 without the assistance of the British Ambassador.

It was not until March 13 that the British Press fully realised what had happened. They appear to have been instigated to action by the extensive comment in both the Canadian and American Press ; in both cases the tendency was to regard this action of the Canadian Government as an entirely new step forward in the constitutional status of the Dominions. The *Chicago Tribune* went so far as to head its story of the events with the following warning to the unity of the British Empire :—

Canada rejects British Domination.

The British capitalist Press at once attempted to argue that the procedure was thoroughly constitutional. Yet most of them were unable entirely to eliminate from their writing the fear that after all the *Chicago Tribune* had correctly summed up the facts of the situation. The very fact that one and all thought it necessary to give such time and space to the question, proved that the question was by no means of such little importance as they tried to prove it to be.

Thus we find *The Times* in a leader of March 13 going into an elaborate argument as to whether Lapointe received his instructions as plenipotentiary directly from the Crown or on the advice of the Ministers of the British Government. Yet the writer cannot but help putting the obvious problem as to what would happen to "the unity of the Commonwealth

if ever the Imperial Government declines to support the enforcement of some treaty concluded by a British Dominion."

It therefore urged that the special Imperial Conference on constitutional relationships between the Dominions and the home government resolved on in 1917 should not be indefinitely delayed.

That the other Dominions had also decided that Canada's action raised fresh problems can be seen from a report of a speech in *The Times* for March 16, delivered in the Australian Parliament by the imperialist-minded Prime Minister, Mr. Bruce.

Canada's decision raises the question whether Great Britain will in future be responsible for the action of one of the Dominions, and the effect of this new development may be far reaching. In any event, the position created is much more serious than appears on the surface, and emphasises the need for an early meeting of the Imperial Conference.

On March 19 Professor B. Keith, in a letter to *The Times*, managed to contribute his share in the endeavour to belittle the consequences of this situation. He emphasised the fact that the Treaty can only be ratified with the full sanction of the Imperial Government. The only innovation is that the formal signature of the British Ambassador has been waived: "these formal signatures have never meant anything of value as the real control is exercised through the issue of powers and ratification and the decision to dispense with it is manifestly wise." Yet even he could not help ending with a final warning:—

That they (the Dominions) should have independence in treaty matters is wholly incompatible, in my opinion, with the maintenance of the British Empire.

As might be expected the *Morning Post* took up the controversy in a much more blatantly imperialist way than *The Times*. In a leading article of March 20 it stated that though the Minister of a Dominion was a properly accredited representative of the Crown, "should he take independent action, in doing so he undoubtedly deprives the Dominion Government of the full weight and authority of the Imperial Government." Canada, it alleged, had taken independent action in this case. This action might be regarded as a precedent: "in which case," the *Morning Post* continued, "we may be allowed to suggest that such a precedent is not to the advantage of Canada." This seemed an obvious threat that if Canada was involved in a war as a consequence of any such action, Great Britain would be released from any obligation to support

her if she, Great Britain, did not think it was to her own interest to do so.

A further complication arose when it became known that the United States Senate had added a stipulation that the Treaty should be applicable to every other part of the British Empire as well as to Canada. This point was quickly seized upon by the Conservative Opposition in Canada and by the Press, both in Canada and England. In the case of the former, Mr. Meighen put a leading question to the Government as to what they intended to do. The Government affirmed that concurrent legislation in the United States and Canada would be passed to deal with the matter. Mr. Meighen then followed up this reply by inquiring if as the British Ambassador was "denied the courtesy of signing the Treaty, His Majesty would do the utmost in his power to prevent infringement, as promised." The *Daily Telegraph*, affirmed by this amendment to the Treaty that "The American Senate has apparently placed Mr. Mackenzie King's administration in a perplexing and embarrassing situation as a result of the first essay in the field of independent diplomacy." The *Telegraph* added that it was expected that the Canadian Government would decline to accept the amendment.

Meanwhile the Conservative Press in Canada had taken up a definitely hostile attitude to the Treaty. The *Toronto Mail and Empire* for instance, put the following rhetorical question:—

Is the document to which Plenipotentiary Lapointe put his name, at Washington, merely a treaty affecting halibut fishery on our Pacific coast, or is it also the withdrawal of Canada from the British Empire.

The *Montreal Gazette* accused the Government of meaning mischief: the Treaty, it alleged, indicates "the desire, if not the purpose, to carry the principle of Dominion autonomy one step further."

The *Times* in England again took up the question and again endeavoured to argue away the matter as merely a slight deviation from accepted formalities; but no doubt the storm that Canada's action had raised, and the interest it had evoked had affected the desire of the *The Times* to belittle the issue; for at the conclusion of its argument it stated:—

The problem may be formal rather than constitutional, but, nevertheless, it holds the seeds of dissension within the British Empire.

On the following day, the 23rd, the *Manchester Guardian* proceeded to join in the endeavour to allay the growing uneasiness. It began by sympathising with those who were worried over the issue; it then proceeded to deal with the position with such masterly sophistry that it was able to reassure the worried Imperialists, such as the Australian Prime Minister, that "the absence of the British Ambassador's signature is no more than the ending of an established custom" or as it put it further on, such an omission "is not likely to prove more than a minor precedent in the broadening out of the Empire into a company of co-operative states with a common centre to which they look for the safeguarding of their interests."

But the situation seemed still to require further "delicate handling," for the *Montreal Star* produced a leading article in which it stated that there had been no constitutional departure in the procedure. "Mr. Lapointe signed as His Majesty's Minister, and if he did not sign 'Imperially,' his signature was not worth the ink with which he wrote it. If the Canadian Government asked for the privilege of signing alone, that fact, if significant at all, is a reflection on the progressiveness of British Ministers in failing to take the initiative. Canada should not have been compelled to ask"

The South African *Cape Times* also produced a long comment on the situation. It seemed amazed at the storm that the action of the Canadian Government had raised.

After the precedent of the signature of the Versailles Treaty, it cannot see any justification for the objections raised. The alarm of the English *Times* it stated, was due to the misconception of the Empire as a body politic.

It is no longer a body politic, but a partnership of States with one monarch, who is advised by his ministers in each of the component States of the partnership. The possibility of conflicting advice being given by ministers in Britain and a Dominion, or in two or more Dominions, exists, but it is a possibility the risks of which can be reduced to a minimum by mutual consultation and forbearance in the interests of the whole partnership. Such risks are almost negligible compared to the risks of an attempt to reassert that the treaty-making power of the Dominions must always be subject to the explicit endorsement of British ministers.

In an attempt to answer these two expressions of opinion, *The Times* once more tried its hand. This time it was eminently reasonable : it emphasised the fact that the "controversy was mainly about constitutional forms," "opinions differ at the moment not on purposes and principles, but on forms." It was only to the form of the conclusion of the Treaty that objection could be raised. For this form was not strictly in accordance with the principle of equal status of all the Dominions and India. For instance, such a Treaty might involve them in an international dispute, or even in war ; if they realised this they would "then desire that this ultimate responsibility should somehow be registered at the moment of its conclusion."

Consequently *The Times* suggested a permanent body of some kind who could sign treaties.

It would be mainly a matter of form. But constitutional terms are seldom quite unimportant. If they are slurred over or dispensed with, the responsibilities they register may too easily be forgotten.

With this article there closed for a moment the controversy as to this Treaty. At any moment it may be revived again, either when Mackenzie King presents the Treaty to be ratified, or when the decision as to whether it can apply to the whole British Empire is reached between Sir Auckland Geddes and the Colonial Office, who are reported to be now in correspondence over this particular matter, or finally not until the meeting of the Imperial Conference itself which has hastily been announced as fixed for October 1 this year.

It seems, however, clear that no permanent body with powers to sign treaties will ever be accepted by Canada. Firstly, because she is opposed, as we have already pointed out above, to any centralised control whatever. Secondly because she would with very great difficulty be persuaded to give up the hardly-won right to have even the modicum of diplomatic status that she is accorded at present. Thirdly, because she had already early in 1920 requested the Imperial Government so to amend the British North America Act (her constitution), as to permit amendments to be made in it by the Canadian Parliament, and not, as at present, only by the British House of Commons. This latter move is all the more significant, when it is remembered that one of the chief

objections that the United States raised to Canada's insistence at the Peace negotiations to the full status of a nation, was owing to this very fact that Canada's constitution was governed by the British North America Act which Canada herself was powerless to amend.

The bourgeoisie, Marx told us, are the architects of their own ruin. More and more this becomes clear seventy-five years after this was demonstrated. The cry of self-determination was a weapon to be used against the Central Empires, with their congeries of small nationalities. But there is no such congeries of nationalities as the British Empire itself.

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FRANCE

Communist Trial

MARCEL CACHIN, Monmousseau, Albert Treint, Semard, and many other leading Communists were arrested by the French Government in January last. They had been instrumental in setting up, at the commencement of the Ruhr Occupation, the Committee of Action against Imperialism and War, which had begun a wide agitation among the masses of French workers. They were accused of "conspiracy against the internal and external safety of the State." The court before which they should nominally have appeared was the Assize Court of the Seine—a jury court; but the French Government, fearing a verdict of acquittal, refrained from bringing the accused to trial. Eventually, it was decided to arraign the accused before the Senate, sitting as a High Court: pending these proceedings, Marcel Cachin and ten others were released on May 7. The Senate assembled to hear the case on May 24. To the consternation of the Poincaré Government, by 148 votes to 104, the Senate refused to proceed with the trial. M. Joussetin, the investigating magistrate, on the case being referred to him on June 13, advised the judicial authorities to drop all proceedings against the accused, with the exception of Vaudeputte, Gabriel Péri, Maurice Laporte, and some others who are specifically accused of "Press offences." It seemed that the Government would accept M. Joussetin's verdict of "no true bill" with the best grace it could muster, when the Attorney-General, acting on the instructions of the Council of Ministers, opposed the verdict. The case must now come before a Grand Jury.

Emil Hoellein, the German Communist deputy, who was arrested in Paris in March and imprisoned, has been released and expelled from France (June 14), after several days' hunger strike during May.

JAPAN

The United Front

ONE of the most significant events in the history of Japanese trade unionism, and, indeed, in the history of the whole working-class movement of Japan, was the attempt made last year to form a united front. It should be remembered that the trade unions of Japan are still in a

very primitive stage of development, split up, localised, and without any strong central body. Under these circumstances, the proposal to form a united front meant nothing less than the creation for the first time of a conscious national working-class movement. The pressure of external events—the world slump, which began in Japan, was still, in 1922, impelling the employers to make still greater attacks on the workers—compelled the proletarian organisations to come together.

From April, 1922, onwards numerous meetings of the arrangement committee made a prelude to a first general conference, held at Osaka on September 30. The delegates present numbered 106, representing fifty-nine trade unions of varying size. Of the delegates, more than sixty represented unions affiliated to Kodo-Sodomé (the General Federation of Labour of Japan), while of the remainder a certain number belonged to Kojo-Kai (the General Federation of Munition and Governmental Workers), and others to the Shinyu-Kai (extreme "left" or syndicalist tendency, opposed to Sodomé).

To unite these dissident elements was not easy, and it proved too great a task for this first conference. The rock on which they split was Article II of the proposed rules, by which power was to be given to the new body to amalgamate rival unions, either locally or nationally, along the lines of organisation by industry. This was not simply a question of structure; the idea behind it was the concentration of the fighting force of Japanese labour. The opposition of the Anarcho-Syndicalists caused a modification of the rule to be put forward, by which it was suggested that rival unions should first federate on the understanding that this would be simply a step towards complete industrial union. This compromise, however, was not accepted, and the conference dissolved without having created the machinery for carrying out the united front. Nevertheless, the mere occurrence of such a conference, though without results, is of great significance, and has had an effect on the working class. Already the workers, in the early months of 1923, have themselves begun to move towards a united front. When the workers themselves are leading, no theoretical dissensions will keep them apart.

Agitation against Reactionary Laws

A great demonstration against three new reactionary laws now being proposed took place on February 11, 1923, at Tokio, Japan, under the auspices of an *ad hoc* federation of trade unions composed of the General Federation of Labour of Japan, the General Federation of Miners of Japan, the General Federation of Land Labourers, the Shinyu-Kai (anarchist trade unions), and many others. More than 5,000 people gathered in the Shibaura Ground, but before any speeches or demonstration could be made the police interfered. A number of prominent fighters were detained, while some were arrested and taken by motor car to the police station. Speeches were made by many militant speakers against the proposed three reactionary laws.

The three reactionary laws are :—

- (1) Law against the Radical-Social Movements.
- (2) Law against Trade Unions. (The object of this Bill is to destroy all existing trade unions except the trade unions which are convenient to the Government.)

- (3) Conciliation of small tenant disputes. (This Bill is very oppressive to the small tenant.)

After several speeches had been delivered, the people formed a procession and marched through the main streets, finally arriving at Fukagawa Park, when the demonstrators came into conflict with the police. At the park there were more speeches, after which the crowds dispersed. In all, more than 150 people were arrested by the police.

Another similar disturbance, organised under the auspices of the Tokio Federation of Engineering Trade Unions, took place on the same day.

This demonstration took place in Yokoamicho Military Munition Factory Ground, where more than 3,000 people gathered. Speeches were made and the crowds marched through the main streets to Kameido Temple Park, where the demonstration broke up. Many people were arrested here too.

Yet another demonstration occurred at Osaka, under the auspices of the Osaka Federation of Kodo-Sodomé, in Nakanoshima Park. This procession consisted chiefly of members of the Kojo-Kai (National Federation of Munition Workers), the Federation of Korean Labour, the Women's Labour Union, and many other unions. Speeches were made by militant speakers. The procession, 4,000 strong, marched the main streets of Osaka until they came to the entrance of Tennoji Park. At the park gates a number of policemen gathered at the head of the procession and barred the way. Bloody conflicts with the workers occurred, especially with the Korean labourers, of whom about 200 were arrested and taken to a police station near the park. The police station was stormed by the workers. A few of the arrested men were released, and after returning to the park the demonstration broke up.

Similar disturbances occurred all over Japan on the same day, accompanied by violence and bloodshed.

SWEDEN

Great Lock-Out Ending

THE great lock-out of workers in the forest industries, paper-making, saw mills, and iron smelting, which began on February 1, has not yet completely ended, but the more important unions are now back at work.

Agreement was reached in the paper-making industry on June 6. This part of the dispute, affecting 16,000 workers, ended in a victory for the men. Wages are raised by about 3 per cent. over the 1922 average, and the agreement is retrospective to November 1, 1922. The agreement holds good until the end of 1924.

The timber workers signed on February 20 an agreement that is to a large extent unfavourable to the workers, of whom 15,500 were involved. Strong opposition to the agreement has developed among the forestry workers, and men whose work is connected with floating the logs down the rivers are still locked out.

The dispute in the saw mills came to an end at the beginning of April. Wages are stabilised at the level prevailing before the lock-out, but payments for work during holidays are reduced by 20 per cent.

The fight in the iron works still continues. About 20,000 workers in forty-seven enterprises are affected, and the deadlock is complete. The workers are determined to hold out. The iron masters are beginning to realise that they have made a mistake ; the result of the lock-out is that Sweden is importing iron from England and other countries, the demands of the electrical industry being particularly large.

Other Disputes

Since the beginning of 1923 there has been an increase in the number of small disputes, many of which are still going on. One of the most important of these was the strike at Gothenburg docks, involving 1,500 workers and lasting from February 15 to May 22. It had a negative result, but wages were not reduced. A lock-out in the building materials industry affecting 5,000 men ended on April 6, also on the *status quo*, which in this case represents a fall in wages of 45 per cent. since 1920.

General

The membership of the central organisation of the trade unions decreased during 1922 from 300,000 to 293,000. The number of unemployed at the end of March, 1923, was 43,400, a decrease of 5,800 on the February figures.

The Branting Government fell during April as a result of its failure to produce a policy on unemployment and relief satisfactory to the bourgeoisie. The new government, formed on April 14, is not in a very strong position, and functions only as a government of administrators. The Premier, Tryggar, is one of the directors of the Iggesund Company, a big timber and saw mill firm.

On May 3 Parliament prolonged the operation of the law on the eight-hours day for three years. The Premier is its bitterest enemy, and yet is forced to supervise its operations.

BOOK REVIEWS

WORKERS' REPUBLIC OR SOCIALIST EXPERIMENT?

The Russian Revolution. By R. Page Arnot. (Labour Research Department. (Syllabus No. 6.) 6d.)

The Soviet Constitution. Edited by Andrew Rothstein. (Labour Publishing Co. 2s. 6d.)

Bolshevism in Retreat. By Michael Farbman. (Collins. 15s.)

LATE in the summer of 1917 a London paper gravely warned the Russian Government that if they continued to accept "the dictation of a mere public meeting" in foreign affairs the Allies could not possibly reach any agreement with them. The mere meeting referred to was a session of the Petrograd Soviet.

Outside Russia, the great change that came in November, 1917, has been treated from many points of view, and Western Socialism has argued and fought and puzzled more over the question of how to regard the Russian revolution than over any other. While the contemptuous attitude of "a mere public meeting" still persists in the diplomacy of Lord Curzon, there has grown up amongst the intellectual adherents of the Labour and Socialist Parties of the West a rather illogical conception of the revolution—especially of its present phase—that deserves a word of analysis. The Russian revolution is treated as an unhappy product of Tsarist oppression, for which allowances must be made. The Labour Party's attitude during the recent Anglo-Russian crisis seems to have been: "We cannot defend the Russian revolution or any of the acts of the Russian Government. But you really ought not to attack Russia, you know." Speakers carried on their campaign on the line that there was something to be said for revolutions and even for Soviets in Russia, and that the Russian Government had made certain efforts towards a socialist policy, although their rashness and lack of constitutional training had led them into blunders. These very prevalent attitudes spring directly from middle-class conceptions of the revolution.

How far can a clear view of the Russian workers' rising in 1917, and of subsequent events, be gained from the three books under review?

Page Arnot's book is an achievement. He has compressed into a few thousand words of narrative a history of the vastest political change that has ever occurred. He traces the forces that shaped the Russia of 1917 from the ninth century to the murder of Rasputin; the March revolution, the growth in power of the soviets, the episodes of Kerensky and of Korniloff, are sketched in three pages—and each page is a summary that makes it possible to read the polemics and propaganda of the time without the feeling, "What is it all about?" The chapter on the November revolution gives a key to the epic of John Reed's "Ten Days," and to a multitude of other books that have appeared since 1917.

But the thing that distinguishes this booklet from a simple syllabus that is intended to help a student's reading is the chapter headed "Cronstadt." This summary of the transition to the "new economic policy" gives a clear

account of the reasons that led the Russian Communist Party to reverse their previous policy in industry and agriculture—a reversal that was in itself a victory almost equal in importance to the seizure of power.

The new economic policy, once the fundamental facts about Russia are grasped, falls into its place as part of a natural development of the revolution—in the conditions of economic collapse and foreign capitalist hostility that dominated the Russian situation in 1921. But in order to get straight the fundamental facts of the revolution, one thing has to be made plain beyond any doubt: What is the Soviet “system”?

If you ask a Russian Communist to explain some point in the “Soviet system,” he will reply that it is not a system at all. He will speak of the “Soviet power.” This is universal in Russia. The organ of the People’s Commissariat for Home Affairs is called *Vlast Sovietov* (“The Soviet Power”). A pamphlet on local government will be headed: “The Soviet Power in the Provinces.” And this phrase alone shows how false to facts are the arguments of Liberal pro-Russians who talk of the Soviet system as a “more democratic system of representative government than the parliamentary.” On paper this may or may not be true—a question for the pedants of political science to play with. In actual life the working of the Soviets and of a capitalist parliament show a sharper difference than any arising out of differences of degree of democracy.

Page Arnot stresses the flexibility of the Soviets, enabling them “to embody the will of the workers in a rapidly changing situation.” But the Soviets are more than organs of expression or even of power. They are instruments of *mobilisation*, and have been since they were first formed. They form the machinery by which the great party leading the Russian workers has brought every section of the masses, not merely to express their views or to fight for and maintain power, but to the actual work of realising in life all aspects of a working-class policy within their reach.

Russia is a country in which the workers are in power—not a State in which socialist experiments are being carried out or theories of democracy tested. With this one fact in mind it is possible to gain much from Page Arnot’s book, from *The Soviet Constitution*, and even from Mr. Farbman’s volume, large portions of which have already appeared as articles in the *Observer*.

The Soviet Constitution contains a definitive translation of the fundamental law of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic—“a constitution for the present period of transition.” These pages—the product not of political theory, but of the actual experience of twelve months’ working of the Soviets, as the editor points out—will always rank high among the greatest documents of world history. After the “Declaration of Rights of the Labouring and Exploited Masses” comes a statement of general principles beginning:—

The principal object of the Constitution . . . consists in the establishment (in the form of a strong Soviet Government) of the dictatorship of the urban and rural workers, combined with the poorer peasantry, to secure the complete suppression of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, and the establishment of socialism, under which neither class divisions nor State coercion arising therefrom will any longer exist.

These are words that have a meaning—a meaning that Western socialists anxious to “defend Russia” have to tone down or slur over. It is a reality; and it is unpleasant to the bourgeoisie, to whom Western Socialism largely addresses itself in an appeal for intellectual recognition or moral sympathy.

In addition to the actual text of the Constitution, the volume contains all modifications to the Constitution enacted up to and including the amalgamation of the separate federal republics into a single union, recently decreed and not yet completed. The last fifty pages consist of a series of short but detailed articles on the powers and functions of the various bodies that govern Russia. The editor says of these that they—

illustrate the broad principle running through the whole of the Government machinery built up by the Russian proletariat—namely, that the administrative machinery exists, not for the purpose of satisfying pedants or bureaucrats, but in order to minister to the daily requirements of the masses, whose life and development it reflects.

This seems an understatement; the administrative machinery of the Soviet Republic cannot be disassociated from the “representative,” and both are means evolved by the masses to enable them to minister to their own needs—and to see that no other political force hinders them from doing so. But the value of the booklet as a whole, for any clear realisation of a workers’ State in being—though labouring under immense difficulties—cannot be over-estimated.

We can discover no good excuse for dealing at length with Mr. Farbman’s essays in eclectic journalism. His book is a curious mixture. With a real and wide knowledge of the superficial aspects of the revolution, and some appreciation of the forces that lie beneath, he combines an amazing capacity for inventing motives and deducing utterly unreal conclusions. Thus he is obsessed by the idea that the Communist Party has become imbued with Russian nationalism and with “the militarist mentality.” Practically no instances of either tendency are given, except for a purely ridiculous story about Trotsky sending an armoured train “to suppress a detachment of Red Guards” the moment they “refused to submit to the new Bolshevik discipline.” The value of the book lies in the sidelights it gives, especially those that show Lenin’s qualities of leadership in high relief. But full value from Mr. Farbman’s astounding analysis of what he calls the “Russian Thermidor” can only be gained by those gifted with a sense of irony and an appreciation of the ludicrous.

T. L.

ANOTHER HIRELING

The Romance of Trade. By A. W. Kirkaldy, M.A., B.Litt. (H. B. Saxton, King Street, Nottingham. Cloth, 3s. 6d.; paper, 2s. 6d. net.)

WITH such a title, the book might be expected to be bright and chatty; the reader will not be disappointed. It is full of good bits, and the breathless rush from primitive man to Lord Leverhulme is punctuated with unconscious humour. Thus we read, on page 19, that the Indian philosophers held that “only a very wicked person would have

anything to do with usury or profit out of the loan of money." Gradually, however, the Jews and Romans modified their opposition to usury, and (page 21) "we say interest instead of usury at the present time." The value of organising ability is illustrated (p. 107): "Take the King and his ministers, judges, the necessary officials of State, they all . . . have assisted in a system of government under which we get security. Take away that system of government and there would be chaos." Therefore, Kirkaldy argues, the King and all his horses and men are productive labourers.

But you must not think Kirkaldy is unsympathetic: "One has the greatest sympathy with those whose lot is cast in slums."

With a deft touch he disproves the labour theory of value: for are not the same things differently priced? Marx and all his works and pomps are therefore dismissed: "We must also realise the utter wickedness of class warfare as taught by Marx and those who follow him. It is based on a mistake, and Marx must have known it before he died."

Curiously enough, the book seems to have value to some people: Sir George B. Hunter, K.B.E., writes a foreword, and Sir John Turney, Kt., "most generously bore the expense of an edition of 2,000 copies."

May they not come our way!

C. J. H

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Vom Menschewismus zum Kommunismus. By A. Martynow. Foreword by Karl Radek. (Published in Germany for the Comintern by Carl Hoym. Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

Ascent of Man. By Samuel W. Ball. (Central School of Practical Psychology, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A. 25c.)

Fourth Congress of the Communist International: Abridged Report of Meetings held at Petrograd and Moscow, November 7-December 3, 1922. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1s. 6d.)

Resolutions and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1s.)

Canada To-day, 1923. (Canada Newspaper Co. Ltd. 2s. 6d.)

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NOTES of the MONTH

*Imperialist Common Sense—The Labour Party—Leaders and Workers
—The Conference—Communist Exclusion—Pre-requisites
of Power—Coalition in Fact—Coalition in
Form—Inevitability*

THE development of the working-class movement in any one country cannot be considered apart from the international position of the workers and of capitalism. The approach of British Labour towards power, in particular, can only be seen in the right perspective when it is linked up with the development of the other forces that are shaping the rapid changes of the whole post-war world. British capitalism has possessions and interests in every corner of the world: the trade of South America, India, or Asia Minor matters just as much to the City as the trade of Hull or Manchester. And the trade of Europe matters vitally. This immediate dependence of British capitalism on the economic condition of the world as a whole has its reflection within the British Labour Movement: the Labour Party is so much under the influence of capitalist ideas that it cannot but be affected by the needs of commercial imperialism. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald says that "the Labour Party has asked for a British policy inspired by economic and political common sense." The economic and political common sense of a capitalist society is different from that of a working-class society—a fact well illustrated by the article in the *New Leader* from which this quotation is taken. For Mr. MacDonald's idea of political common sense is that British policy should be one of open antagonism to France, and that if "France gets angry" and threatens war, "we must still have courage." This would seem common sense to most armament manufacturers and to many industrial employers who remember war-time profits. But so far from being common sense from the viewpoint of a socialist historian of the future, it would seem to him strong evidence in favour of a verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind."

WHETHER that verdict is to be passed on the British Labour Party only, or on the British working class, or on all the workers of Central and Western Europe, will be determined within the next few years. It will be determined by the struggle of the working class to acquire consciousness of itself and of its tasks, and to achieve its first main task: the conquest of power. And it is with regard to this struggle that the Labour Party has to be analysed. Is it—whatever its faults—an instrument of the workers in this struggle? Is it an institution which fits a certain phase in the development of the workers as they move towards that struggle? Or is it a body which, though nominally united, contains elements so different and antagonistic that what is true of one section is untrue of the others?

THERE are plenty of very distinct and separable elements within the Labour Party. But the one clear and permanent cleavage, which has been widening steadily for the last three years, is that between the leaders of the party and the rank and file. The party derives its strength, actual and potential, from a revolt of the working class against capitalism and imperialism, the workers' gradual movement towards consciousness both of their power and of their needs. But its leaders have no stable political outlook or clear conception of social theory. They know nothing of the realities of capitalism, and they refuse to face facts. They refuse even to consider the inevitable processes of the class struggle, which must be undergone if Socialism is to be achieved. Because of this the Labour Party is continually responsive to middle-class criticism, and is swayed by it. The party is more and more tending to accept, tacitly or implicitly, those pre-requisites for a party aspiring to power which capitalist opinion considers fundamental. Meanwhile the rank and file of the party have lost, not merely control over, but even touch with, their leaders and spokesmen in Parliament.

AT the Labour Party Conference the "previous question" was moved whenever a controversial point came up on which the Executive might be subjected to damaging criticism, or the party committed to definitely working-class policy.

This closure was carried, every time, by the block vote of the great unions. The majority was almost always the same: 2,800,000 votes against a few hundred thousand. *The Times*, in a leading article praising the temper of the conference, says: "Awkward and difficult questions did arise. Impetuous individuals were occasionally a menace to the harmony of the proceedings. Extremists had succeeded in placing on the agenda proposals the adoption of which would have done the party irretrievable harm in the opinion of the country. Skilful piloting took the conference past many points of danger." The Labour Party Conference was thus made safe for opportunism: and in perspective it will be found that the London Conference marks a definite stage in the party's progress towards the tacit acceptance of a policy satisfying all the most important requirements of British capitalism.

THIS acceptance of the things that must be accepted, by an "alternative Government" which will commend itself to the middle classes, will lead the Labour Party into power. It will reach power not by its strength but by its weakness. And those who reach power will not be the Labour Party as a whole, certainly not the rank and file whose delegates were closed out at the Party Conference; it will be the politicians and ex-Liberal moderates of the Party who will act in the name of Labour. It is these people who are now manœuvring Labour into such a position that the rank and file have no say in policy. And they are manœuvring successfully. At only one point have they failed: the exclusion of the Communists from the Labour Party has not been secured. Affiliation of the Communist Party was turned down by the usual block-vote majority; the Labour Whip was refused to Mr. Newbold. But the famous "Edinburgh amendment" of last year has been found unworkable. Policy for the coming year, towards the Communists, will be based on an unwilling tolerance—a possibility foretold in these Notes last month. But in every other way the party has moved steadily towards accepting the conditions laid down not only by capitalist opinion but inherent in the structure of capitalism—conditions that must be fulfilled before a capitalist party can reach power.

A THOROUGH-GOING acceptance of imperialism is the first and most important of these conditions. The possibilities of revolution in Central Europe and of a revolt of the colonial countries dictate the policies of British imperialism abroad—which are at least as important as the policies adopted to divide and withhold the workers at home. The second main pre-requisite for power is just this ability to divide and hold back the workers, in which the leaders of the Labour Party have already shown their skill, particularly with regard to mediation in industrial disputes. They are doing their best to convince capitalist opinion that their party already has all the essential qualities to ensure safe and smooth progress when it reaches power; that it is not a class party; that its opposition to armaments will never be translated into action; that it is ready to pursue the policy of Mr. Baldwin and Lord Curzon in Europe. It is this acceptance of (or more truly insistence upon) a forward policy in Europe that marks most clearly how far the Labour Party has gone towards active coalition with the bourgeoisie.

MR. GARVIN says, with regard to the reception of the Prime Minister's new move on the Ruhr question, that we have practically returned to coalition government. The *Daily Herald* boasts that Mr. Baldwin may have to rely on Labour votes in order to carry through his foreign policy in the future. Mr. MacDonald writes that the "Government has set its foot upon the road which we have indicated. Naturally we look forward with some expectation to the development of a policy which in its inspiration is apparently the same as ours." And yet this new policy is not one of disarmament or of real reconstruction. It is one of direct preparation for war. The *Daily Herald* is practically the only paper in Britain which has definitely demanded severe pressure on France "to pay us the immense sums owing to us." This is far in advance of the Cabinet's cautious progress towards a new 1914. It is more nakedly imperialist than Lord Curzon's policy, which seems to have been opposed within the Cabinet by those who know the realities of the military situation. The policy of Messrs. Baldwin and MacDonald has met with only two

arguments on the capitalist side: the National Liberals have said that it does not go far enough or rapidly enough towards blank antagonism to France, while the *Morning Post* has argued that Britain cannot face the consequences of antagonising France, because Britain lacks the military power to meet the consequences of such a policy !

FURTHER than this the leaders of the Labour Party can scarcely go in their efforts to serve the "community." But they have already realised that the "community" does not yet fully trust them. That is why they are preparing for a coalition with the remnants of middle-class Radicalism that still remain outside their party. It looks as if the *Daily Herald* is to be allowed to die a lingering death, while the *Daily News*—which already has Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as a permanent contributor—will open its columns to selected Labour leaders. After all, when Mr. Snowden appears as the leader of an attack on the Soviet Government, demanding action which even Lord Curzon now feels impossible, and it is left to Commander Kenworthy to defend the Workers' Republic, what distinction need be drawn between Labour and Liberalism? There are internal differences in the bloc formed by these two parties, but these cut across the party boundaries and are not of great moment—to the politicians who aspire to leadership and a career in the Cabinet.

THE Labour Party Conference decided against a resolution, put forward by the I.L.P., calling for a refusal to vote military and naval estimates. None of the leaders of the Labour Party, who are also members of the I.L.P., spoke on this resolution. It was put forward under rank-and-file pressure; its failure shows that the rank and file of the I.L.P. are as powerless against the dead weight of their party leadership as the local Labour parties within the larger body. And this refusal to oppose the piling up of armaments, the maintenance of all the weapons of imperialism, is not simply the sign of a political heresy in a party that calls itself Socialist—it is a

threat to the workers so definite, urgent, and immediate that no worker who has known war can feel safe once the bare fact of this refusal is realised. It is a sign that in all probability Labour's first Government will not only be a coalition; it will be a Government of "national defence." If that comes about, the progress of Western Europe will be rapid, but the direction of its progress will be incomprehensible to Mr. Webb. It is hard for the pilots of bombing aeroplanes to appreciate the "inevitability of gradualness."

T. L.

FASCISM

By CLARA ZETKIN

IN Fascism, the proletariat is confronted by an extraordinarily dangerous enemy. Fascism is the concentrated expression of the general offensive undertaken by the world bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Its overthrow is therefore an absolute necessity, nay, it is even a question of the every-day existence and of the bread and butter of every ordinary worker. On these grounds the whole of the proletariat must concentrate on the fight against Fascism. It will be much easier for us to defeat Fascism if we clearly and distinctly study its nature. Hitherto there have been extremely vague ideas upon this subject not only among the large masses of the workers, but even among the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat and the Communists. Hitherto Fascism has been put on a level with the White Terror of Horthy in Hungary. Although the methods of both are similar, in essence they are different. The Horthy Terror was established after the victorious, although shortlived, revolution of the proletariat had been suppressed, and was the expression of vengeance of the bourgeoisie. The ringleaders of the White Terror were a quite small clique of former officers. Fascism, on the contrary, viewed objectively, is not the revenge of the bourgeoisie in retaliation for proletarian aggression against the bourgeoisie, but it is a punishment of the proletariat for failing to carry on the revolution begun in Russia. The Fascist leaders are not a small and exclusive caste ; they extend deeply into wide elements of the population.

We have to overcome Fascism not only militarily, but also politically and ideologically. The reformists even to-day consider Fascism to be nothing else but naked violence, the reaction against the violence begun by the proletariat. To the reformists the Russian Revolution amounts to the same thing as Mother Eve's biting into the apple in the Garden of Eden. The reformists trace Fascism back to the Russian Revolution and its consequences. Nothing else was meant by Otto Bauer at the Unity Congress at Hamburg, when he declared that a great share of the blame for Fascism rests on the Communists, who had weakened the force

of the proletariat by continual splits. In saying this he entirely ignored the fact that the German Independents had made their split long before the demoralising example was given by the Russian Revolution. Contrary to his own views, Bauer, at Hamburg, had to draw the conclusion that the organised violence of Fascism must be met by forming defence organisations of the proletariat, because no appeal to democracy can avail against direct violence. At any rate, he went on to explain that he did not mean such weapons as insurrection or a general strike which did not always lead to success. What he meant was the co-ordination of parliamentary action with mass action. What was to be the nature of these actions Otto Bauer did not say, but this is the very point of the question. The only weapon recommended by Bauer for the fight against Fascism was the establishment of an International Bureau of Information on world reaction. The distinguishing feature of this new-old International is its faith in the power and permanence of bourgeois domination, and its mistrust and cowardice towards the proletariat as the strongest factor of the world revolution. They are of the opinion that against the invulnerable force of the bourgeoisie the proletariat can do nothing else but act with moderation and refrain from teasing the tiger of the bourgeoisie. Fascism, with all its forcefulness in the prosecution of its violent deeds, is indeed nothing else but the expression of the disintegration and decay of capitalist economy, and the symptom of the dissolution of the bourgeois State. This is one of its roots. Symptoms of this decay of capitalism were observed even before the war. The war has shattered capitalist economy to its foundation, resulting not only in the colossal impoverishment of the proletariat, but also in deep misery for the petty bourgeoisie, the small peasantry and the intellectuals. All these elements had been promised that the war would bring about an amelioration of their material conditions. But the very opposite has happened. Large numbers of the former middle classes have become proletarians, having entirely lost their economic security. Their ranks were joined by large masses of ex-officers, who are now unemployed. It was among these elements that Fascism recruited quite a considerable contingent. The manner of its composition is also the reason why Fascism in some countries is of an outspoken, monarchist character.

The second root of Fascism lies in the retarding of the world revolution by the treacherous attitude of the reformist leaders. Large numbers of the petty bourgeoisie, including even the middle classes, had discarded their war-time psychology for a certain sympathy with reformist socialism, hoping that the latter would bring about a reformation of society along democratic lines. They were disappointed in their hopes. They can now see that the reformist leaders are in benevolent accord with the bourgeoisie, and the worst of it is that these masses have now lost their faith not only in the reformist leaders, but in socialism as a whole. These masses of disappointed socialist sympathisers are joined by large circles of the proletariat, of workers who have given up their faith not only in socialism, but also in their own class. Fascism has become a sort of refuge for the politically shelterless. In fairness it ought to be said that the Communists, too—except the Russians—bear part of the blame for the desertion of these elements to the Fascist ranks, because our actions at times failed to stir the masses profoundly enough. The obvious aim of the Fascists, when gaining support among the various elements of society, must have been, as a matter of course, to try and bridge over the class antagonism in the ranks of their own adherents, and the so-called authoritative State was to serve as a means to this end. Fascism now embraces such elements which may become very dangerous to the bourgeois order. Nevertheless, thus far these elements have been invariably overcome by the reactionary elements.

The bourgeoisie had seen the situation clearly from the start. The bourgeoisie wants to reconstruct capitalist economy. Under the present circumstances reconstruction of bourgeois class domination can be brought about only at the cost of increased exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie is quite aware that the soft-speaking reformist socialists are fast losing their hold on the proletariat, and that there will be nothing for the bourgeoisie but to resort to violence against the proletariat. But the means of violence of the bourgeois States are beginning to fail. They therefore need a new organisation of violence, and this is offered to them by the hodge-podge conglomeration of Fascism. For this reason the bourgeoisie offers all the force at its command in the service of Fascism. Fascism has diverse

characteristics in different countries. Nevertheless it has two distinguishing features in all countries, namely, the pretence of a revolutionary programme, which is cleverly adapted to the interests and demands of the large masses, and, on the other hand, the application of the most brutal violence. The classic instance is Italian Fascism. Industrial capital in Italy was not strong enough to reconstruct the ruined economy. It was not expected that the State would intervene to increase the power and the material possibilities of the industrial capital of Northern Italy. The State was giving all its attention to agrarian capital and to petty financial capital. The heavy industries, which had been artificially boosted during the war, collapsed when the war was over, and a wave of unprecedented unemployment set in. The pledges given to the soldiers could not be redeemed. All these circumstances created an extreme revolutionary situation. This revolutionary situation resulted, in the summer of 1920, in the occupation of the factories. Upon that occasion it was shown that the maturity of the revolution makes its first appearance among a small minority of the proletariat. The occupation of the factories was therefore bound to end in a tremendous defeat instead of becoming the starting point for revolutionary development. The reformist leaders of the trade unions acted the part of ignominious traitors, but at the same time it was shown that the proletariat possessed neither the will nor the power to march on towards revolution. Notwithstanding the reformist influence, there were forces at work among the proletariat which could become inconvenient to the bourgeoisie. The municipal elections, in which the social democrats gained a third of all the councils, were a signal of alarm to the bourgeoisie, who immediately started to seek for a force which could combat the revolutionary proletariat. It was just at that time that Mussolini had gained some importance with Fascismo. After the defeat of the proletariat in the occupation of the factories, the number of the Fascisti was over 1,000 and great masses of the proletariat joined the Mussolini organisation. On the other hand, large masses of the proletariat had fallen into a state of indifference. The cause of the first success of the Fascisti was that it made its start with a revolutionary gesture. Its pretended aim was to fight to retain the revolutionary conquests of the revolutionary war, and for this

reason they demanded a strong State which would be able to protect these revolutionary fruits of victory against the hostile interests of the various classes of society represented by the "old State." Its slogan was directed against all the exploiters, and hence also against the bourgeoisie. Fascism at that time was so radical that it even demanded the execution of Giolitti and the dethronement of the Italian dynasty. But Giolitti carefully refrained from using violence against Fascism, which seemed to him to be the lesser evil. To satisfy these Fascist clamours he dissolved Parliament. At that time Mussolini was still pretending to be a republican, and in an interview he declared that the Fascist faction could not participate at the opening of the Italian parliament because of the monarchist ceremony accompanying it. These utterances provoked a crisis in the Fascist Movement, which had been established as a party by a merger of the Mussolini adherents and the representatives of the monarchist organisation, and the executive of the new party was made up of an even number of members from both factions. The Fascist Party created a double-edged weapon for the corruption and terrorisation of the working class. For the corruption of the working class the Fascist Trade Unions were created, the so-called corporations in which workers and employers were united. To terrorise the working class, the Fascist Party created the militant squads which had grown out of the punitive expeditions. Here it must be emphasised again that the tremendous treason of the Italian reformists during the general strike, which was the cause of the terrible defeat of the Italian proletariat, had given direct encouragement to the Fascists to capture the State. On the other hand, the mistakes of the Communist Party consisted in their regarding Fascism as merely a militarist and terrorist movement without any profound social basis.

Let us now examine what Fascism has done since the conquest of power for the fulfilment of its intended revolutionary programme, for the realisation of its promise to create a State without class. Fascism held out the promise of a new and better electoral law and of equal suffrage for women. The new suffrage law of Mussolini is in reality the worst restriction of the suffrage law to favour the Fascist Movement. According to this law, two-thirds of all the seats must be given to the strongest party, and all the other parties

together shall hold only one-third of the seats. Women's franchise has been nearly entirely eliminated. The right to vote is given only to a small group of propertied women and the so-called "war-distinguished" women. There is no longer any mention made of the promise of the economic parliament and National Assembly, nor of the abolition of the Senate which had been pledged so solemnly by the Fascists.

The same can be said about the pledges made in the social sphere. The Fascists had inscribed on their programme the eight-hour day, but the bill introduced by them provides so many exceptions that there is to be no eight-hour day in Italy. Nothing came also of the promised guarantee of wages. The destruction of the trade unions has enabled the employers to effect wage reductions of 20 to 30 per cent., and in some cases of even 50 to 60 per cent. Fascism had promised old age and invalid insurance. In practice the Fascist Government, for the sake of economy, has struck off the miserable 50,000,000 lire which had been set aside for this purpose in the budget. The workers were promised the right of technical participation in the administration of the factories. To-day there is a law in Italy which proscribes the factory councils completely. The State enterprises are playing into the hands of private capital. The Fascist programme had contained a provision for a progressive income tax on capital, which was to some extent to act as a form of expropriation. In fact the opposite was done. Various taxes on luxuries were abolished, such as the automobile tax, for the pretended reason that it would restrict national production. The indirect taxes were increased for the reason that this would curtail the home consumption and thus improve the possibilities for export. The Fascist Government also abrogated the law for the compulsory registration of transfers of securities, thus reintroducing the system of bearer-bonds and opening the door wide to the tax-evader. The schools were handed over to the clergy. Before capturing the State, Mussolini demanded a commission to inquire into war profits, of which 85 per cent. were to be restored to the State. When this commission had become uncomfortable for his financial backers, the heavy industrialists, he ordered that the commission should only submit a report to him, and whoever published any of the things that transpired in

that commission would be punished with six months' imprisonment. Also in military matters Fascism failed to keep its promises. The army was promised to be restricted to territorial defence. In reality, the term of service for the standing army was increased from eight months to eighteen, which meant the increase of the armed forces from 250,000 to 350,000. The Royal Guards were abolished because they were too democratic to suit Mussolini. On the other hand, the carabinieri were increased from 65,000 to 90,000, and all the police troops were doubled. The Fascist organisations were transformed into a kind of national militia, which by latest accounts have now reached the number of 500,000. But the social differences have introduced an element of political contrast in the militia, which must lead to the eventual collapse of Fascism.

When we compare the Fascist programme with its fulfilment we can foresee already to-day the complete ideological collapse of Fascism in Italy. Political bankruptcy must inevitably follow in the wake of this ideological bankruptcy. Fascism is unable to keep together the forces which helped it to get into power. A clash of interests in many forms is already making itself felt. Fascism has not yet succeeded in making the old bureaucracy subservient to it. In the army there is also friction between the old officers and the new Fascist leaders. The differences between the various political parties are growing. Resistance against Fascism is increasing throughout the country. Class antagonism begins to permeate even the ranks of the Fascists. The Fascists are unable to keep the promises which they made to the workers and to the Fascist Trade Unions. Wage reductions and dismissals of workers are the order of the day. Thus it happens that the first protest against the Fascist trade union movement came from the ranks of the Fascists themselves. The workers will very soon come back to their class interest and class duty. We must not look upon Fascism as a united force capable of repelling our attack. It is rather a formation, which comprises many antagonistic elements, and will be disintegrated from within. But it would be dangerous to assume that the ideological and political disintegration of Fascism in Italy would be immediately followed by military disintegration. On the contrary, we must be prepared for Fascism

to endeavour to keep alive by terrorist methods. Therefore, the revolutionary Italian workers must be prepared for further serious struggles. It would be a great calamity if we were satisfied with the rôle of spectators of this process of disintegration. It is our duty to hasten this process with all the means at our disposal. This is not only the duty of the Italian proletariat, but also the duty of the German proletariat in the face of German Fascism.

After Italy, Fascism is strongest in Germany. As a consequence of the result of the war and of the failure of the revolution, the capitalist economy of Germany is weak, and in no other country is the contrast between the objective ripeness for revolution and the subjective unpreparedness of the working class as great as just now in Germany. In no other country have the reformists so ignominiously failed as in Germany. Their failure is more criminal than the failure of any other party in the old International, because it is they who should have conducted the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat with utterly different means in the country where the working-class organisations are older and better organised than anywhere else.

I am firmly convinced that neither the Peace Treaties nor the occupation of the Ruhr have given such a fillip to Fascism in Germany as the seizure of power by Mussolini. This has encouraged the German Fascists. The collapse of Fascism in Italy would greatly discourage the Fascists in Germany. We must not overlook one thing: the prerequisite for the overthrow of Fascism abroad is the overthrow of Fascism in every single country by the proletariat of these countries. It behoves us to overcome Fascism ideologically and politically. This imposes enormous tasks on us. We must realise that Fascism is a movement of the disappointed and of those whose existence is ruined. Therefore, we must endeavour either to win over or to neutralise those wide masses who are still in the Fascist camp. I wish to emphasise the importance of our realising that we must struggle ideologically for the possession of the soul of these masses. We must realise that they are not only trying to escape from their present tribulations, but that they are longing for a new philosophy. We must come out of the narrow limits of our present activity. The Third International is, in contradistinction to the old International, an International of all races without any

distinctions whatever. The Communist Parties must not only be the vanguard of the proletarian manual workers, but also the energetic defenders of the interests of the brain workers. They must be the leaders of all sections of society which are driven into opposition to bourgeois domination because of their interests and their expectations of the future. Therefore, I welcomed the proposal of Comrade Zinoviev (speaking at a session of the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International in June of this year) to take up the struggle for the Workers' and Peasants' Government. I was jubilant when I read about it. This new slogan has a great significance for all countries. We cannot dispense with it in the struggle for the overthrow of Fascism. It means that the salvation of the wide masses of the small peasantry will be achieved through Communism. We must not limit ourselves merely to carrying on a struggle for our political and economic programme. We must at the same time familiarise the masses with the ideals of Communism as a philosophy. If we do this, we shall show the way to a new philosophy to all those elements which have lost their bearings during the historical development of recent times. The necessary prerequisite for this is that, as we approach these masses, we also become organisationally, as a Party, a firmly welded unit. If we do not do that, we run the risk of falling into opportunism and of going bankrupt. We must adapt our methods of work to our new tasks. We must speak to the masses in a language which they can understand, without doing prejudice to our ideas. Thus, the struggle against Fascism brings forward a number of new tasks.

It behoves all the parties to carry out this task energetically and in conformity with the situation in their respective countries. However, we must bear in mind that it is not enough to overcome Fascism ideologically and politically. The position of the proletariat as regards Fascism is at present one of self-defence. This self-defence of the proletariat must take the form of a struggle for its existence and its organisation.

The proletariat must have a well organised apparatus of self-defence. Whenever Fascism uses violence, it must be met with proletarian violence. I do not mean by this individual terrorist acts, but the violence of the organised revolutionary class struggle

of the proletariat. Germany has made a beginning by organising factory "hundreds." This struggle can only be successful if there is a proletarian united front. The workers must unite for this struggle regardless of party. The self-defence of the proletariat is one of the greatest incentives for the establishment of the proletarian united front. Only by instilling class-consciousness into the soul of every worker will we succeed in preparing also for the military overthrow of Fascism, which, at this juncture, is absolutely necessary. If we succeed in this, we may be sure that it will be soon all up with the capitalist system and with bourgeois power, regardless of any success of the general offensive of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The signs of disintegration, which are so palpably before our eyes, give us the conviction that the giant proletariat will again join in the revolutionary fray, and that its call to the bourgeois world will be: I am the strength, I am the will, in me you see the future!

THE HAMBURG CONGRESS AND THE NEW LABOUR INTERNATIONAL

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

UP to the Hamburg Congress the international Labour movement outside the Communist International was divided into two camps, which had in the past shown important, if decreasing, differences of outlook. The two schools of Socialist thought, which characterised these differences, are best known as the Revisionist and the Centrist schools. In the old International before the war, tendencies corresponding to these differences existed, but the coming of the war made them acute and resulted in a rupture, which has now been healed in Hamburg. Were those differences of a serious, far-reaching nature? The answer to that question will show us the nature of the new Labour and Socialist International.

In the days before the war, when capitalism was developing in Western and Central Europe into its imperialist stage, the working classes of the industrialised lands were securing some benefit from the exploitation of the colonial areas of the earth. A labour aristocracy had arisen in every capitalist land, which derived advantages from the fact that the profits of capitalism obtained in colonies through the exploitation of cheap unskilled labour enabled them to monopolise the skilled jobs both at home and in the colonies at higher rates of pay. And as long as surplus values were extracted from labour in different degrees from different categories and flowed automatically into the colonies, returning in accumulations of investments to the Mother Country, the Labour movement in the highly capitalised lands was bound to assume an aristocratic nature, and to acquire the nationalist ideology and imperialist methods of the ruling class. No wonder that Edward Bernstein, the ablest theoretician of the international labour movement before

the war, preached the need to work within the capitalist system, so that Labour might secure by reforms all the improvements that it needed. This was Revisionism, which revised the theoretical basis on which the far-seeing Karl Marx, living before his time, had tried in *The Communist Manifesto* to organise the working classes internationally. It is no accident that the rise of Revisionism in Germany coincided with the rise of German capitalist Imperialism, and the same developments took place in England and France.

As time went on and as the capitalist Imperialism of England, France, and Germany had carved out the greater part of the available colonial areas of the earth, and as the menace of armed struggle for the few that remained loomed on the horizon, doubts as to the wisdom of the theory that the working classes could derive any permanent benefit under the existing system began to increase. Another school of thought began to crystallise in the Labour International. But instead of taking up the theses of Marx, laid down in his *Communist Manifesto*, which recognised that the blind forces of capitalist machine production were driving the world into a series of wars, revolts, famines, and disasters, and placing against this evolutionary material mechanism the revolutionary counter-action of the international working class, the new school sought to avoid the issue by sentimental phrases and the construction of pacifist paradises. It sought a short cut to Socialism, whereby Labour would avoid the unpleasant task of fighting for its right to live, and of dictating, when necessary, the new order of society. Since Imperialism was driving civilisation to destruction, all that needed to be proved was that there was no need for Imperialism, which was not the inevitable result of the capitalist system, but was due to accidents and the cussedness of human nature in individual monarchs and diplomats. The spiritual leader of this school of thought was none other than Otto Bauer, who played an important rôle at the Hamburg Congress. It was centred in Vienna, where the enervating atmosphere of the Austrian capital favoured insipid philosophies of this kind.

The World War divided the Revisionists from the Centrists. In Germany the split took place in the political parties, and the Reformists got away with the party machine. In Austria the Centrists got the upper hand. In Britain, owing to the peculiar

nature of the Labour movement, both Revisionists and Centrists remained in the Labour Party, but fought each other outside. In general the war smashed up the Labour International. The Revisionists, more logical and clear-headed than their former Centrist colleagues, felt that, once they had tied themselves to the chariot wheels of capitalism, in the hopes of getting crumbs that had fallen from the rich man's table, they had better follow that chariot in a war, which, if it was won, might bring increased advantages to the labour aristocracy. And so they went dining with generals at the front, while Centrists were squealing like frightened chickens at events which their brains were too muddle-headed to understand. But when the "accident" of war was over, the cause for the separation of these two schools of Socialist thought had disappeared. The sham peace broke out, and the Centrist illusions could be married once more to the calculating opportunism of the Revisionist. And that was the basis of the reunion of the German Majority Socialists with the Independent Socialists at Nurnberg in September, 1922, which in its turn was the prelude to the Unity Congress of the International at Hamburg last May,

The Hamburg Congress reflected the outlook of both Revisionists and Centrist philosophy, the opportunist phraseology of the one being intertwined into the pacifist phraseology of the other, like a patched-up quilt. Nowhere was this more clearly in evidence than in the resolution dealing with the peace treaties and reparations. The essence of this was : revise, but do not abolish the Versailles Treaty; Germany must pay according to her capacity; Wilsonism and the League of Nations must be called in to form an impartial tribunal; Germany's obligations must be limited to the "actual amount of material damage"; "international credit operations" must be set going to provide France with the necessary cash and Germany with the possibility of paying off in interest and sinking fund the burdens imposed upon her. The only thing which made this programme differ from that of the Baldwin Government's reparations policy was that it expressly excluded war pensions and allowances from the reparations scheme. Yet what was meant by "material reparations" was left quite unclear, and one could quite well see any capitalist government interpreting this as an obligation on the part of Germany to cover costs outside the restoration of the

devastated areas. No specific mention was made of the devastated areas at all, and nothing whatever about the need to reconstruct by direct labour and without the intervention of capitalist trusts, drawing profits from these operations. The policies of the national bourgeoisies of the two most powerful Entente States in Europe could be read in this resolution and in the debate which accompanied it. There was Leon Blum protesting that the "Treaty, which closed the world war between 1914 and 1918, is much less repressive and violent than the treaties of Vienna and Utrecht, which closed the great wars of 100 and 200 years ago. One speaks much about French militarism. It is true that there is a militarism in France, which is attributable to old and glorious traditions. It is also true that there is a certain national pride in France which is too often mistaken for chauvinism." So spoke the voice of the French *petit bourgeois*, the little *rentier*, who hopes to see the value of his War Bonds rise through a French Budget, in which German gold payments, not French supertaxes, provide the bulk of the revenue. And there was the sinister M. Vandervelde trying to excuse his signature to the Versailles Treaty by whining that he did it in order to secure Belgium's freedom from German military occupation! Besides, the German Social Democrat, Hermann Müller, put his signature also to the document! The contemptible behaviour of Vandervelde at the Congress over his political record caused many comments from delegates who were by no means extremists.

In the part of the resolution which called for an international credit operation to assist the French bourgeoisie to the necessary cash, and to extract more easily taxation for interest and sinking fund from the German working masses, one could hear the voice of the British and American governments and of the bond-holding aristocrats of the City of London and Wall Street. And the prominence which was given to the financial juggling to accompany this "solution" of the reparations problem was rather a proof that in the struggles behind the scenes at the Congress the British Government point of view prevailed over that of the French Government point of view. Baldwin, not Poincaré, carried the day at Hamburg, as far as reparations was concerned. But what this had to do with international Socialism nobody had the courage to ask from the Congress platform, although doubts were whispered

here and there by delegates. Revisionism triumphed in resolution Number 7 of the Hamburg Congress. The foreign policy of capitalist governments was laid down as the foreign policy of the new Labour International, which showed itself incapable of having one of its own, and could only consider the merits of one capitalist solution of the post-war economic crisis in Europe over the merits of another capitalist solution. The idea of imposing the war burdens on the capitalist class of all Europe on an international scale by capital levies or State mortgages on industry was never even discussed.

One of the most significant features of the Congress was the complete absence from it of any representatives of the coloured workers from Asia, Africa, and the colonial areas of the earth. It was not even an international of the aristocracy of labour throughout the world, but only of the aristocracy of white labour. Just as Moscow seeks to gather round it the dusky millions of the exploited, so did Hamburg seek to gather round it the élite of labour. There were no resolutions of sympathy with the struggling national movements of Egypt and India, and in this respect Arthur Henderson was abundantly right when, during the Morpeth election, he met the accusation of the *Times* and *Morning Post*, that the new International was run by Germans, by pointing to British predominance upon it. British government policy was certainly predominant upon it in all matters concerning the colonial areas of the British Empire. On the other hand the Congress was asked to wax indignant at the treatment of Georgia and Armenia. In those areas of the Middle East, where Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell are casting longing eyes on the oil fields of Maikop, Grozny, and Baku, nationalised by the Russian Soviets, the Hamburg Congress could consider unwarranted the presence of the Red Army of Russian and Caucasian workers and peasants along the pipe line connecting the oil fields with the Black Sea and blocking the plans of the concessionaires. Personally, I don't think that any member of the British delegation had any responsibility for this declaration of the Congress. Indeed, it was the British delegation which acted as a brake on those who wanted to make this very sinister demonstration against the Russian Revolution even worse than it was. If the British delegation did not bring in any reference

to the colonial races of the British Empire, it was content to leave the Caucasus oil fields alone, all the more so as a certain political common sense told them that, at a moment when Lord Curzon was launching an ultimatum against Soviet Russia, which might result in a breach of trading relations with Russia and possibly even in war, it was not desirable to stab the Soviets in the back by a hostile resolution. The I.L.P. delegates in particular did admirable work in counteracting the intrigues of the infamous Abramovitch and of other political bankrupts of the Russian " Socialist " emigrants, who tried to lead the Congress by the nose on everything concerning Russia. It would be interesting to know from what source these gentlemen get the money for the propaganda which they have been carrying on for so long against the Soviets, and whether one of the continental Social Democratic parties provides them from time to time with the necessary sinews of war against the Russian Revolution. It is certainly a matter which the Russian Government would be entitled to raise if no satisfactory answer is given to this question and if the members of the London International complain about the Third International supporting Communist parties outside Russia.

In spite of the predominance of the Revisionist and Centrist philosophies in the resolutions and deliberations of the Hamburg Congress, there was nevertheless a third element present, which tried from time to time to make itself felt. That was an element which was evidently in close touch with the rank and file in its particular country, demanding a united front of all sections of the labour movement in opposition to Fascist reaction and the capitalist economic offensive against the working class. The French Socialist Party is entirely innocent of these elements, which have mostly gone over to the French Communist Party. The same is true of the German Social-Democratic Party, whose former militants went over to the German Communist Party after the Independent split at Halle in 1920. And in order to prevent even the moderate opposition within the present German Social-Democratic Party from appearing at Hamburg, the wire-pullers in Berlin saw to it that the delegates were not elected from the provincial branches of the party, but were appointed by the National Executive. And so at Hamburg the predominating types from France and Germany

were the French *rentiers'* solicitor and the Potsdam parade sergeant, dressed in civilian clothing. There only remained the English gentleman with a smell of oil, but he was not very conspicuous by his presence and largely, I think, because of the presence of the I.L.P. delegates. For the same reason that a strong Communist Party in France and Germany makes the French and German Social-Democratic parties the symbol of petty bourgeois opportunism, so the existence of a numerically small Communist Party in England causes the I.L.P. to contain elements who are sincerely out to fight capitalist Imperialism, even though they may do so with unclear phrases. They were joined by some of the Italian Socialists under Modigliani, and small left-wing groups in Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. To them is due the fact that the constitution of the new International contains the following paragraph:—

The Labour and Socialist International is a union of such parties as accept the principle of the class struggle for the economic emancipation of the workers from capitalist domination and the establishment of a Socialist Commonwealth as their object, and the independent political and industrial action of the workers organisations as a means of realising that object. The object of the Labour and Socialist International is to unify the activities of the affiliated parties and to arrange common action and to bring about the entire unification of the Labour and Socialist Movement on the principles of this constitution.

Acting also on the principle laid down in this paragraph, the I.L.P. received a deputation of the Council of Action, set up at the Conference at Frankfurt in March, of Red Trade Unions and Communist shop stewards for the purpose of promoting the united working-class front. That the deputation did not get the opportunity of officially discussing its programme with representatives of the Congress was not the fault of the I.L.P. delegation. Again the sharply-worded resolution of protest against the second British ultimatum to Russia, accepted unanimously by the Congress, was the work of the I.L.P.

But in spite of this, the dominant tone of the Congress was that of the old Second International, and whether the third element will be able to breathe a spirit of reality into the corpse emanating the fumes of Revisionism and Centrism is a question which only the future can decide. The resolution No. 8 on the fight against

Fascist reaction was largely the work of Otto Bauer, the Centrist leader of the Austro-Marxian school, and was very typical of the philosophy of this school. While condemning Fascism and Imperialism, it could only propose as a means of dealing with them an intensified propaganda for showing up their activities. The same old illusion was present as before and during the war. Fascism and Imperialism are seen as phenomena in themselves, and not as one of the aspects of capitalist machine production in its declining stage.

THE SITUATION IN THE MINING INDUSTRY

By NESS EDWARDS

THE most advanced, and therefore the most libelled, section of the working class in this country again takes the limelighted stage of industrial warfare. During the last ten years the British miners, with the Clyde engineers, have formed the spearhead of the organised working class in this country; and because of this one must analyse their activities in order correctly to assess the drift of the working class towards its historic goal. Regard must be had for the economic importance of the industry when judging the power of the worker in that industry. Only when regard is had for this fact can one properly understand the variations in the pace of progress in the mining industry. The immense power which the miners had in 1920 and their impotence in 1922 are only explicable when related to the economic position of the industry in the first place, and the attitude of the dominant policy existing among the miners in relation thereto in the second.

A revaluation of the factors has to take place before a correct policy can be enunciated. A review of the past may hold the key of the future.

Up until about the year 1900 the mines of this country were still worked in a relatively crude fashion. A fairly ready demand existed for the output, and an "economic" price was obtainable because of this demand. The expansion of the heavy steel industry and the consequent railroading of the whole world was the chief cause of this. Economic pressure to apply scientific methods was therefore not very intensive.

Since 1900 the coalfields of other lands have been developed to an amazing extent. Competition between the national coal

producing units has become intense, and has consequently influenced the method of production. This influence has expressed itself in three ways chiefly.

First, the amalgamating of small private firms into large combines owning many collieries.

Second, the application of scientific methods and machines in the mines, in which are included the bye-product plants and processes. (It may be mentioned here that this was conditioned by the existence of large quantities of capital in the hands of the combine.)

Third, price-cutting, which is reflected in the incessant struggles over wages which have taken place in the industry the world over.

These three factors influence and intensify each other.

This process continued steadily up to the outbreak of the war, when its action was partially postponed by the artificial conditions created by the State control of production.

During the war, coal was what Mr. Lloyd George called the "life blood of the nation." Our munitions, transport, navy, and allies depended upon it, and this gave to the miner an enormous power. This power was used to obtain increased wages, which, however, were first conditioned by increased prices of coal.

Under government control the productive capacity of the mines was decreased through a great deal of mismanagement and sabotage on the part of the mine owners. That the productions of 1913 and 1919 were 73,400,118 tons and 35,249,578 tons respectively is evidence of this.

In 1919 the Sankey Commission condemned the present method of ownership and control of the mines, an attitude which has been amply justified by the condition of the industry during the last six years.

In 1921 the artificial conditions of government control were removed and the forces of competitive national capitalism began to operate.

At this time the price of British coal was much higher than American, German or French coal. Orders fell off, and America stole much of our export trade, whilst the reparations coal to France

and Italy robbed us of two great buyers. The full effect of the Versailles Treaty can be seen by the following table:—

	<i>France</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Belgium</i>
Normal British exports to	12,775,909	9,647,161	2,031,077
Reparations coal (tons per annum) . .	27,000,000	8,500,000	8,000,000

The bottom was knocked out of the British coal trade by these two factors. The general depression in other trades had a great effect upon the inland trade. An unexampled depression occurred, and the coalowners took steps to reduce the wages of the miners. This brings us to the national lock-out of April 1, 1921.

After a lock-out lasting thirteen weeks, the miners returned to work on wages which placed them in a worse position than they were in 1914. Many collieries remained closed, thousands upon thousands were unemployed, and short time was general. The full force of the depression, which had just manifested itself before the lock-out, was now being felt. The following list of prices will give an indication of this :—

BEST ADMIRALTY LARGE, F.O.B. CARDIFF			
September, 1920 . .	115/- to 120/-	January, 1923 . .	28/6 to 30/-
December, 1920 . .	107/6 „ 115/-	February, 1923 . .	29/- „ 33/-
January, 1921 . .	57/6 „ 85/-	March, 1923 . .	33/- „ 39/-
August, 1921 . .	18/6 „ 25/-	April, 1923 . .	39/- „ 44/-
January, 1922 . .	24/6 „ 27/-	May, 1923 . .	40/- „ 42/6
July, 1922 . .	24/6 „ 30/-	June, 1923 . .	40/- „ 30/-
December, 1922 . .	25/6 „ 29/6		

Since January, 1922, a steady increase in prices has taken place. This increase was occasioned by the continental demand due to the Ruhr affair; but as the Ruhr coal mines are resuming production, the prices and orders in the country are decreasing. The depression is about to manifest itself again unmitigated by cross tendencies or neutralising factors.

We have not here dealt with the effects of the increasing use of oil fuel upon the mining industry.

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this short survey. First, that international competition is fast driving out of production those mines which are not geologically well placed and scientifically worked; and that this country suffers as much in this respect, if not more, as other countries.

Secondly, that this competitive struggle decreases prices and rate of profit, until we find that the country whose mines are badly placed will lose markets and go out of production, whilst a general attempt will continually be made to keep the miners' wages below the average for the country, so that the profit may approximate to the average for the country. The mechanical limits of capitalism in the British coal-fields are fast being reached.

Since the early part of 1919, the Executive Council of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain has continuously mismanaged and misdirected the power of that organisation. No executive has so defied the instructions of its rank and file as the executive of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain during the last few years, since the Hodgean star became dominant.

The acceptance of the Sankey Commission was a direct betrayal of the rank and file who had voted for a stoppage by a five to one majority. Again, in the struggle of 1921 over the National Pool, the Executive Council went behind the back of the rank and file, abandoned the Pool, and concluded the struggle with the National Agreement. This after ten weeks of a grim struggle with starvation on the part of the miners. On June 17, 1921, the result of the ballot on the acceptance of the coal-owners' offer and the abandoning of the principle of the National Pool became known. The overwhelming decision to fight on for the Pool was staggering even to the most optimistic of the "left" element. *Seven days* afterwards the Executive Council decided to meet the Government and owners to effect a wages settlement and abandon the instructions of the rank and file. On June 26, Mr. Frank Hodges and Herbert Smith were at "Chequers" discussing terms with Lloyd George! By Tuesday, June 28, the Executive Council had decided to recommend the National Agreement to the members, an agreement which contradicted every principle and mandate decided upon by ballot votes of the members. It would be superfluous to outline here how that agreement was thrust upon the rank and file without a ballot, or to describe the "brilliancy" of Mr. Hodges' betrayal tactics in the Black Friday incidents.

For all this Mr. Hodges has defended himself. In a reply to his critics he stated : " Leadership, now born of desperation, asserts itself. Suffering now breaks down the democratic formula that the rank and file must lead the leaders," and this was a few days after his fighting speech which commenced with the rhetorical " Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh " phrase. Hodges likes his own benevolent autocracy and dissembles his love like a Don Juan. Herbert Smith has delivered himself of similar " betrayal " effusions, the both of them regretting that they had not defied the rank and file earlier in the stoppage!

The existence of the miners under this agreement has been one of prolonged starvation. Lone districts, especially the most advanced, have suffered much greater privation than others. Unemployment has been rampant and the organisation was broken. The men returned to work in front of the lash of the tongues of their own leaders. Complete demoralisation set in, and for a time no healthy criticism of the agreement was forthcoming. The rebel element was too much concerned with the way the agreement came. They considered that their conditions were due to the progress of the Hodgean policy, a policy which has been marked with failure upon failure. The Sankey Commission, Black Friday, the National Agreement, Hodges' concealment of the German miners' appeal for help, the conscience money in reply to the American miners' appeal, and the continued defying of the miners' demand for the abolition of the National Agreement have all had the sponsorship of Hodges.

This struggle over the National Agreement now holds the field. This agreement guarantees the standard profits for the owners. The industry has not that risk for the owner which the old economists argued was the factor for which the capitalist receives a high rate of profit, equal to 17 per cent. of the wages paid to the employees.

On the other hand, the miners' return is a low one. His risk is great and his labour greater still. With the cost of living where it is, the miners have lost 20 per cent. of their 1914 standard of living. This cannot be reclaimed as the owners' losses can.

The term " costs " in the agreement covers a wide field of expenditure—directors' fees, extension of the industry, managers'

fees and houses, compensation costs and charges, litigation fees in fighting the workmen, and a host of other "small details." This clause in the agreement allows the owners to obtain "extra income" in a multitude of ways. The rank and file are extremely suspicious of this clause. It allows the value of the industry to be enormously increased, upon which bonus shares can be issued to the shareholders. . . . The inclusion of compensation charges in this term enables the owners to contest every claim in the law courts, and in this way to keep the workmen's organisation financially weak. Every miners' district, without exception, is being crippled because the owners' expenses are being borne by the industry, whilst the workmen's expenses come out of the union funds.

Local leaders are told that they should help reduce the "costs" of the industry so as to leave a greater portion of the "proceeds" for division among the workmen (83 per cent.) and the owners (17 per cent.). The introduction of machinery, the dismissing of surplus labour, the return to "eight hours," the introduction of a Sunday shift, speeding up, abolition of old customs—all these tactics we are told are in the interests of the miners under the present agreement! This would give us increased wages!!

Mr. Hodges has described the agreement as the "greatest wage-producing principle ever introduced into this country." During a boom period, when a record output has been obtained, the wages of the miner only permit a standard of living forty points below that of 1914. Forty thousand workmen in South Wales were going home from January, 1922, to June, 1923, with £2 or less per week. Other coalfields have suffered in a similar fashion. Mr. Hodges himself has said that some coalfields in this country were famine areas.

But the greatest blunder of all was the formation of District Wages Boards, which determined the wages for each coal field. This made the Miners' Federation of Great Britain into a formal organisation with no power in actuality. Each coal field has its own, but a different, wages problem, whilst one or two coal fields are satisfied with the wages they obtain. The result is that miners' national action is most difficult to obtain, and a set of conditions

exists which allows the reactionary leaders to play one coal field off against the other.

Generally speaking, conditions have been intolerable, and a movement has started to end the agreement. *When miners, who have not enough wages to buy food, are told that they owe the coal owners four, five, or nine weeks' wages they begin to think and talk.* (This has been the case under this agreement in more than one coal field.)

An expression of this desire to end the agreement was manifested in a Miners' Federation of Great Britain conference in July, 1922. South Wales moved to end the agreement. Hodges was the chief spokesman against this, and on his suggestion it was carried that the new Executive Council should consider the matter and report to a later conference. On December 21, 1922, the conference was called to hear the Executive Council's report. At this time South Wales was joined by Lancashire, who also had had enough of the agreement. The Executive Council now recommended that they should interview the owners and the Government, Hodges again leading the attack on the "agreement enders." Action was again postponed. The Executive Council met Mr. Bonar Law and the owners and all they had was a threat to further reduce wages and increase the hours of labour.

A conference was then called on March 27, 1923. By this time the wages in all the districts had decreased, most of them being down to the minimum. Hodges was busy making speeches, advising the men not to strike to end the agreement. At this conference again he was the champion of reaction and peace-at-any-price, carrying out his word to the public that he would not do anything to hamper our reviving trade. The fight between Hodges and the left elements became more intense. He prophesied increased wages as a result of the boom if the districts would wait for the April and May ascertainment, and it was this prospective increase he dangled before the eyes of the conference to get it to postpone action. Again his policy carried, and the Executive Council's recommendation defeated the Lancashire amendment to end the agreement by 438,000 votes to 305,000. The recommendation, which was carried, instructed the Executive Council to interview the owners again, and to attempt to get the Minimum

Wage Act amended so as to provide a living wage for the miner. All this was an excuse for postponing action, in the hope that by the time the next conference was held wages would have risen in the districts and the need for action disappeared.

The owners refused to concede the Executive Council's application and the Parliamentary Labour Party had not been able to obtain facilities for bringing in the Bill. The next conference was announced for May 30, and a few days before the 30th it was made public that W. Adamson had received facilities for "bringing in" his Bill. Here was another excuse for postponing action, although the Executive Council must have known that the Labour members were insufficient to carry the Bill. Again Hodges begged that the Parliamentary Labour Party should have their chance. The conference split up into coal field group meetings. On the advice of the leaders these groups defied their mandates and postponed action. Since then the Bill has been rejected in the House of Commons. One hoped that the last card in the hands of the Hodgean group had been played, and that now the autocrats would have to carry out the instructions of the rank and file. But treachery knows no limits, and it appears that despite a majority mandate the Hodgeans will attempt to prevent the abolition of the agreement during next week. (This is being written on July 8.) The writer of Trade Union Notes in the *Daily Herald* writes : "The time has now arrived to make a decision, but, notwithstanding the strong majority for the ending of the agreement at the last special conference, I believe the miners will decide to give it a little further trial." The rank and file have given a mandate to end the agreement; only cowardice and treachery can nullify it. The Hodgeans are looking for satisfaction inside the limits of capitalist enterprise. Satisfaction for the miners cannot be achieved inside these limits. Some time the miners will be compelled to surge up against and over these limits. Hodges and his clique seek to postpone that day ; to that extent are they the most treacherous traitors inside the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

THESES ON INDUSTRY

II

By L. TROTZKY

(Conclusion of report presented to the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow last April and unanimously adopted)

§ 5.—*Industry and Trade*

Without a properly organised sale, increased production will again lead to partial gluts, *i.e.*, to *crises of trading helplessness*, which cannot be justified even by the extremely limited market of the present day. The perfection of the lowest links of the trading apparatus, even though only capable of insuring the smallest number of genuine connections between industry and the peasant market, is of paramount importance. The formation of syndicates in the near future should be conducted with the greatest circumspection and with due consideration to the state of the market and the resources of the trusts. The transformation of the syndicates into trading "chief committees" would only obstruct trading activity and swell the burden of additional expenses. Compulsory syndication must be economically prepared for and commercially justified.

The increased operative independence of the trusts and separate enterprises, the more flexible activity of the syndicates, and the whole position of our industry in general require an incomparably greater co-ordination as to the relations between the purely productive and the purely commercial spheres of activity. This applies both to home and to foreign trade. Without predetermining the forms of organisation that this co-ordination will take, it ought to be already established that the systematic study of the experience which is accumulating in this sphere and the elaboration of practical methods of co-ordinating industrial and commercial activity constitute a vital problem, the solution of which is possible only through the combined efforts of the Supreme Council of People's Economy, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, the Commissariat of International Trade, and with the active participation of the State Planning Commission under the general guidance of the Council of Labour and Defence.

§ 6.—*The Factory*

The root of success or failure in production is to be found in the basic industrial unit, *i.e.*, in the factory or mill. The question, therefore, of properly organising each separate enterprise, and that not only from the technical-productive, but also from the commercial point of view, is of decisive importance.

While retaining the general guidance of the enterprise in its hands and centralising those productive and commercial branches and operations which are ripe for it, the trust must at the same time avoid by all manner of means that sort of centralisation which strangles, which extinguishes initiative, and it must avoid mechanical invasions into the work of its enterprises.

The independent accounts of each factory must not only provide the means of determining its profits and its growth or decline, but must also serve as the general basis of a premium system strictly adjusted to the peculiarities of the enterprise.

§ 7.—*Calculation, Balance, and Control*

Under present conditions material results form the only serious and reliable empirical verification of whether mutual relations between the enterprises, the trusts, and the State are satisfactory, as well as providing the sole test of the success or otherwise of our methods of economic management as a whole. Only from the careful tabulation of *balance sheets* can we judge our commercial position, for without a system of correct book-keeping which embraces State economy from top to bottom, without scientific accounts to show the real cost of the products of State industry, there is no guarantee against the gradual dissipation or dilapidation of nationalised property, and the trusts in this case might but serve as channels for pumping over State property into private hands.

To work out methods of uniform book-keeping, to see to it that it be really carried out and made more and more accurate, all this must constitute one of the most important problems of the leading economic establishments in general and of the State Planning Commission in particular, this work having for its aim the attaining of *a single real balance* from which can be estimated the position of State industry, and, later on, of the whole State economy in general.

The Council of Labour and Defence must organise a State audit of commercial and industrial accounts and balance sheets. The absence of a competent and skilled control on such lines makes all other kinds of economic inspection useless, and spreads a sense of irresponsibility incompatible with a properly organised economy.

§ 8.—*Wages*

The system of wages adopted during the period that has just expired has on the whole confirmed the soundness of the decisions of the eleventh Party Congress and the fifth Trade Union Congress, as well as that of the conclusion of collective agreements between the trade unions and economic organisations.

During the year just elapsed a considerable increase of wages for all categories of workers can be recorded, and this has resulted in a considerable increase of the productivity of labour.

The general wages policy must for the future be directed towards a greater or smaller levelling up of the average wage in all branches of production with the necessary modifications on the basis of the average skill in such a manner that workers of similar or equivalent skill should be drawing approximately equal remuneration in different branches of industry, and as far as possible independent of the fluctuations of the market ; at the same time the individual wage in reality should be proportional to the actual output. The corresponding State organs must, hand-in-hand with the trade unions, direct their efforts towards coming to a more favourable agreement in a given branch of industry which will serve the interests of the workers not only of this or that branch, but also those of the working class as a whole, by increasing the earnings in the backward branches and, above all, in the heavy industry and transport.

While striving in every way to improve the condition of the working class, the State organs and the trade unions must at the same time remember that a continuous and all-embracing improvement is possible only on the basis of their own development as a profit-bearing industry. From this point of view measures which retain poorly-furnished enterprises in operation, or employ in a mill a number of workers not proportionate to the actual productivity of the enterprise, constitute the most expensive and irrational

form of social insurance, and are therefore against the interests of the future of the working class.

The burdening of industrial enterprises with all sorts of additional expenses neither necessitated by production itself nor provided for by law are highly detrimental to the enterprises in question and to the State, however important the purpose for which they are incurred, for they undermine the possibility of an accurate mode of calculation and impose upon the State in a semi-disguised manner an expenditure which under the present conditions it is beyond its strength to bear. Arbitrary donations on the part of the trusts, *i.e.*, donations unauthorised and unregulated by the State, are nothing but a dissipation of State property, and as such must be punished by law.

It is necessary to undertake a close inquiry into the practical application under present conditions of the Labour Code and, in general, of all the statutes on labour power, wages, length of the working day for different categories, deductions for social insurance, cultural and educational needs, &c., &c., with a view, on the one hand, to satisfying the interests of the workers in the highest degree that is compatible with the present state of industry and, on the other hand, to setting aside or altering for the time being statutes which are manifestly unrealisable in existing circumstances. Industrial managers and trade unionists must co-operate in collecting, in the most objective manner, closely examined and well-sifted facts which would serve as a basis for the above-mentioned legislative alterations or administrative measures.

§ 9.—*Finance, Credit, Custom Duties*

A necessary condition for the restoration and development of industry, especially of heavy industry, is the proper drawing up of the State Budget in the sense of bringing it into close correspondence with the real State resources and with their expenditure according to plan.

It is necessary to do away completely with that greatest of evils—forced upon us, it is true, to a considerable extent by objective conditions—namely, the lack of unity and the discrepancy between our productive schemes and those resources which were at our disposal for their realisation. This sort of scheming inevitably spelt

chaos—industrial and financial—and badly shook the stability of the most important economic establishments.

Exactly the same consequences resulted from the practice of requisitioning the products of industry (chiefly of the mechanical, metallurgical, and fuel industries) by the State—chiefly for the benefit of the military and the transport departments either without any payment at all or else at arbitrary prices which did not cover the cost of those products.

Should future discrepancies crop up between the incoming revenues and the estimated allocations, and should a necessity of curtailing expenditure result therefrom, the reductions should be effected not under some mask or other, but openly, by way of reconstructing the Budget and reducing allowances for transport and industrial enterprises, the army, &c., always according to a definite plan.

The system of providing industrial credit constitutes not only a financial or banking problem, but the most important part of activity in the business of organising and guiding industry. It is necessary, therefore, that the business of financing the State industry should be as far as possible concentrated in one credit establishment which should be very closely connected with the Supreme Council of People's Economy.

The imposition of taxes and excise duties, in strict conformity to the ability of industry to pay and the capacity of the market, must be closely studied, while the effect which higher or lower duties on different imported articles may have on corresponding branches of home industry (from the point of view of protecting them) ought to be carefully considered.

Purchases and orders from abroad, even at prices which are lower than in the home market, must be unhesitatingly pushed aside in all those cases in which they are not absolutely necessary, for the placing of the order inside the country may serve as a considerable spur to the development of the corresponding branch of our State industry.

It is only a system of Socialist protectionism carried out in a consistent and determined manner that can insure at the present transitional period a real development of industry in our Soviet State, surrounded as it is by a capitalist world.

§ 10.—*Foreign Capital*

The experience of the past year has confirmed the fact that the process of State Socialist construction under the new economic policy is quite compatible (within certain by no means narrow limits) with the active participation of private—foreign as well as home—capital in the sphere of industry. Further systematic measures are necessary in order to attract foreign capital to industry in all those forms the expedience of which has already manifested itself up till now : concessions, mixed companies, leasing. A careful study of which domains of industry and which enterprises can be left to foreign capital and on what principles, with advantage to the general economic development of the country, is essential in the formulation of future plans by our leading economic organisations.

§ 11.—*Managers, their Position and Problems ; the Education of a New Generation of Technicians and Managers*

The mutual relations between trade unions and administrative bodies defined by the resolutions of the eleventh Congress of the Party, the correctness of which is confirmed by the experience of last year, must continue to be developed and strengthened in the spirit of those resolutions.

The system of real unity of power must be carried through in the organisation of industry from top to bottom. The selection of workers and their transference or dismissal constitute in the hands of the leading administrative organs a necessary condition for the real guiding of industry and for enabling them to bear the responsibility for its fate. The recommendations and attestations of the trade unions must be fully and sympathetically taken into consideration, but they should under no circumstances release the corresponding administrative organs from their responsibility, as the existing statutes leave to the latter full freedom of selection and appointment.

Heaviness, immobility, lack of enterprising spirit form the weak side of the State industry and trade. The reason for it lies in the fact that the managing staffs are as yet very far from being the best fitted for their jobs, that they lack experience, and are not sufficiently interested in the progress of their own work. It is

necessary to take regular and systematic measures towards improvement in all these directions. In particular, the remuneration of the managers of enterprises should be made to depend upon the credit or debit balance, as wages do upon output.

The work of leading administrative workers (trade-corporation controllers, directors of mills and factories, chairmen and members of the boards of trusts), in so far as their task consists in lowering the expenses of production and in extracting profit, is beset with extremely great difficulties frequently resulting in conflicts, dismissals, and transferences. Two dangers always confront an administrator : (a) that his strict demands will stir up against him the workers of the enterprise and their representative organs or the local Party and Soviet establishments ; (b) that following the line of least resistance in questions of the productivity of labour, wages, &c., he will endanger the lucrativeness, and therefore the future, of the enterprise. It goes without saying that a director of a Soviet factory must take into the most sympathetic consideration the material and spiritual interests of the workers, their feelings and frame of mind. But at the same time he must never forget that his highest duty to the working class as a whole consists in raising the productivity of labour, in lowering the costs of production, and in increasing the quantity of material products at the disposal of the working-class State. It is the duty of the Party and of trade-union workers to give the Soviet director their whole-hearted support in this respect. Attention, perseverance, and economy are the necessary qualities of a Soviet administrative worker. His highest testimonial is to run the enterprise on a basis of soundly-balanced accounts.

It must be made plain to the mass of the workers that a director striving to make the enterprise profitable serves the interests of the working class just as much as a trade-union worker who strives to raise the workman's standard of living and to safeguard his health.

The preparation of new administrative workers must assume a systematic and, at the same time, a highly specialised character. Summary methods, as when instruction was taken in in a hurry by merely watching others at their duties, must be replaced by systematic training according to an exact plan, coupled with a

definite period of experience. Workers placed at their posts in the first period and who have not yet had time to acquire the necessary knowledge must be given the opportunity of filling the more serious gaps.

Specialisation in different kinds of practical activity, however, ought to be closely connected with a raising of the theoretical and political level and with a closer contact with the Party ; otherwise specialisation might prove injurious to the Party as a superficial knowledge of everything is detrimental to any economic enterprise.

The Party and the trade unions must pay the most serious attention to the question of increasing the number of working-men managers of industry and especially of Communists in managerial posts at all the stages in the economic hierarchy.

Technical training ought to be for the new generation not only a question of specialisation but also one of a revolutionary duty. Under the conditions of a workers' State all the enthusiasm of the young working men which formerly used to be devoted to the revolutionary political struggle should now be directed towards the mastering of science and technical subjects. It is necessary that a student who neglects his studies should be treated in the same way as a deserter or blackleg was treated in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The organisation of a Socialist economy is for the proletarian vanguard not a method of obtaining a career, but an heroic action.

§ 12.—*Party Institutions and Economic Institutions*

Without for one single moment forgetting its permanent revolutionary educational problems the Party must clearly realise that at the present constructive-economic period of the revolution its most fundamental work lies in guiding economic activity in the basic points of the Soviet process of construction. The Party will accomplish its historic mission only if the economic experience of the whole Party grows together with the growth in size and complexity of the economic problems which the Soviet power has to face.

Therefore the twelfth Congress is of the opinion that not only a proper distribution of workers, but also the function of supervising every important branch of economic administration must

be considered by the Party as its bounden duty, especially in view of the new economic policy, which creates the danger of degeneration for a part of the managing staffs and of perverting the proletarian line of policy in the process of economic reconstruction. Under no circumstances whatever should this guidance turn, in practice and as a matter of course, into frequent dismissals or transference of managers, into a meddling in the current every-day work of the administration, or into attempts at their direction.

Directions with regard to concrete questions imposed by Party organisations upon administrative machinery are inevitable and indispensable under existing conditions, but it is necessary constantly to strive that such guidance should bear the stamp of a broad plan, which would eventually lead to an actual diminution of the number of cases where there would be any necessity for direct administrative interference in independent or specialised questions of current practice.

The more regularly the administrative and economic work of the State itself proceeds in the execution of the plans brought forward by the Party, the more completely the leadership of the Party will be safeguarded.

The twelfth Congress confirms the resolutions of the eleventh with regard to the necessity for a division of labour and a delimitation of the work in the economic sphere as between the Party and the Soviets, in particular, and insists that this resolution be carried out more completely and systematically both in the centre and locally. The twelfth Congress especially calls to mind that in accordance with the resolution of the eleventh Congress, the Party organisations "solve economic questions independently only in those cases and in so far as the questions imperatively demand a solution according to Party principles."

One of the important problems before the Party is to give its support to an arrangement under which competent economic organisations would have not only a formal right, but a practical opportunity of gradually educating administrative workers and providing for their regular advancement in proportion as they gain in experience and develop their qualities.

This is only possible if workers are systematically selected according to their economic experience both in business and in

skilled trades, and also if inside economic institutions the principles of discipline and of a corresponding system of co-ordination and subordination among the separate branches of the work and among the workers at the head of these branches are observed.

But in view of the particularly important and responsible work with which the administrative workers are charged at the present moment, the Party as a whole and all its organisations must give them the most hearty support, and systematically take care to create such an atmosphere as would exclude the possibility of groups of administrative workers breaking away from the Party.

§ 13.—*The Printing Trade*

The question of putting the printing trade on a sound basis is not only of economic but also of immense cultural importance.

The Congress recognises the present state of the printing trade as unsatisfactory and considers it necessary to take decisive measures to improve it.

It is necessary first of all to raise the technique of those publications which are meant for a mass sale. The question of the organisation of the typographical trades must be solved as early as possible, and in such a way that the biggest and most important State publishing establishments should be able to put their work on a broad, regular, and technically satisfactory basis.

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FURTHER SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

Translated and Annotated by MAX BEER

V

TAXATION REFORM AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION

EMILE DE GIRARDIN, a noted French publicist and Radical social reformer in the 'forties and 'fifties of the last century, published at Paris in 1850, during the revival of Socialist and Communist agitation, a book, *Le socialisme et l'impôt*, in which he recommended taxation and budget reform as the best means of realising socialism without the social revolution. His plan was to abolish all taxes and to introduce instead national compulsory insurance of all movable and immovable property. France was to be turned into a mutual insurance society in which everybody would insure his property against all sorts of business losses, failures, strikes, upheavals, &c. The whole insurance business to be managed by the State, which would draw its income from the premiums; a secondary source of income would be the conversion of nearly all penalties, imposed by the courts of justice upon guilty offenders, into fines. The premium rate to be equal for all sorts of property, no matter what income they might bring. Such a reform would give security of property, form an incentive to the most profitable employment of capital, facilitate credit, promote solidarity among all citizens, and lead to honesty in dealing, for the insurance policy would show at once with whom one had to do.

Marx, in his *Neue Rheinische Revue*, which he edited from London in 1850, reviews the book at some length, arguing that all advantages which Girardin looked for from his taxation reform scheme would not lead to social peace, but to a higher development of capitalism in France and to conditions similar to those that prevailed in Great Britain.

We take from Marx's review the following pertinent observations:—

"There are two sorts of socialism, the 'good' socialism and the 'bad' one: the bad socialism, that is 'the war of Labour against Capital,' and it is surrounded by all the scare crows, such as equal sharing-out of property, community of wives, organised plunder, &c.; the good socialism, that is 'peace and goodwill between Labour and Capital,' and its attendants are—removal of

ignorance, abolition of poverty, reorganisation of the credit system, broadening the basis of property, taxation reform, in short, as M. de Girardin says, 'an order of society which most approaches the idea of the Kingdom of God on earth. . . .' One ought to make use, then, of the good socialism in order to crowd out the bad one. 'Socialism,' says M. de Girardin, 'has a mighty lever, which is the budget. But it lacked a fulcrum to take the world off its hinges. This fulcrum the revolution of February, 1848, has been found in universal suffrage.' The source of the budget is taxation. The effect of universal suffrage on the budget is thus supposed to have its effect on taxation. And through that effect on taxation the good socialism will come. . . .

"Taxation reform, the hobby of all Radicals, has for its objects (i) either the abolition of traditional, obsolete taxes that impeded trade; (ii) or cheaper government; (iii) or a more equitable distribution. The more zeal the middle-class reformer develops in the pursuit of his chimerical ideal of a just incidence of taxation the more it eludes his grasp in practice.

"Taxation can only modify some secondary effects of the conditions of distribution which spring directly from the capitalist production, that is, the ratio between profit and wages, profit and interest, profit and rent, but it can never attack them at their basis. All disquisitions and debates concerning taxation presuppose the permanent existence of the capitalist order. Moreover, the abolition of all taxes, far from establishing socialism, could but result in accelerating the development of bourgeois property and its inherent contradictions. Taxation may favour certain classes and oppress others, as we see this, for instance, under the regime of the financial oligarchy. It can ruin the intermediary strata that are placed between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, since their position does not allow them to shift the burden to the other classes. The proletariat is driven down a degree lower through every new tax; the abolition of an old tax does not result in raising the rate of wages, but that of profit. During a revolution, taxes may be swelled to colossal proportions in order to use them as a lever for attacking private property, but even then they will progressively drive on to new revolutionary measures, or ultimately lead us back to the old conditions of bourgeois property.

"Reduction of taxation, a more equitable incidence of taxation, that is the demand of the commonplace middle-class reformer. The abolition of taxation, that is the socialism of the Radical reformer. This Radical socialism appeals particularly to the industrial and commercial class and to the peasantry. . . . Behind the demand for the abolition of taxation lurks the demand for the abolition of the State. But the abolition of the State is only logical with the Communists as the inevitable result of the abolition of the classes, for only then will there be no need for an organised power of one class to keep down the other."¹

VI

POST-RICARDIAN SOCIAL CRITICISM

In 1907-1910, Karl Kautsky edited in four volumes a bundle of manuscripts left by Marx on various theories concerning surplus-value. They were written in 1862-1863, but were not made ready for the press owing to his work in the International. They deal among others with Petty, Dudley North, Locke, Hume, James Stewart, the Physiocrats (French and English), Adam Smith and his school, Ricardo and his school, Malthus, Sismondi, Ravenstone, Hodgskin, Cherbuliez, Richard Jones. The following extract is taken from a chapter on the transition from Ricardo to social criticism.

"The disquisition on the Ricardian school shows how it reduces itself to two points:—

"(i) Exchange between Capital and Labour in conformity with the law of surplus-value.

"(ii) Formation of a general profit rate; identification of surplus value and profit; not understood relation between value and price of production.

"In the Ricardian period of Political Economy there arises the opposition to it, namely, Communism (Owen) and Socialism (Fourier and Saint-Simon). The latter are still in their swaddling clothes. According to our plan of work we have to deal only with the opposition which springs from the propositions of the economists. . . .

"In the same measure as Political Economy grew into a science—and this growth, as far as its principles are concerned, finds its clearest expression in Ricardo—it came to regard Labour as the

¹ *Aus dem literarischen nachlass von Marx und Engels* (edited by Mehring), Vol. III, pp. 434-442.

only element of value and the only creator of use-value, and the growth of the productive forces of labour as the only means of a real increase of wealth; the greatest possible development of the productive forces of labour as the economic basis of society. This is indeed the basis of capitalist production. Ricardo's book, by demonstrating the force of the law of value in relation to rent, capitalist accumulation, &c., is really devoted to the removal of all contradictions, or to an elucidation of all phenomena which appear as contradiction to the law of value. But in the same measure as labour comes to be regarded as the only source of exchange value and the active agent of use value, the economists, and particularly Ricardo (and more so Torrens, Malthus, Bailey, &c.), make 'capital' the regulator of production, while labour is in their eyes merely wage-labour, the agent and instrument of which is necessarily a pauper; and this conception is reinforced by the population theory of Malthus. The labourer is but one of the items in the cost of production, whose existence depends on a minimum wage, and who may even sink below the minimum as soon as, from the point of view of capital, he appears as a 'redundant' mass.

"In this contradiction, Political Economy merely expresses the essence of capitalist production or, if you like, of wage-labour—of labour which disowns its own creation, which looks upon the wealth it produces as the wealth of others, which regards its own productive capacity as that of the product (capital), and its own social power as the power of society.

"And this specific, historical, transient form of social labour the economists regard as the general and only form, as something inevitable; and those conditions of production they pronounce to be the absolutely (not historically) necessary—the natural and reasonable conditions of the productive work of society.

"Hopelessly closed in by the horizon of capitalist production, the economists declare the antagonistic form in which the productive work of society appears to-day to be as necessary as social productive service itself when freed from all antagonism. By declaring, on the one hand, *labour* to be absolute, because they identify wage-labour with social labour, and on the other hand, *capital* to be absolute, that is, by pronouncing in the same breath the poverty

of labour and the wealth of non-labour as the only source of wealth, they are permanently entangled in absolute contradictions, without having the slightest idea of it. Sismondi, by getting an inkling of it, is epoch-making in the history of political economy.

"However, it was inevitable that the same real evolution, to which the economists gave theoretical expression, would likewise bring the real antagonistic forces to the surface, particularly through the contrast between the growing wealth of the 'nation' and the growing misery of the workers. And as, furthermore, these contradictions found in Ricardo's work a theoretically striking, though unconscious, expression it was but natural that the intellects who took the side of the proletariat would get hold of the contradiction which theory had prepared for them. You say, the latter argued with the economists, that labour is the only source of exchange value and the only active creator of use value, and yet you say, too, that capital is everything and labour nothing or merely a part of the cost of production. You have contradicted yourselves. Capital is nothing but robbery of labour. *Labour is everything.*

"This is indeed the last word of all those writings which defend the interests of labour from the standpoint of Ricardo's theories. But as little as Ricardo understood the meaning of his identification of capital and labour do those proletarian defenders understand the contradiction which they point out; therefore it happens that the most prominent among them, such as Hodgskin, for instance, accept all prerequisites of capitalist production as eternal forms and but desire to eliminate capital, at once the basis and the necessary consequence."²

VII

ENGLAND AND MATERIALIST PHILOSOPHY

In 1844, Marx wrote "The Holy Family," a collection of essays directed against his friend Dr. Bruno Bauer, a university lecturer and Liberal theologian (one of the pioneers of higher criticism); the latter edited the *Kritische Literaturzeitung*, in which he gave a superficial view of French materialism, at the same time adversely criticising French Socialism. Marx, on the other hand, gave an analysis of the rôle of Descartes and Bayle, showing

² Karl Marx, *Theorien über Mehrwert*, Stuttgart, 1910. Vol. III, pp. 280, 281, 307-309.

how French materialism arose from the physics of Descartes and the theory of knowledge of John Locke; further, how the deductions from the latter were made the basis of Utopian Socialism. The essay of Marx on those problems is too long and in some parts too concentrated to be reproduced here, but we give the salient points as a specimen of his philosophic mastery. It must be remembered that Marx wrote this essay at a time when his own views of Communism were still in the process of formation.

" French materialism of the eighteenth century exhibits two currents, one having its origin in Descartes, the other in Locke. The latter exercised a dominating influence on the French mind and led directly to socialism. The former, the mechanical materialism, dominated French science. Both currents crossed in their courses. . . . Descartes, in his physics, endowed matter with creative power and conceived mechanical motion as its manifestation of life. He completely severed his physics from his metaphysics. Within his physics, matter is the only substance, the only reason of its existence and cognition. The French mechanical materialism adopted the physics of Descartes and rejected his metaphysics. His disciples were anti-metaphysicians by profession, namely, physicians. This school begins with the physician Leroy, reaches its culmination with the physician Cabanis, while the physician Lamettrie was its centre. . . . But the man who destroyed the credit of the metaphysics of the seventeenth century was Pierre Bayle. The negative refutation of theology and metaphysics, however, sharpened the desire for a positive, anti-metaphysical system. And it was Locke who supplied it. His *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* came in the nick of time for the other side of the Channel. It was enthusiastically acclaimed as a long-expected guest.

" Materialism is the born son of Britain. Even one of his great schoolmen, Duns Scotus, asked himself ' whether matter cannot think.' In performing this wonder, Duns had recourse to God's omnipotence, that is, he made theology itself preach materialism. He was, moreover, Nominalist. Nominalism is one of the main elements of the English materialists, as it is indeed the first expression of materialism in Christian Europe.

" The real progenitor of English materialism is Francis Bacon. Natural science is to him the true science, and sensuous physics the foremost part of science. Anaxagoras with his ' homoimeries '

and Democritus with his atoms are often his authorities. According to Bacon the senses are unerring and the source of all knowledge. Science is experimental and consists in the application of a rational method to sensuous data. Observation, experiment, induction, analysis, are the main conditions of a rational method. Of the qualities inherent in matter the foremost is motion, not only as mechanical and mathematical motion, but more as impulse, vital force, tension, or as Jacob Boehme said, pain of matter. The primitive forms of the latter are living, individualising, inherent, and essential forces, which produce specific variations.

"With Bacon as its pioneer, materialism contains in a naïve manner the germs of universal development. Matter is still smiling upon us in its poetic-sensuous charm. The aphoristic doctrine, on the other hand, teems with theological inconsistencies.

"In its further development, materialism becomes one-sided. Hobbes is the systematiser of Baconian materialism. Sensuousness loses its bloom and is turned into the abstract sensuousness of geometry. The physical motion is sacrificed to the mechanical and mathematical one. Geometry is proclaimed the cardinal science. . . . Materialism is rationalised, and it develops also the ruthless logicity of reason. Hobbes, starting from Bacon, argues that if all knowledge is supplied by the senses, then . . . only the corporeal is perceptible and knowable, therefore we can know nothing of the existence of God. Only my own existence is certain. . . . Hobbes systematised Bacon, but did not establish the main principle, the origin of the ideas and knowledge of the sensuous world.

"It was Locke who accomplished that work in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.

"If Hobbes removed the theistic prejudices from Baconian materialism, Collins, Toland, Coward, Hartley, Priestley, &c., broke down the last theological barrier of Locke's sensualism. Theism is, for those materialists, merely a comfortable, lackadaisical way to get rid of religion. . . .

"The direct French disciple and interpreter of Locke was Condillac, who pitted Locke's sensualism against the metaphysics of the seventeenth century. He published a refutation of the system of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Malebranche. In his

Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines he follows up the ideas of Locke and argues that not only the mind, but also the senses, not only the capacity for forming ideas, but also the capacity for sensuous perception, are a matter of experience and habit. On education and external circumstances depends the whole development of man.

"The difference between French and English materialism is the difference between the two nationalities. The French endowed English materialism with *esprit* and eloquence, with flesh and blood, with temperament and grace.

"In Helvetius, who likewise starts from Locke, materialism receives its proper French character. He envisages it in relation to social life. The sensuous qualities and self-love, enjoyment, and the well-understood personal interest are made into the foundations of morality. The natural equality of the human intelligence, the harmony between the progress of reason and the progress of manufactures, the natural goodness of man, the omnipotence of education, are the main points of his system. . . .

"It needs no special ingenuity to discover in the doctrines of materialism (concerning the natural goodness and the equal mental endowments of man, the omnipotence of experience, habit, and education, the influence of external circumstances on man, the great importance of manufactures, the legitimacy of enjoyment) the necessary connection with Communism and Socialism. If man receives from the external world and from his experience in the external world all his feelings, ideas, &c., then it is evidently our business to reorganise the empirical world in such a manner that man should only experience the really humane and acquire the habit of it. If the well-understood personal interest is the principle of all morality, then we must arrange society in such a manner as to make private interest fit in with social interest. If man is subject to the same laws as Nature: if man is not free in a materialistic sense, that is, he is not free to do this or to avoid that, but that he is only free to assert his true individuality, then there is no sense in punishing the criminal, but we must rather destroy the anti-social breeding-places of vice and to allow to everybody social scope for his activities. If man is formed by circumstances, then we must humanise the circumstances. If man is social by nature,

then man develops his true nature in society only, and we must not measure the power of his nature by the power of a single individual, by the power of society.

"These and similar views we find even literally in the works of the older French materialists. It is not the proper place here to sit in judgment upon them. Characteristic of the social-critical tendency of materialism is Mandeville's apology of vice. Mandeville, one of the earlier followers of Locke, demonstrates that in the present-day society vice is indispensable and useful. This was by no means an apology for present-day society.

"Fourier starts directly from the doctrines of French materialism. The Babouvistes were raw, uncivilised materialists,³ but also the more advanced Communism is based on French materialism. The latter, in the French garb, returned to its native country. Godwin and Bentham established their systems on the ethical philosophy of Helvetius, and Owen took it from Bentham and based upon it English Communism. Etienne Corbet, banished to England, brought those ideas back to France and became here the most commonplace representative of Communism. But also the more advanced of French Communists, such as Dezamy, Gay, &c., developed, like Robert Owen, the materialist doctrine into real humanism and the logical basis of Communism."⁴

(The first four sections of Max Beer's annotated selections from Karl Marx's literary remains appeared in the last issue of THE LABOUR MONTHLY (Vol. V, No. 1, July, 1923), which can be ordered through any newsagent, or obtained for 8d. post free direct from the Publisher of THE LABOUR MONTHLY, at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.)

³ This severe view was probably evinced before Marx had read Buonarrotti. He generalised individual opinions of some Babouvistes against the arts and enjoyments of life.—M. B.

⁴ *Aus dem Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. II, pp. 225-240.

The World of Labour

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DUTCH EAST INDIES

Railway Strike and Nationalist Movement

THE Javan Rail and Tramway Workers' Union is the oldest and strongest union in the Dutch East Indies. Founded in 1908 by European workers it had in 1914 a membership of 900, of whom half were Europeans. With the intensive colonial exploitation of the war period and the consequent sharpening of the class struggle in the colonies, the native membership of the union rose enormously. In 1922 it was reported to possess 16,000 members, of whom not more than 150 were Europeans. At a delegate conference in February of the present year the general feeling was in favour of a strike against wage reductions. In the early summer wage reductions were proposed, and immediately the Dutch Colonial Government arrested Samaoen, a Communist railwaymen's leader, in order to prevent him organising a strike. At once the railwaymen struck: reports in the bourgeois Press put their number at 8,000, of whom 20 per cent. were highly skilled locomotive grades. In the middle of June *The Times* correspondent at Batavia reported that the strike had proved a fiasco, and that it had been broken by the dismissal of strikers. However, far more significant was the admission that "the suggestion of a strike of natives in Java would have been ridiculed a few years ago," and further, that the strike "is the most serious affair of its kind that has ever happened in Java." As far as it went, the strike completely disorganised transport and so held up the chief industry of Java—sugar-refining. The Dutch sugar capitalists were undoubtedly seriously frightened.

The strike has drawn attention to the importance of the Dutch East Indies as a factor in the complex equation of world imperialism. Dutch exploitation of the East Indies has developed steadily during the last three centuries from the spice speculators of the seventeenth century to the sugar-refinery owners and the petroleum magnates of the present day. The population of the Dutch East Indies is some 50,000,000 (Java accounting for 35,000,000) of whom 25,000,000 are peasants. The industrial proletariat is estimated to number about 1,000,000: in addition to the railwaymen's union there are unions of dockers (at the ports of Soerabaya and Semarang), printers, oilworkers (4,000 organised), State employees, and sugar-workers.

Nationalists and Communists together founded the first central trade union organisation, but this collapsed in 1921 owing to disputes between these two groups. A new revolutionary trade union federation was founded under Communist influence: it claims 30,000 members and is affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions. A second central organisation was founded by a nationalist union of clerks. The relations between the two organisations are said to be improving, and amalgamation is expected.

The nationalist movement finds its chief expression in the *Sarekat Islam* Party (founded in 1912), which has a membership of a million and a half and five to six million sympathisers. The membership of this party is described as composed of "workers, business men, intellectuals"—it is, in short, a typical nationalist party, embracing different classes, who are united only on the anti-imperialist issue. The *Sarekat Islam* and the other nationalist parties, together with the Communist Party, have founded an anti-governmental *bloc* called the "Radical Concentration," which has adopted the slogan: *Separation from Holland!* The social democrats, who are for the most part only a small clique of intellectuals, vacillate on the anti-imperialist issue: and the Social Democratic Party in Holland is known to support the continuance of Dutch rule in the East Indies. While the Communist influence in the *Sarekat Islam* and particularly in its left wing—the "Red" *Sarekat Islam*—is considerable, the leaders of the *Sarekat Islam* are said to be still under the influence of the social democrats. Accordingly, the *Sarekat Islam* as an organisation did not side with the strikers in the railway strike: and without such support it is not likely that the strike could do other than fail. In the Dutch East Indies the growing working-class movement has to deal with a nationalist movement that is more revolutionary than similar movements in other colonial countries. The difficulty that arises is due to the simple fact that so many working-class militants—especially Communists—are deported or imprisoned by the Dutch imperialist power.

FINLAND

Trade Union Congress

THE Sixth Finnish Trade Union Congress was held at Helsingfors from May 21-26. The White Terror still persists in Finland, and a few weeks before the Congress opened a number of militant trade unionists were arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned. Seventy-six delegates attended the congress, representing 46,000 organised workers. A fact characteristic of the workers' movement in Finland is that more than 80 per cent. of the delegates were reported as having spent over a year in jail.

The struggle in the trade unions between the revolutionary workers and the social democrats was reflected in the congress. That the revolutionary workers are in the ascendant in this struggle is evidenced by the fact that sixty-five delegates were sympathisers with the R.I.L.U. as against eleven social democrats. Further, the new Executive Committee of twenty-six consisted of eighteen adherents of the R.I.L.U., two social democrats, and six non-party.

On the question of affiliation to the R.I.L.U. it was decided to remain outside this International for the time being, in order to prevent the social democrats forcing an immediate split, for which they have been preparing.

The resolution on the relation of the Trade Union Movement to political parties laid down :—

(1) The trade unions of Finland base themselves on the class struggle, and therefore fight side by side with that political organisation of the workers which is actually waging the class struggle.

(2) Common action, for special aims, with this party of class struggle to be secured.

(3) Subject to the foregoing, trade unionists are free to join which workers' political party they choose.

Further, in the resolution on tactics, the congress declared for the united front of the masses of the workers in any activities of the class struggle.

With regard to the work of organisation, the congress agreed on a scheme for the transformation of the existing twenty-one craft unions into thirteen industrial unions.

Finally, the new committee was instructed to prepare a manifesto addressed, in the name of the congress, to all the political and trade union Internationals, calling upon them to assist the workers of Finland in their struggle against the White Terror and for the liberation of political prisoners.

INTERNATIONAL

Enlarged Executive of Communist International

THE Congress of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International opened in Moscow on June 12: the last session took place on June 24. In his opening speech Zinoviev outlined the existing situation from the standpoint of the International. Fascism is marching onward, as the recent events in Bulgaria testify. At the same time the Second and Two and a-half Internationals have fused, with the British Labour Party—formerly regarded by the Second International with some suspicion as a non-Marxist Party—as the leading party in the new International. The tactic of the United Front is being applied with growing success. The party crises in France and Germany have been satisfactorily liquidated. In the national question and the peasant question there is much yet to be done. The Social Democrats must be fought for the leadership of the peasant masses: the slogan of "A Workers' Government" must be extended to "A Workers' and Peasants' Government." A genuine dictatorship of the proletariat demands that the support of the peasants be secured, or at any rate that they should be neutral.

The industrial and agricultural proletariat must find allies among the non-proletarian elements of the toiling masses. Of these elements the most important are the working peasants; important because they are not exploiters. On the contrary, the working peasants are themselves the victims of capitalist exploitation—chiefly indirect exploitation, by means of artificial raising of prices of industrial products, and artificial lowering of prices of agricultural

products. Also, big capitalist interests pocket a considerable part of the income of the working peasants in the form of loan capital, monopoly of the mean of transport, and usurious commercial transactions. Proletariat and peasantry are thus confronted by a common enemy: this circumstance affords a real basis for a class alliance. Owing to the relatively loose connection of the peasantry with the economic system they are not capable of the large-scale organisation necessary to maintain power as a ruling class in society. During the present historical epoch the question is whether the peasants shall be led, but not exploited, by the proletariat, or led *and* exploited by the bourgeoisie.

The Workers' and Peasants' Government provided the keynote for much of the subsequent discussion. Emphasis was laid on the point that it was a logical continuation of the United Front tactic. Varga wished to make the slogan more explicit, and proposed that its altered form should be "A Workers' and Working Peasants' Government." There was general agreement as to the immediate political value of the slogan, and its importance for countries like Canada and the United States, where the farmers are largely sinking to the position of landless tenant farmers (by mortgages, debts, &c.), was specially emphasised by delegates from those countries.

The question of centralism in the International was intimately connected with the Italian and Scandinavian questions. In the Swedish Party Hoeglund had expressed the view that religion was an entirely private matter, with which the party should have no concern; to which Bucharin replied that religion is a part of bourgeois ideology, and therefore the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat from bourgeois ideology becomes *a fortiori* a struggle against religion—it being understood that this struggle is to be waged with the utmost tact and caution, so as not to antagonise those backward sections of the working class who are still under religious influence. That religion in Europe is frankly counter-revolutionary is sufficiently shown by the recent international campaign against Soviet Russia on the grounds of alleged religious persecution by the Russian Government. To the complaints of the Scandinavian parties—especially the Norwegian party—about the "excessive" centralisation of the International, the final answer was given by an Italian delegate, who said: "The history of the Italian working-class movement is an example of what happens to a movement which ignores the proposals of the Communist International." The initial error of Serrati in refusing to expel the reformists from the Italian Socialist Party, and the further error of certain Italian Communists in refusing to apply the tactic of the United Front till too late, had paved the way for the present chaos of the Italian movement and the triumph of Fascism. A French delegate also pointedly remarked that the attitude of the Norwegian party strongly resembled that taken up by certain elements in the French party (Frossard, &c.), who left the party after the Fourth Congress.

Reporting on the trade union question, Losovsky pointed out the existence of a strong leftward tendency among the masses of trade unionists organised in the Amsterdam International, of which some signs were the Frankfort Conference and the recent formation of an International United Front of Transport Workers. He concluded by urging Communists to redouble their efforts in the trade unions, for the prospects for the leadership of the trade

union movement by the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions were encouraging.

The meeting of the next World Congress was fixed for March, 1924, the fifth anniversary of the Communist International. Resolutions were passed on the Norwegian question, the religious question, the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and on the Anglo-Russian crisis.

Other subjects discussed at the Enlarged Executive included the struggle against Fascism, the Labour Movement in England, and the preparation of a Programme for the Communist International.

Transport Workers' United Front

A Joint Conference of representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and the All-Russian Unions of Railway Workers, Transport Workers, and Seamen was held in Berlin on May 23 and 24—the Russian unions being empowered to speak for all the Transport Workers' Unions affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions. The resolution proclaiming the United Front of the Transport Workers of all countries, and also the manifestoes against War and Fascism, are given in full below.

The Transport Workers' United Front was greeted with enthusiasm by a conference of German sailors at Bremen and by a great meeting of Parisian railwaymen and other transport workers, but already the International Federation of Trade Unions had officiously washed its hands of the whole proceedings by a long resolution passed at the Amsterdam Bureau meeting of May 30-31. This resolution in effect declared that unity could only be achieved within the I.F.T.U., thus demonstrating the hostility of the leaders of the I.F.T.U. to any movement for a United Front of action between different sections of the working class.

Resolution on the United Action of the Transport Workers

The position of the World Proletariat is deteriorating at an ever-increasing rate. The continually extended occupation of German territory by French and Belgian troops, the catastrophic effects of the Versailles Peace Treaty, the dependence of the countries of the Little Entente upon the West European capitalist governments, in consequence of which Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia are nothing else than the serviceable tools of the great imperialist States, the steadily growing reaction, the destruction of the Workers' organisations by Fascism in Italy, the persecution of the working class in Yugoslavia, Rumania, Finland, Spain and other countries, and above all the conspiracy of the reactionary governments to overthrow Soviet Russia, threaten the proletariat with complete enslavement and misery.

The Bureau and General Council of the International Transport Workers' Federation, empowered by the congresses of the I.T.W.F., as well as the All-Russian Unions of the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen, empowered on their side by the All-Russian Trade Union Federation and by the Transport Workers' Unions holding the view-point of the Red International of Labour Unions, consider it as their first task to bring about the unity of the Transport Workers in all countries, especially in those countries where the movement is split, and to prevent future expulsions as well as the creation of new parallel organisations.

For the purpose of carrying out this task, the representatives of the I.T.W.F. have conferred with the representatives of the Russian Transport Workers' Unions authorised

by all the Transport Workers' organisations holding the view-point of the R.I.L.U. on May 23 and 24 in Berlin in order to realise this common aim.

The conference, at which the I.T.W.F. was represented by Robert Williams (Chairman), John Doring (Vice-Chairman), M. Bidegaray, Edo Fimmen (General Secretary), and N. Natans (Assistant Secretary), and the Russian Railway Workers, Transport Workers, and Seamen's Unions by A. Andreyev, A. Sadovsky, G. Atchkanov, as well as the All-Russian Trade Union Federation by A. Lozowsky, adopted a series of resolutions with the carrying out of which the organisations concerned on both sides are most expressly charged.

It was decided:—

- (1) To form an equally representative International Committee of Action whose task it will be to propagate, organise, and carry through the struggle of the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen of all countries and tendencies against militarism, danger of war and Fascism.
- (2) To organise a constant control of all transport of munitions, in the first place by the creation of Control Committees at the factories, the important docks, railway junctions, and frontier stations.
- (3) To convene a world congress of the Transport Workers of all countries and tendencies for the purpose of creating a united fighting front and for the setting up of a united national and international organisation.
- (4) To adopt the necessary measures for the common support of Transport Workers of all countries persecuted by Fascism, especially through the creation of a common fund.

The conference expressed the hope that it would not only succeed in the near future in realising the unity of all Transport Workers and effectively carrying on their common struggle against Militarism, Danger of War and Fascism, but that the international secretariats of other industries would create the unity necessary in the interests of all the workers.

Manifestoes to the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen of All Countries

(1) Against War

Comrades,

The solemn promise of the capitalist governments that the great World War which we have just passed through would be the last of all wars was a despicable lie.

The bourgeoisie never for a moment believed in the truth of this promise. It was nothing but a deceptive catchword which it found necessary to employ in order to incite millions of proletarians to engage in mutual slaughter, instead of uniting in the struggle against their common enemy: International Capital. To-day we are further off from the promised peace than ever. Capitalism has emerged out of the War more predatory than ever. Throughout the world capitalist interests conflict with one another. On all sides the combustible material is accumulating for new bloody conflicts, conflicts among the capitalist States themselves, but more particularly between the capitalist States on the one side and the Workers' Republic on the other. The occupation of the Ruhr area by French and Belgian troops, the journey of Marshal Foch to the countries of the Little Entente, Lord Curzon's note to the Russian Government, the endeavours of the Lausanne Conference to subjugate the Turkish people—all these are unmistakable signs of the efforts of the imperialist governments to plunge the world into a new blood bath. The hatred and aversion towards the New Russia evinced throughout the reactionary and conservative world still continues. The most cherished ideal of the propertied classes in all countries remains that of exploiting the inexhaustible treasures of this vast country. The first desire of all the enemies of the

struggling proletariat is, to overthrow the present form of government in Russia, *i.e.*, the rule of the Workers and Peasants.

The Working Class in all countries wants peace.

In all capitalist wars the working class has nothing to gain and all to lose. No matter what the issue of a war, capitalism is always the victor, the international Proletariat always the vanquished. A war of the united capitalist States against Russia would inevitably mean a new world war. The overthrow of the Workers' and Peasants' Republic would be the severest blow which the International Proletariat could sustain. For no matter what the differences dividing the Proletariat internationally, theoretically, and organisationally, one thing is certain: Soviet Russia is the last stronghold against the growing international reaction which threatens to submerge the revolutionary Working Class.

Comrades!

Convinced that the Working Class of all countries can only offer resistance to the threatening war danger and the ever-increasing reaction, when the strongest United Front is formed, the representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and of the Russian Trade Unions of Railway Workers, Transport Workers, and Seamen, empowered by all the Transport Workers' organisations which accept the view-point of the R.I.L.U., have decided to create a *Joint Committee of Action against War and Fascism*.

Determined to overcome all existing divisions in the Transport Workers' movement, and inspired by the wish to create a strong unified power in the interests of the International Proletariat, the representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and of the All-Russian Transport Workers' Unions appeal to the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen of all countries and all tendencies to follow their example and to proceed to common action against the threatening War and against Reaction.

Comrades, Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen, do your duty! Set the example to workers in other industries.

Be on your guard!

Continue the strictest control over the transport of munitions and other war material in all countries. See to it that this control is as stringent as possible and that not a single consignment of war material escapes your notice. Notify your organisations of everything and keep them in constant touch with everything that comes to your notice. Be prepared for all emergencies.

War against War!

Down with Militarism! Down with Reaction! Down with Capitalism!

Long live the United Front of the Transport Workers of all countries!

For the Delegation of the International Transport Workers' Federation:

ROBERT WILLIAMS, Chairman.

EDO FIMMEN, Secretary.

For the Delegation of the All-Russian Unions of Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen, acting for all R.I.L.U. Transport Workers' Unions.

A. ANDREYEV.

A. SADOVSKY.

G. ATCHEANOV.

A. LOZOVSKY.

(2) Against Fascism

Comrades,

The representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and the All-Russian Railway Workers', Seamen's, and Transport Workers' Unions (the latter having a mandate from all the rest of the Transport Workers' organisations standing

on the basis of the Red International of Labour Unions), in conference on May 23 and 24, 1923, in Berlin, urgently call attention to the serious dangers which threaten the Transport Workers, as well as the whole of the Labour Movement, from the side of Fascism and Reaction.

In Italy, under the Fascist dictatorship, Trade Unions have been forcibly dissolved, their funds confiscated, their buildings destroyed, the Labour Press suppressed, and leaders and members of workers' organisations arrested. All working-class organisations which challenge capitalism are subjected to the severest persecution.

In Yugoslavia, in Italy, Spain, and Bavaria, as well as in the rest of Europe, the danger threatening the working-class movement from the side of armed Reaction grows daily. Capitalism, shaken to its foundations by wars and armed peace, shrinks at no form of barbarity for its defence. The White Terror in Hungary, the Fascist tyranny in Italy, the mobilisation of special constables in England, are all phases of the international Class Struggle.

Fascism is forming its shock-troops from the military trained bourgeois youth, from the Russian White Guard emigrants, from the impoverished and desperate middle class, and even from the backward sections of the workers. These shock-troops of the bourgeoisie will be employed as instruments for strike-breaking and for terrorising the militant working masses.

The Transport Workers of all countries must take up the defensive against these dangers threatening them from Fascism and Reaction, by systematic counter-measures and solidarity among themselves as well as with the organised workers in other industries.

As the unity of the Trade Union movement is a pre-requisite for the defeat of Fascism, the conference held in Berlin between the I.T.W.F. and the All-Russian Transport Workers' Unions has decided, with all emphasis, to work for the setting up of the United Front of the Proletariat. The conference turns to the Transport Workers and also to the whole working class of all countries and appeals to them to put an end to all petty strife, to establish the unity of the Trade Union movement, and thus undertake the first step for the systematic and ruthless struggle against Fascism and World Reaction.

The danger is great. Fascism is becoming more and more one of the most fearful weapons of the bourgeoisie against the Proletariat. Against this movement it is necessary immediately to mobilise all forces. Otherwise it will be too late and the power of Fascism will for a long time exceed the forces of the organised Proletariat. The greatest determination is necessary in the defensive struggle against the armed enemy of our class.

Transport Workers of all countries!

The power and importance of your organisation is great. Therefore the responsibility which lies upon you is also great. It is up to you, therefore, by determined struggle, to lead yourselves and the whole working class to victory. You have a decisive part to play in the struggle against Fascism and Reaction.

Transport Workers! Comrades!

Our conference, which is of great importance for the whole of the working class, has passed important resolutions. It now lies with you to convert these resolutions into deeds:—

- (1) To carry on an unwearied and systematic propaganda in the Press and through meetings among the working masses in order to enlighten them as to the character of Fascism as a class weapon of the bourgeoisie.
- (2) To make use of all given opportunities, including parliamentary agitation, for the struggle against Fascism.
- (3) To oppose the direct action of Fascism with the direct action of the working class, the armed attack of the Fascisti with the armed defensive action of the Proletariat.

- (4) To organise systematically a watch over the movements of Fascist bands and over the transport of munitions, by special Control Committees at the railway centres and docks.
- (5) To establish connections for this purpose with all labour organisations concerned (Trade Unions, political parties, co-operative societies, &c.).
- (6) To devote special attention to the work of enlightenment among the backward and unorganised sections of the Transport Workers, in order to hinder the possibility of these being used as tools against their own class brothers. This work of enlightenment is to be conducted within the Fascist trade unions themselves, so that their proletarian elements are brought back to the class struggle.

Transport Workers! Comrades!

See to the carrying out of these decisions!

Down with Fascism!

Down with Reaction!

Down with Capitalism!

Long live the United Front of the Transport Workers of all countries!

For the Delegation of the International Transport Workers' Federation:

ROBERT WILLIAMS, Chairman.

EDO FIMMEN, Secretary.

For the Delegation of the All-Russian Unions of Transport Workers, Railway Workers and Seamen, empowered by the Transport Workers' Unions standing on the platform of the R.I.L.U.:

A. ANDREYEV.

G. ATCHKANOV.

A. SADOVSKY.

A. LOZOVSKY.

BOOK REVIEW

AN OUTPOST OF REVOLUTION

The Far Eastern Republic of Siberia. By Henry Kittredge Norton. (George Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

THE history of the Far Eastern Republic is contained in one word—intervention. Along the line of the Trans-Siberian Railway the forces of the counter-revolution advanced to strike a blow for Tsardom (or the Constituent Assembly) and to do what might be done to overthrow the revolutionary Workers' State of Russia. First came the Czechs, then Kolchak, Colonel John Ward and his "diehards," the Americans, numerous bandits of the Semenov and Ungam brand, and, always and ever, the Japanese. When Kolchak had been routed and his forces were reeling back across Siberia under the hammer-blows of Kamenev's advance—the Japanese were always ready to get a stranglehold on Vladivostok, and to support the Semenov gentry in their "campaigns" of pillage and massacre, to say nothing of direct armed intervention by their own troops wherever they thought it of military (and so of political) value.

Japanese intervention did not cease till October of last year, when Vladivostok was finally evacuated. And hardly had the last Japanese soldier quitted the soil of the Far Eastern Republic before a demand went up from every quarter of the Republic for amalgamation with Soviet Russia and the establishment of Soviet authority. Accordingly, the Popular Assembly of the F.E.R., meeting at Chita early in November, unanimously adopted a resolution liquidating itself and establishing Soviet authority in its territory, completely uniting the republic with the R.S.F.S.R.

So the "democratic" Far Eastern Republic, with the studious shunning of Communism in its constitution, appears in its true historical aspect. That is to say, the "democratic" republic was tactically the best means of avoiding immediate suppression by foreign imperialism, and the best screen behind which to carry on the guerilla warfare of the "Partisan" bands against the forces of intervention. This was undoubtedly appreciated by the Communist members of the republic's Government: and by foregoing any attempt at a premature seizure of power by the Soviets they were enabled, directly the national struggle had succeeded, by the evacuation of the Japanese, to secure an immediate and unquestioned transition of power from the hands of the Popular Assembly to the Soviets.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Norton's book, though it was not published till the spring of this year, should close somewhere about the middle of 1921, for the events of last November have thrown a flood of light on the historical and political significance of the Far Eastern Republic, as we have tried to show. Mr. Norton is a liberal-minded American journalist who is disposed to give even Kolchak (or any other counter-revolutionary) his due. But he profoundly disapproves of Japanese "militarism," and his pages outlining the sins and crimes of the Japanese military are piquant reading. He treats us to some amiable chat about the leading personalities of the Far Eastern Republic;

and his narrative of the struggles of the infant republic, the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, the solid non-party "Peasant Majority," the valiant performances of the Partisans, and the hard battle on the railway front is good journalism and full of valuable material. Of course Mr. Norton does not provide us with a searching political analysis, but he is no Marxist and we do not expect it of him. His obvious misconception of the meaning of Communism is, after all, the misconception of all writers about the Russian Revolution who are not Marxist.

G. A. H.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Labour Supply and Regulation.* By Hambert Wolfe. (Economic and Social History of the World War, British Series. Published on behalf of the Carnegie Endowment for World Peace by Humphrey Milford, Clarendon Press and Oxford University Press. 10s. 6d.)
- The Ruhr.* By Ben Tillett, M.P. (Labour Publishing Company. 9d.)
- The Government-Strikebreaker.* By Jay Lovestone. (Workers' Party of America, New York City.)
- Trade Unionism: Past and Future.* By Mark Starr. Foreword by George Hicks. (Plebs League. 6d.)
- The Challenge of Waste.* By Stuart Chase. (League for Industrial Democracy, New York.)
- The Challenge of War: An Economic Interpretation.* By Norman Thomas. (League for Industrial Democracy, New York.)
- The Intellectual and the Labour Movement.* By George Soule. (League for Industrial Democracy, New York.)
- Der Beste Fabrikdirector.* By Frida Rubiner. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg. M: 0.60.)
- My Flight from Siberia.* By Leon Trotzky. Translated from the Russian by Malcolm Campbell. (Young Communist International.)
- The World's Children,* formerly the *Quarterly Record* of the Save the Children Fund. (Edward Fuller. 1s.)
- The Pillar-Box: No. I.* Edited by George Middleton, M.P. (Union of Post Office Workers. 1s.)
- Report of the International Transport Workers' Congress, held at Vienna, in the Grand Hall of the Kammer für Handel, Industrie and Gewerbe, from 2nd to 6th October, 1922.* (I.T.W.F., Amsterdam.)

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NOTES of the MONTH

The Test of Internationalism—The Internationalism of Labour Statesmen—The United Front with Baldwin—The Nationalism of the Glasgow Group—The Deadlock in Britain—Why Labour-Liberal Remedies Fail—The Forgotten Factors—The Deadlock in Europe—The Break-through in Germany—The Labour Party and the Grand Coalition

WHEN the Trades Union Congress meets it is probable that very little attention will be paid to the German situation except in reference to some conventional resolution on reparations and the diplomatic situation. That this should be so means that something is wrong with the working-class movement of the world viewed as a whole. For one large section to enter on a desperate struggle for existence and for another large section to be in no wise practically concerned is an unhealthy situation. It means that the workers are much more nationally self-centred and isolated than the bourgeoisie. This is very natural for the individual unorganised workers, who in the majority of trades have no opportunities of international contact like the bourgeoisie. But it is not natural for organised movements and leaders who make any profession of international organisation. And in this case there is not any question of some wicked other body such as an alternative International having crept across the path and ruined the chances of international unity. The largest official organisations of the workers in Britain and Germany are the two principal props of the Second International. Yet where is there any sign of the remotest common policy and action—not over high diplomatic questions of how much reparations should be paid—but over the workers' struggle in Germany?

ACTUALLY the situation is much more serious. If it were only a case of national self-absorption and obtuseness to the importance of what is happening to the workers beyond the State frontier, such a situation would be bound to remedy itself by the sheer hard blows of experience—just as the hard blows of

experience will knock the sectionalism out of the British movement at home during the next ten years (if the movement as we know it does not go out of existence). But here the evil is much more positive. For the leaders and big men believe they have got an international policy and are very fond of talking about it. And when this international policy comes to be examined it is found to be a policy of the British Government. It is a policy of revising reparations, holding international diplomatic conferences, maintaining "our" Army of Occupation in Cologne, preserving "our" interests in the Near East, protecting the White Man against coloured aggression, invoking American Big Business as the saviour, praising Wilson, praising Harding, praising Baldwin—anything and everything (written mostly by a set of ex-members of the Foreign Office and Civil Service or liberal diplomatic publicists and experts and dubbed a "Labour" foreign policy) except anything to do with the workers' struggle. The workers' movement appears at the most as a piously added tailpiece, something like the world church movement and other movements which may help to realise these glorious aspirations. This kind of farrago is hawked round on every Labour platform and news-sheet as a grand international policy and the one and only cure-all for all our domestic and foreign troubles.

THE result is that the movement is nauseated with international platitudes and at the same time has no conception of its being part of the international working class. The daily issues of the fight, such as the arrest to-day and imprisonment of the whole Executive and all the leading members of the Finnish Labour Party or the shooting yesterday of strikers in South Africa, pass by without a muscle being moved. And when a real crisis arises, such as the present in Germany, the movement has no form of expression or action save to declare its complete solidarity behind a Tory Prime Minister and to maintain a stubborn indifference to the struggle of the German workers. The *Daily Herald* informs us that "the Prime Minister has in this matter the British nation behind him," and that as for the situation in Germany "in any case we must keep our heads cool—even if we see chaos come in Germany." It is no doubt very helpful to the German workers, struggling for bread, to know that the British workers are "keeping

cool." And this is called an international policy, and its exponents claim to come from forming a brand new perfect united international workers' organisation. This travesty of an international policy is even worse than no international policy. It is as if on the home field the leaders of the movement were to answer the charge of sectionalism by saying: "But we are all united in our loyalty to His Majesty the King."

THERE has been so much vague and insincere claptrap talked about international affairs and their importance to Labour (chiefly as a way of avoiding unpleasant home questions from the unemployed and others) that it is difficult for those most genuinely concerned with the international working-class movement to speak much without a sense of unreality on international questions. It is natural to turn almost aggressively from the current high political gossip to questions of the parish pump that do at any rate concern the action of the workers. So much is this the case that the group of Labour M.P.'s most energetically concerned with the action of the working class have defiantly turned away from the liberal foreign policy of their leaders to a kind of aggressive nationalism which has led them into curious paths. But Mr. Wheatley and his friends do not remedy the liberal pacifism of Messrs. MacDonald and Morel by entering into the service of Allied militarism on the Ruhr, nor do they show the clearest understanding of the working-class fight by assuming that Glasgow can cure the ills of Glasgow. The two groups together only reveal themselves as complementary parts of one picture of the present movement: Messrs. MacDonald and Snowden winning the praise of the *Daily News* for their Cobdenite internationalism, and Messrs. Wheatley and Kirkwood winning the praise of the *Morning Post* for their sturdy British patriotism: both alike revealing the poverty of the movement which does not know itself as part of the international working class. But since the meaning of working-class internationalism, the first and also the last lesson of working-class politics, is so little even guessed at here except in a sentimental Christian fashion, it will be desirable, even at the expense of passing over for the moment vital home issues, to see if we cannot get

somewhat closer to it in terms of the present situation. And for this purpose it is not enough to talk of international working-class solidarity—not because this is to be regarded as a conventional catchword to be applauded in the abstract, but because, however sincerely applauded, it cannot in practice mean much to us until it has been burnt in by experience such as has not yet been gone through in this country. Therefore it is necessary to consider in concrete terms what is the importance of the present German situation to the British working class.

IF we are to get a clear view on this, we need to consider more widely what is the present outlook and prospects of the British working class. It is common ground that the British working class is at present at a heavy disadvantage. There are up to one and a-half millions unemployed. Those who are employed are heavily reduced in wages and are working in constant fear of unemployment, thus submitting to the most arbitrary decisions and conditions rather than risk action. The question is: what is the prospect of emerging from this position? The present condition of affairs is now entering its fourth year—thus exceeding in length as well as in severity any previous crisis of modern industrialism. This prolongation is defeating all expectations and calculations. What was before treated as a temporary slump is now seen to be something much more chronic; even the word “permanent” begins to be whispered. The question has now become common in all circles whether there will ever be full employment in England again. What is being witnessed, in fact, is not a simple post-war world unsettlement (America has already recovered for the moment and is booming again), but the sinking of British capitalist supremacy. What, then, are the remedies put forward? The Labour Party planks everything on European restoration. The Baldwin Government looks rather to imperial reorganisation and development. Both these schemes are the same in this, that they are schemes of capitalist reconstruction, differing only in the direction of emphasis. How much justification have the workers to place their hopes in either of these schemes of capitalist reconstruction as their one salvation, even abstaining from action on their own part, as instructed

by their leaders, in the hope of this millennium? Can all the king's horses and all the king's men ever put Humpty Dumpty together again?

THE Labour-Liberal scheme of European restoration assumes firstly that the whole cause of the abnormal distress in England is the unsettlement of Europe, and secondly, that the restoration of Europe can be accomplished by the actions of the British Government. Neither of these assumptions can be regarded as justified. It has already for a long time been clear that the British Government—Tory, National Liberal, Independent Liberal, or Labour—would be only too glad to see a settlement of Europe for the sake of British trade, but that such a wish does not produce a settlement when England is only one factor in a total situation which as a whole constitutes a deadlock of forces. In the second place, and even more important, to attempt to trace the whole of British economic decline to the Treaty of Versailles is wilfully to ignore the biggest factors in the situation from the point of view of their significance for the future.

LET textiles be taken as an example. The president of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce recently declared that the British textile trade with India had fallen from 3,000 million yards of cotton goods exports before the war to 1,000 million yards after the war, or a drop of 66 per cent., representing the loss of two working days in the week for every Lancashire operative. Was this due even indirectly in the main to the Treaty of Versailles? On the contrary, the main contributing causes were the combined campaigns of Gandhi's non-co-operation movement and the import of textile machinery into India, resulting in an increase of India's cotton goods production from 28 per cent. of her own consumption before the war to 61 per cent. after the war. But the same process is true of all the newer capitalist countries after the war. In South Africa the 1915-16 Census revealed 3,998 factories with an output of £40,000,000 worth; the 1920-21 Census revealed 7,005 factories with an output of £98,000,000 worth, or an increase of industrial output of close on 150 per cent. in five years. There are the big, permanent, and increasing factors in the British economic decline

which no juggling with the Treaty of Versailles can affect. Is there any better hope, then, in the Baldwin scheme of imperial development? An examination will reveal the same obstacles and the same failure to affect the permanent factors, as we shall endeavour to show when we deal with the Imperial Conference next month. The British Government can get nothing from the Dominions except at the price of forms of preference or subsidy or assisted loans which in practice go to build up the rivals whose existence constitutes the problem. But it is sufficient for the moment to say that even on their own showing the British Government schemes of imperial development will take at least ten or fifteen years to develop to fruition sufficient to affect materially the English situation. Thus in neither of these directions can the workers see any reasonable prospect of getting out of the present situation.

IN this way the English situation reveals a deadlock with no immediate easy hope of escape. Neither mechanical official campaigns of trade union reorganisation and reuniting, conducted with the prim decorum of a Church of England National Mission, nor desperate unofficial struggles of angry sections of workers as each new economic blow falls upon them, conducted without common aim or objective or revolutionary insight and even in antagonism to the revolutionary elements that alone can help them, neither one nor the other can make any difference to the brick wall of the situation. The inescapable facts of the position force us to turn our attention to the international situation. But here, if we proceed to examine it, we find the same deadlock. The French Government, driven into the reckless adventure of the Ruhr by the fatal imminence of bankruptcy at home, and, after having become inextricably entangled in a long and fruitless warfare with a whole population, unable to withdraw for the same reasons that pushed it in, plunges on with no ultimate goal or vision save the desperate phantom of military hegemony. The British Government, wringing its hands helplessly over the ruin of its trade and now cajoling, now threatening, now blustering, longing to use a pressure that it does not command, unable to face the only logical alternative of ranging itself on the side of Russia and Germany, worsted in the debts and in the economic settlement, alike in paying and in not receiving,

looking wistfully to America for an assistance that never comes, remains in drawn-out indecision and impotence over the European situation, and even turns aside at intervals to wash its hands of Europe with which it is indissolubly bound and tries to find sufficient sustenance in dreams of empire. On the other hand, the German Government, precariously placed between the upper millstone of the Entente and the nether millstone of social discontent at home, remains a formula without power; while the American Government, secure in its magnificent isolation and superiority, based on its self-sufficiency and the financial ability of its capitalists to take advantage of the European chaos, remains a power without a formula.

THUS in every direction the same deadlock presents itself. *The present European situation is a deadlock from which there is no way out save the proletarian revolution.* This is the great key fact of the European situation, and therefore the most important governing factor of policy for the English working class. But in what sense is it possible to speak of the proletarian revolution in view of the immaturity of the working class and the still powerful organisation of Western capitalism? In the same sense in which it was possible to speak of the proletarian revolution as the inevitable and only possible outcome of the world war, namely, as an outcome which, though logically necessary over the whole field, would, owing to the unpreparedness of proletarian organisation, first break out at that point only where the system was weakest and there form the nucleus of future development. That was the significance of the Russian revolution, which remains permanently the greatest conquest of the proletariat, because it was the first conquest from which the rest follows. Had the war passed without the Russian revolution, then not only the future fortunes of the working class, but the whole future of human development would have failed. But the war accomplished its work in that it left embedded in the heart of the existing system the nucleus of the world revolution. Once that conquest has been accomplished and can be maintained by the consciousness of the working class throughout the world, the rest follows like the slow unravelling of a tangled skein. We are now at the second stage of the process. Once again we are

reaching a situation of European crisis and deadlock from which the only ultimate outcome can be the proletarian revolution, and once again the critical point is the point at which the system as a whole is weakest—in this case, Germany. Therefore the German situation is the critical situation, not merely in the sense of common interest and solidarity, but as the immediately decisive centre for the whole European and world working class. If the English workers do not realise their relation now and in time to the German workers' struggle it is their own fortunes that will be pushed back.

WHAT has happened in Germany? The important point of what has happened in Germany is that the masses have begun to act. The Cuno Government was overthrown by the direct pressure of the workers outside under the open leadership of the Communists. That is a tremendous fact, not only by itself, but in its meaning for the future. Previously, since the suppression of the November revolution, the action of the workers has been isolated, passive, or sectional. In the Kapp putsch, they acted as a united body in the general strike; but it was only a defensive action, and the attempt to carry it further to any positive gains ended in confusion and failure. Now they have formed the United Workers' Front in action through the Factory Councils, overcoming the old confusion and irresolution betokened by the division of Social Democrats and Communists, advancing beyond the isolated and sectional economic strikes and bread riots, and proceeding onward to the direct political struggle—the call for the overthrow of the Government—and bringing down the existing Ministry against the declared intention of the combined majority of Social Democrat, Liberal, Catholic, Industrialist, and other “democratic” politicians on the Reichstag benches. The Cuno Government has gone. How long will the Stresemann Government remain? The forward movement of the workers has begun, and will not easily be stayed. The surest sign of the crisis is the return of the Social Democrats into the Cabinet as in the days of the crushing of the November revolution. The Stresemann Cabinet is the coming into the open of the alliance between Big Capital and Social Democracy; and that coming into the open only happens in

moments of extremest crisis. But to-day the situation is very different from the days of the crushing of the November revolution. Then the Social Democratic Party led and controlled the working class; the Communist Party did not exist. To-day the Social Democratic Party is only a husk of its former self, hardly existing in daily life outside its officials, broken up with division, and its most active rank-and-file members openly working with the Communists; while the Communist Party has established itself as the party of the working class, leading its action and dominating the Factory Councils and the membership of the most powerful unions. Then the treachery of the Social Democrats was fatal to the revolution. To-day the treachery of the Social Democrats will only be fatal to themselves. It is already clear from news received that the outcome of the entry into the Stresemann Cabinet means the disruption of the German Social Democratic Party and the last stage in its dissolution and decay.

AT this point it is necessary to ask the question fairly and squarely: How does the Labour Party stand in relation to the German Social Democratic Party? Does it stand in with them? Does their policy represent the policy of the Second International? We have always said that the policy of the Second International is a policy of coalition with capitalism. That charge is now receiving a brutal illustration, full of ugly meaning for the future in this country. The suggestion of such a charge, the suggestion of even such a delicate form of it as an electoral alliance or understanding or a future Parliamentary bloc, has always received the most indignant denials here. How do the authors of these denials regard this open realisation of the policy of the Second International? But indeed the Grand Coalition is not so far away from here already. Do we not find Sir Allan Smith and the leaders of the Labour Party declaring themselves in open harmony on immediate economic issues? "Sir Allan Smith speaks for the employers, but he is using the very phrases of the Labour Party," declares Mr. Clynes. And in foreign policy do we not find the same united front of Baldwin and MacDonald? Indeed the situation becomes so open that Mr. Clynes declares at a conference of

General Workers that "the Government and Opposition might co-operate with advantage on specific national business." Why, then, have an Opposition except for appearance's sake? The Grand Coalition is not a peculiarity of Germany. It is the policy of the Second International in its most open form. And as surely as that policy is rotting and destroying the remains of the once mighty Social Democratic Party of Germany, so surely will it bring to the ground their counterparts in this country and leave the workers to pass away from the present lead to new paths and a new direction.

CO-OPERATION AND THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY¹

By N. LENIN

I

IT seems to me that we are devoting too little attention to the Co-operative Movement. Everyone cannot grasp that now, since the October revolution, and unprejudiced by the New Economic Policy (on the contrary, in this respect we must say: thanks to the New Economic Policy), co-operation has attained a unique significance in Russia. The founders of the old co-operatives mingled much imagination with their dreams. They were often ridiculously imaginative people. And why have their dreams been mere imaginings? Because these people have never grasped the fundamental significance of the political struggle of the working class for the overthrow of the exploiting class. Here in Russia this overthrow has been accomplished, and much that appeared fantastic, or even extravagantly romantic, in the dreams of the old co-operators has become a complete reality.

Here in Russia, where the power is in the hands of the working class, where all the means of production are the property of the State, the sole task remaining to us has been to secure a real co-operative alliance of the population. Once given the pre-requisite of complete co-operation by the population, that socialism which hitherto, and rightly, evoked at most an indulgent smile from those who were convinced of the necessity of the class struggle, of the struggle for political power, has obviously attained its end.

But none of our comrades are taking sufficient account of the fact that co-operation has acquired enormous significance in Russia. With the New Economic Policy we made concessions to the peasant, to the merchant, to the principle of private trade; contrary to what is generally supposed, it is precisely this that gives rise to the immense importance of co-operation. All that we essentially need is the union of the Russian population on a sufficiently broad

¹ Written in January of this year.

co-operative basis during the regime of the New Economic Policy; for we have now attained such a degree of unification of private commercial interests, of their supervision and control by the State, and of their subordination to the interests of the general public, that we may claim to have realised what was formerly a stumbling block to very many Socialists. For is not the actual power of the State over all the most important means of production, and this State power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with many millions of peasants and small holders, the secure and leading rôle of the proletariat in relation to this peasantry, &c.—is this not all that is required to enable us to build up, with the aid of co-operation (that co-operation which we formerly treated as petty shopkeeping, and which we may still so treat, from one point of view, under the New Economic Policy), the complete structure of Socialist society? This co-operation is not in itself the structure of Socialist society, but it is everything that is required now for this structure.

It is precisely this circumstance which is under-estimated by many of our practical workers. Co-operation receives too little attention from us; its extraordinary importance is not realised, first and foremost, in relation to the means of production as State property, and secondly, with regard to the transition to a new order on the simplest, easiest, and (for the peasantry) the best attainable lines.

And this is just the most important point. It is one thing to indulge in all sorts of imaginings about labour associations for building up a Socialist structure, but it is another matter when it comes to practically building up this Socialism so that every small holder may have his share in it. We have already reached this stage. There is no doubt whatever but that we, having reached this stage, are not making full use of it.

We were too hasty at the time of our transition to the New Economic Policy, not in the sense that we granted too great concessions to the principles of private industry and free trade, but in the sense that we forgot to think of co-operation, which we still underestimate, and whose tremendous significance, in relation to the two sides of this question mentioned above, we are already beginning to forget.

I want next to discuss with my readers what can and must be done now, practically, starting from this "co-operative" principle. Along what lines can and must we now set to work, in order to so develop this co-operative principle that its Socialist significance becomes clear to everyone?

Politically, the co-operative question should be so treated that co-operation is granted, always and everywhere, certain financial facilities (amount of bank rate, &c.). Co-operatives must be supported by State credits exceeding—if not greatly, at least somewhat—those granted to private undertakings or even to heavy industry.

Every social order owes its existence solely to the financial support of a certain class. It is not necessary to mention those hundreds and hundreds of millions of roubles which the birth of "free" capitalism cost. But we must not forget it, and in actual practice we must realise that at the present time the social order to which we are to lend more than the average meed of support must be a co-operative order. And we must support it in the true sense of the word, that is, it is not sufficient if we understand by such support the support of any co-operative enterprise; by this support we must understand the support of a co-operative enterprise in which real masses of the population participate. It is, no doubt, a correct formula to give a bonus to the farmer who takes part in co-operative enterprise. But his participation must be examined with respect to its consciousness and quality—that is the main point in question. When the co-operative member comes to a village and opens a co-operative store there, the population has no share in this, strictly speaking. But for the sake of its own advantage it will speedily endeavour to have one.

There is therefore another side to the question. From the viewpoint of the "civilised" European (above all from that of everybody who can read and write) we have not far to go before every single individual can be induced to participate in co-operative operations, not merely passively, but actively. Actually there is "only" one further step necessary: to render our population so "civilised" that it will realise all the advantages of personal participation in the co-operative, and proceed to participate—

"only" this one step. But to realise this "only" implies a great stride forward, the covering of a wide stretch along the road of the cultural development of the whole mass of the people. Therefore we must make it our rule: as little philosophising as possible, as little tomfoolery as possible. In this respect the New Economic Policy is a sign of progress in so far as it accommodates itself to the level of the lowest peasant and demands nothing higher from him. But to utilise the New Economic Policy for the purpose of inducing the whole population, every separate individual, to take part in co-operation—this requires a whole historical epoch. We may pass through this epoch in one or two decades. But it will still be a distinct historical epoch, and without this historical epoch, without everyone's being able to read and write, without adequate insight, without having educated the population to the extent that all can make some use of books, and without having created the material basis for this, without a certain security, let us say, against bad crops and famine—without all this we cannot attain our end. Everything now depends on whether we can supplement that revolutionary *élan*, that revolutionary enthusiasm which we have so often successfully proved, by a capacity—I might almost say—for acting like a sensible and experienced shopkeeper, which is all that is required from a good co-operator. By commercial capacity I understand the capacity to be a civilised business man. This distinction must be learnt by those Russian people who think that, if one trades, that means that one possesses the qualities of a trader. This is entirely wrong. One must know how to trade in the European manner.

I conclude: A number of economic, financial, and banking privileges for co-operation: this is the form in which support will be given to the New Organisation Principle by our Socialist State. But this only draws the broad outlines of our task, for the whole actual contents of this task have not here been practically detailed; that is, we must understand how to determine upon that form of "bonus" (and the conditions under which it is granted) which we shall accord to co-operation, the form of "bonus" which adequately aids co-operation, the form of bonus by the help of which we can educate civilised members of co-operatives. And the organisation of civilised members of co-operatives, given common ownership

of the means of production on the basis of the class victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie—this is Socialisation.

II

In my writings on the New Economic Policy I have always quoted from the article which I wrote in 1919 on State Capitalism. This has given rise to a certain amount of questioning among some of our younger comrades; their doubts, however, were mainly confined to the abstractions of politics and not to the new policy in itself.

It seemed to them that it was incorrect to describe as State Capitalism a system in which the means of production belong to the working class, which owns the State. These comrades did not observe, however, that I employed the term "State Capitalism" as an historical link between our present policy and the position I held in my controversy with the so-called Left Communists. I then proved that State Capitalism would be a higher stage than our present system of economy. For me it was important to establish the continuity of connection between ordinary State Capitalism and that unusual and indeed extraordinary State Capitalism to which I referred when introducing the reader to the New Economic Policy. Secondly, the practical aim was important for me, and our aim was to be able to arrange for concessions, and this under the conditions prevailing here would be a pure type of State Capitalism. This, then, is the main form in which the idea of State Capitalism presented itself to me.

There is another aspect of the matter, another factor, which we can use as a counter-balance to State Capitalism. This is co-operation.

Without any doubt a co-operative society in a capitalist State is a collectivist capitalist institution. Under our present economic conditions we combine private capitalist enterprises, on socialised land and under the control of the State, which is in the hands of the working class, with enterprises of a wholly Socialist type, where the means of production and the land—in fact the whole of each enterprise—belong to the State. Under these conditions it is clear that co-operation, which formerly had no significance

from the point of view of principle, now appears as a third form of enterprise.

Under individualist capitalism, co-operative enterprises are distinguished from capitalist enterprises mainly because they are collectivist. Under State capitalism co-operative enterprises are distinguished from State capitalist enterprises, first, because they are private and, secondly, because they are collectivist. Under our present system co-operative enterprises are distinguished from the private capitalist enterprises that still exist because they are collectivist; but they do not differ from Socialist enterprises if they are based on the land and the means of production that belong to the State, *i.e.*, to the working class.

These facts are not sufficiently taken into account when co-operation is discussed. It is forgotten that with us co-operation assumes a significance different from that which it has elsewhere. Apart from concessions—which by the by have not developed very fast—the spread of co-operation here would completely coincide with Socialism.

I will try to make my idea clear. What were the fantastic plans of the old co-operators, including Robert Owen? They dreamed of transforming modern society peacefully into Socialism without paying the least regard to such a fundamental question as that of the class struggle, the conquest of political power by the working class, and the overthrow of the exploiting class. We are, therefore, quite right in regarding this “Co-operative” Socialism as a fantastic, romantic, and even puerile dream—a dream that it is possible, by merely inducing the population to become co-operators, to convert class enemies into class collaborators, and the class war into a class peace (the so-called civil peace). Undoubtedly from the point of view of the *fundamental* tasks of modern times we are right in this, for without the class struggle for political power Socialism is impossible.

But observe how all this is changed when power is already in the hands of the working class, and the power of the exploiters has been overthrown, and all the means of production are in the hands of the working class—except for those which the workers’ State deliberately and conditionally gives up to exploiters for a time in the form of concessions.

We should now be right to say that the mere growth of co-operation here with us is equivalent to the growth of Socialism.

We are compelled to recognise a radical change in our point of view with regard to Socialism. The radical change is this: formerly we laid emphasis—we were compelled to do so—on the political struggle, on revolution, and on the conquest of power; while now we must lay all our emphasis on peaceful organisation and on “cultural” work. Or rather, I would be prepared to say that we should lay all emphasis on cultural work if we were not compelled to fight for our international position. Putting that aside for the moment, and limiting ourselves to internal economic relations, we can truly say that we now emphasise mainly work that may be described as cultural.

We are confronted by two fundamental tasks; when we have accomplished these our epoch will be ended. The first is to reform our machinery of government which is absolutely worthless. We inherited it from the previous epoch. During the five years of our existence we have not done very much—we could not do very much—in this direction. Our second task is to conduct cultural work among the peasantry; the aim of this is to spread co-operation.

If co-operation was completely developed, we should already be standing with both our feet firmly planted upon Socialist soil. This condition of a complete development of co-operation includes such a development in education and culture among the peasants that it requires a complete cultural revolution.

More than once our opponents have said that we are frivolously trying to plant Socialism in a country that is not sufficiently advanced. Our opponents erred however. We began at the opposite end from that presumed in the theories of the pedants; our political and social revolution preceded the revolution in culture. This revolution now confronts us.

All that we require now is to bring about the cultural revolution and our country will be completely Socialist. But this cultural revolution represents an incredibly vast task, both of an instructional character—for we are illiterate—and of a material character, for in order to be cultured we need a certain development of the means of production, a material basis.

THE ISSUES BEFORE THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS

By HARRY POLLITT

THE Fifty-fifth Trades Union Congress opens at Plymouth on September 3. It will be the usual type of congress, with the usual type of delegates in the majority: comfortable, full-time, well-paid trade union officials, who look on congress week as a holiday and a reunion to look forward to from year to year.

Whether the agenda be long or short, whether it contains unimportant or important resolutions, it is all the same to the majority of the delegates: the discussion of resolutions is the only thing that mars the "holiday."

The Congress at Southport was faced with three important issues, all of which were inadequately discussed and finally shelved. These same issues come up again before the Plymouth Congress, but in a more serious and aggravated form; and they will be shelved again, even though the future of the trade unions represented at congress, for many years to come, depends upon how these issues are faced.

We refer to the problems of

- (1) The Ruhr occupation.
- (2) Unemployment.
- (3) The future of the General Council.

All the other matters on the lengthy agenda are of minor importance compared to these.

At the Southport Congress Mr. Edo Fimmen was sent with a special mandate by the German workers and by the Amsterdam International to ask the Trades Union Congress to lend its support in any international action taken, or needing to be taken, in the event of the occupation of the Ruhr by the French army. In the course of his speech, which received great applause (chiefly because

the delegates never thought they would be called upon to take any action), he said:—

I have to request you, British comrades, to stand at their side (the German workers) and help them in the most distressful time through which they are passing since the war broke out. At this moment the German proletariat is at the limit of its powers against the reactionary powers in that country. They expect international Labour, from the Trade Union international and the political international, to come to their rescue and help them, not only to save their Republic, but also to save their economic life. I think such an appeal will get an answer from British Labour. I read in the 'bus this morning the resolution your Congress adopted in regard to the German situation. I am happy to say that this resolution as it stands will meet what the German workers expect from you ; *but, friends, I also know that resolutions always sound very nice when they are spoken and when we see them on paper, but they have no value if at the moment it is necessary the people who pass resolutions are not prepared or able to stand up for them and to fight for them ;*"

and afterwards, in letting the German workers know of the enthusiastic support they could depend on from the British trades unions, Mr. Fimmen said, on September 15, immediately after his visit to Southport:—

In the event of the Ruhr being occupied, it would be met by a strike of 25,000,000 workers of the International Federation of Trade Unions.

And when the Ruhr had been occupied, and the I.F.T.U. had done nothing, Mr. Fimmen, Secretary of the International to which the British Trades Union Congress pays £7,418 yearly in affiliation fees, made a speech in Paris on the Ruhr situation, in the course of which he said :—

It must be recognised that we have not been able to do what we said we would do. There is a danger that the present International may prove as helpless in facing this crisis as the old International was in 1914. If we cannot organise resistance in every country, civilisation is doomed.

Well, the French have been in the Ruhr eight months. The result is seen in the misery of countless thousands of German working-class homes, in the appalling increase of unemployment that faces this country, and in the tense political situation, making any faith in a trade revival a palpable absurdity so far as this country is concerned. And all the time the British Trades Union Congress has done nothing to prevent the occupation from taking place, and

has even refused to support any movement to bring about the withdrawal of our troops from Germany.

It is obvious that in any crisis which forces the German workers to strike either against the French occupation or against their own capitalists these troops will be used to suppress the German workers. In the debate on this question at the Labour Party Conference, Mr. Thomas, President of the I.F.T.U., stated that it was the wish of the German trade union leaders that our troops should be kept there. Finally he asked the conference to remember that the German trade unionists had another enemy besides the French: "they were the Communists."

The inference is very clear that the use of British troops would be welcomed if they were used either to suppress the Communists or any movement for which the Communists were responsible.

How will Congress face this problem of the Ruhr? Will it decide to organise mass demonstrations of the workers of this country, calling attention to the Ruhr situation, which is the logical sequel to the Peace Treaty? Will it send delegates to France and Germany bearing fraternal greetings from the British workers and demanding common action between the workers of all the countries that can help in ending the present situation? Will it demand that the I.F.T.U. convene a world conference of all trade unionists to organise defence corps against the growing danger of war and Fascism? These dangers are growing as a result of the Ruhr situation. Will it give a lead and call a one-day general strike of British workers to demonstrate practically to the Government our detestation of the Peace Treaty and our demand that it should be scrapped and that all our troops be withdrawn immediately from German territory?

It is safe to say that Congress will do none of these things. It will confine itself to passing a composite resolution on foreign policy, in which there will be a reference to the Ruhr, and the hope expressed that we won't force the Germans to pay more than they say they can pay. If half an hour is devoted to this resolution congress will get restive, especially if it is near dinner time, and delegates will want to know "What's all this to do with England?" and so the problem will be shelved again.

Meanwhile the Ruhr problem grows more serious; the German workers will be sacrificed either to Fascism or to a Franco-German combination of capitalists. The increased exploitation that will ensue will react upon our own workers, the capitalist offensive against our own conditions will increase in intensity, and our standard of living will be brought down to the German level. Unemployment will increase, the goods now being produced in Germany will be thrown on the markets. This must affect our own production, and yet, despite all this, the Trades Union Congress will shelve the problem, because it is not courageous enough to face up to it and boldly carry out the special demands that fall upon the British Section of the Amsterdam International.

The second grave problem is that of unemployment. Everywhere it is now acknowledged that there are not only no prospects of any trade revival, but on the contrary that unemployment will increase to a tremendous extent during the coming winter. Sir Allan Smith has, on behalf of the big industrialists, expressed this view in two memoranda to the Government. In the last of these the following significant passage occurs in reference to the recent speech of the Minister of Labour. Sir Allan Smith says:—

Undoubtedly, there was such a decline for the first five months of the year, but then the weekly decrease became less and less, and the latest figures available show that a turning point has been reached, and the figures have now started to increase. If the present rate of unemployment is maintained (and there was nothing in the Minister's speech to encourage the most sanguine to hope that the rate will be checked) this relief will be quite inadequate to prevent even larger numbers than last year from becoming workless again. The gravity of the position cannot be exaggerated.

These extracts show how serious the position is, but what will Congress do? The Congress will probably receive a speaker from the unemployed organisation. It will listen very sympathetically and take up a collection when he has finished. Then the General Council will put up one of the "big men" of the Congress. He will move a long resolution deploring the evils of unemployment, and putting on record the fact that if the Government had only adopted the policy of the Labour Movement all would have been well. The resolution will probably talk about great relief schemes, and

also demand that recognition be given to Soviet Russia. After the resolution has been seconded Congress will begin to wonder how much more time is going to be spent on this unemployment, and then the resolution will be passed unanimously and Congress will probably adjourn for dinner or pass on to a resolution demanding old age pensions.

The treatment of unemployment by the General Council of the Congress is a sorry tale. The only time any attempt has been made to co-operate with the unemployed was during the Hunger March, when the question had reached such vast dimensions that the Council thought they would reap some publicity out of it—after all the spade work had been done by the men whom previously the Council had refused to look at. They therefore co-operated with the unemployed organisation and held a special Unemployed Sunday, and after that—nothing further has been done. But with the appalling prospects that lie ahead the unemployed will again begin to agitate, and October and November will again witness mass agitation by the unemployed all over the country. What can Congress do in this situation? Its duty is very simple. It must instruct the General Council to commence a joint campaign with all working-class organisations around the slogan: "Work or Full Maintenance at Highest Trade Union Rates."

The past policy of letting the unemployed look after themselves should cease. The idea that the unemployed are a class apart from those workers who happen to be at work must be killed. These things and defects in our present methods can be altered by the General Council calling together representatives from all workers' organisations, forming a joint committee, and then using the whole resources of the movement to bring about a successful conclusion to this campaign for "Work or Full Maintenance for the Unemployed."

If this is done we shall find that the ranks are rapidly closed and that complete unity will prevail. Enthusiasm would be roused as a result of the unemployed problem at last being tackled in a practical manner, instead of light and airy talk and resolutions of pious sympathy. Let every delegate remember that this is the fourth winter we are facing with this problem of unemployment before us, and that the three past Trades Union Congresses have

failed miserably in their treatment of the question. Is the Fourth Congress going to do the same?

At the Cardiff Congress in 1921 the old Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress was liquidated and the General Council of the Congress elected. This step was hailed by the Labour Press and the trade union officials as a big step forward. At last, we were assured, the trade unions had a General Staff that was going to stop the old sectionalism and lead us forward to victory.

After a year's working the General Council were forced by two causes to apply to the Southport Congress of 1922 for increased powers. In practice they had found they had no power at all, and such a General Staff must be powerless, which of course is exactly the case with the General Council. They have not the power to take a levy, to demand even consultation before a strike takes place, nor can they call one union out on strike in support of another union. This was the first cause that compelled Congress to apply for an increase in its powers. The second was the insistent demand of the rank and file for a General Council that could lead and direct the trade unions in a united manner. The spokesman of the Council admitted that they had been influenced by this rank and file pressure.

Mr. Swales, of the A.E.U., speaking on behalf of the General Council, moved a long resolution, the essence of which was that the Council should have power to make financial levies to help unions whose members are on strike, and also that they should be consulted and kept informed of all developments in regard to strikes or the possibility of strikes. Quite a modest resolution, but when discussion began an amazing spectacle was witnessed. The resolution was fiercely attacked by the very men who never tire of talking about the "need for unity and solidarity." Mr. Cramp, Mr. Clynes, Mr. Hodges, Mr. Bevin, all did their best to strangle the new baby just as it wanted to try and walk. In an immortal passage, Mr. Hodges, with eyes ablaze, said:—

In the nature of the human mind everyone of those thirty-two persons (the General Council) looks at every dispute as to how it is going to affect his trade, and in that degree he unconsciously steps in,

saying, "I will do my best to prevent that stoppage," not because of the principles that are in dispute, but because of his fear of the consequences to his members.

In that passage Mr. Hodges touched the spot. He showed quite plainly and truthfully that the leaders don't want unity of action, because it might mean they lose a little power in their own union. The proposal of the Council was naturally defeated.

This year the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Unions have placed exactly the same resolution on the agenda. The weakness of their resolution is that it seeks to give the Council power to do everything except the one essential thing that is wanted, namely, the power to be able to call other unions out on strike in support of a particular union whose members are out on strike, and whose action is being weakened by the members of other unions remaining at work. And Congress will discuss this resolution faced with a practical example of where the movement is going wrong and where it could be altered if Council only had the power to take definite action.

The Boilermakers have been locked out of the Federated shipyards for months past. The longer they are out, the more men of other unions, shipwrights, blacksmiths, engineers, labourers, are being stood off. Yet they are not helping the Boilermakers to win because they are not actually fighting with them, and because half of the members of their various unions are still at work.

It is in such a case as this that the Council ought to have the power to call out on strike all the shipyard unions in support of the Boilermakers and stop the industry altogether, then levy all the other unions to support all the men locked out or on strike in this industry.

Congress will, of course, not agree to any such power being given; and even if it did, it is doubtful whether the General Council would use it, composed as it is of men of sectional ideas and craft prejudices. But this is the only line it is possible for any serious-minded delegate to take. The need of the movement is unity. Everyone recognises that. Move among any section of workers, in any industry, during a sectional strike, and again and again you hear the cry, "We all ought to be out together."

This is the cry that will gather force, and soon it will compel the Council to build the organisation that will make it possible for the workers "to be all out together."

The other issues before Congress are many and varied, but the three chief issues are those indicated, and on the manner of their treatment depends the future of the trade unions of this country. The Plymouth Congress may be remembered either as a landmark when the Trades Union Congress changed from a holiday week to a live congress, dealing with pressing problems in a bold and militant way, or, if it fails to do this, it will be remembered as the congress that registered another failure and gave new encouragement to the capitalists to renew their attack upon the unions during the coming winter.

LEO SCHLAGETER— THE WANDERER INTO THE VOID

By KARL RADEK

(We have pleasure in printing the full text of the already famous speech of Karl Radek on the German Nationalist hero, Schlageter. This speech, delivered on June 21, is likely to become one of the historical documents of the European revolution. At the very moment when Fascism and Communism were on the point of coming to grips for the soul of the tortured German masses, Radek, on behalf of the Communist International, sent forth this message into the heart of the Fascist camp—a message of sympathy and comprehension for the ideals and heroism of the Nationalist struggle, inspiring the followers of Fascism among the masses, but relentlessly exposing the double dealing anti-nationalism and subservience to Big Business and the Entente on the part of their leaders and showing that the only way for the realisation of their hopes and ideals and the freedom of the German nation lay through the proletarian revolution. This contribution has aroused controversy throughout the Fascist camp at the moment of their projected coup. We find the columns of the Fascist press thrown open to Radek for the purposes of controversy, and we find Count Reventlow entering into discussions in the Communist press. No more striking blow was ever delivered for defeating the tricks to yoke the nationalist-minded masses to the interests of Capital, or for turning politics into their real class meaning.)

I CAN neither supplement nor complete the comprehensive and deeply impressive report of our venerable leader, Comrade Zetkin, on International Fascism,¹ that hammer meant to crush the head of the proletariat, but which will fall upon the petty bourgeois class, who are wielding it in the interests of large capital. I could not even follow it clearly, because there hovered before my eyes the corpse of the German Fascist, our class enemy, who was sentenced to death and shot by the hirelings of French imperialism, that powerful organisation of another section of our class enemy. Throughout the speech of Comrade Zetkin on the contradictions within Fascism, the name of Schlageter and his tragic fate was in my head. We ought to remember him here when we are defining our attitude towards Fascism. The story of this martyr of German nationalism should not be forgotten nor

¹ Published in the August issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY.

passed over with a mere phrase. It has much to tell us, and much to tell the German people.

We are not sentimental romanticists who forget friendship when its object is dead, nor are we diplomats who say : By the graveside say nothing but good, or remain silent. Schlageter, a courageous soldier of the counter-revolution, deserves to be sincerely honoured by us, the soldiers of the revolution. Freksa, who shared his views, published in 1920 a novel in which he described the life of an officer who fell in the fight against Spartacus. Freksa named his novel *The Wanderer into the Void*.

If those German Fascisti, who honestly thought to serve the German people, failed to understand the significance of Schlageter's fate, Schlageter died in vain, and on his tombstone should indeed be inscribed: "The Wanderer into the Void."

Germany lay crushed. Only fools believed that the victorious capitalist Entente would treat the German people differently from the way the victorious German capitalists treated the Russian and Rumanian people. Only fools or cowards, who feared to face the truth, could believe in the promises of Wilson, in the declarations that the Kaiser and not the German people would have to pay the price of defeat. In the East a people was at war. Starving, freezing, it fought against the Entente on fourteen fronts. That was Soviet Russia. One of these fronts consisted of German officers and German soldiers. Schlageter fought in Medem's Volunteer Corps, which stormed Riga. We do not know whether the young officer understood the significance of his acts. But the then German Commissar, the Social Democrat Winnig, and General Von der Goltz, the Commander of the Baltic troops, knew what they were doing. They sought to gain the friendship of the Entente by performing the work of hirelings against the Russian people. In order that the German bourgeoisie should not pay the victors the indemnities of war, they hired young German blood, which had been spared the bullets of the Great War, to fight against the Russian people. We do not know what Schlageter thought at this period. His leader, Medem, later admitted that he marched through the Baltic into the void. Did all the German nationalists understand that?

At the funeral of Schlageter in Munich, General Ludendorff spoke, the same Ludendorff who even to-day is offering himself to England and to France as the leader of a crusade against Russia. Schlageter was mourned by the Stinnes press. Herr Stinnes was the colleague in the Alpina Montana, of Schneider-Creusot the armourer, the assassin of Schlageter. Against whom did the German people wish to fight: against the Entente capitalists or against the Russian people? With whom did they wish to ally themselves: with the Russian workers and peasants in order to throw off the yoke of Entente capital for the enslavement of the German and Russian peoples?

Schlageter is dead. He cannot supply the answer. His comrades in arms swore at his graveside to carry on his fight. They must supply the answer: against whom and on whose side?

Schlageter went from the Baltic to the Ruhr, not in the year 1923 but in the year 1920. Do you know what that meant? He took part in the attack of German capital upon the Ruhr workers; he fought in the ranks of the troops whose task it was to bring the miners of the Ruhr under the heel of the iron and coal kings. The troops of Waters, in whose ranks he fought, fired the same leaden bullets with which General Degoutte quelled the Ruhr workers. We have no reason to believe that it was from selfish motives that Schlageter helped to subdue the starving miners.

The way in which he risked his life speaks on his behalf, and proves that he was convinced he was serving the German people. But Schlageter thought he was best serving the people by helping to restore the mastery of the class which had hitherto led the German people, and had brought such terrible misfortune upon them. Schlageter regarded the working class as the mob that must be governed. And in this he shared the view of Count Reventlow, who calmly declared that no war against the Entente was possible until the internal enemy has been overcome. The internal enemy for Schlageter was the revolutionary working class. Schlageter could see with his own eyes the results of this policy when he returned to the Ruhr in 1923 during the occupation. He could see that even if the workers were united against French imperialism, no single people was able to fight alone. He could see the profound mistrust of the workers towards the German government and the

German bourgeoisie. He could see how greatly the cleavage in the nation hampered its defensive power. He could see more. Those who share his views complained of the passivity of the German people. How can a defeated working class be active? How can a working class be active which has been disarmed, and from whom it is demanded that they shall allow themselves to be exploited by profiteers and speculators? Or could the activity of the German working masses be replaced by the activity of the German bourgeoisie? Schlageter read in the newspapers how the very people who pretended to be the patrons of the German nationalist movement sent securities abroad so that they might be enriched and the country impoverished. Schlageter certainly could have no hope in these parasites. He was spared reading in the Press how the representative of the German bourgeoisie, Dr. Lutterbeck, turned to his executioners with the request that they should permit the iron and steel kings to shoot down sons of Germany, the men who were carrying out the resistance on the Ruhr, with machine guns.

Now that the German resistance, through the rascally trick of Dr. Lutterbeck, and still more through the economic policy of the possessing classes, has been turned into a farce, we ask the honest, patriotic masses who are anxious to fight against the French imperialist invasion: How will you fight, on whose support will you rely? The struggle against Entente imperialism is a war, even though the guns are silent. There can be no war at the front when there is unrest in the rear. A minority can be kept under in the rear, but not a majority. The majority of the German people are the working men, who must fight against the poverty and want which the German bourgeoisie is bringing upon them. If the patriotic circles of Germany do not make up their minds to make the cause of the majority of the nation their own, and so create a front against both Entente and German capital, then the path of Schlageter was the path into the void, and Germany, in the face of foreign invasion, and the perpetual menace of the victors, will be transformed into a field of bloody internal conflict, and it will be easy for the enemy to defeat her and destroy her.

When, after Jena, Gneisenau and Scharnhorst asked themselves how the German people were to be raised from their defeat, they replied: only by making the peasants free from their former

submission and slavery. Only the free German peasantry can lay the foundations for the emancipation of Germany. What the German peasantry meant for the fate of the German nation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the German working class means at the beginning of the twentieth century. Only with it can Germany be freed from the fetters of slavery—not against it.

Schlageter's comrades talked of war at his graveside. They swore to continue the fight. It had to be conducted against an enemy that was armed to the teeth, while Germany was unarmed and beaten. If the talk of war is not to remain an empty phrase, if it is not to consist of bombing columns that blow up bridges, but not the enemy; that derail trains, but cannot check the armoured trains of Entente capital, then a number of conditions must be fulfilled.

The German people must break with those who have not only led it into defeat, but who are perpetuating the defeat and the defencelessness of the German people by regarding the majority of the German people as the enemy. This demands a break with the peoples and parties whose faces act upon other peoples like a Medusa head, mobilising them against the German people. Only when the German cause becomes the cause of the German people, only when the German cause becomes the fight for the rights of the German people, will the German people win active friends. The powerful nation cannot endure without friends, all the more so must a nation which is defeated and surrounded by enemies. If Germany wants to be in the position to fight, it must create a united front of workers, and the brain workers must unite with the hand workers and form a solid phalanx. The condition of the brain workers cries out for this union. Only old prejudices stand in the way. United into a victorious working people, Germany will be able to draw upon great sources of resisting power which will be able to remove all obstacles. If the cause of the people is made the cause of the nation, then the cause of the nation will become the cause of the people. United into a fighting nation of workers, it will gain the assistance of other people who are also fighting for their existence. Whoever is not prepared to fight in this way is capable of deeds of desperation but not of a serious struggle.

This is what the German Communist Party and the Communist International have to say at Schlageter's graveside. It has nothing

to conceal, for only the complete truth can penetrate into the suffering, internally disintegrated masses of Germany. The German Communist Party must declare openly to the nationalist petty bourgeois masses: Whoever is working in the service of the profiteers, the speculators, and the iron and coal magnates to enslave the German people and to drive them into desperate adventures will meet the resistance of the German Communist workers, who will oppose violence by violence. Whoever, from lack of comprehension, allies himself with hirelings of capital we shall fight with every means in our power. But we believe that the great majority of the nationalist-minded masses belong not to the camp of the capitalists but to the camp of the workers. We want to find, and we shall find, the path to these masses. We shall do all in our power to make men like Schlageter, who are prepared to go to their deaths for a common cause, not wanderers into the void, but wanderers into a better future for the whole of mankind; that they should not spill their hot, unselfish blood for the profit of the coal and iron barons, but in the cause of the great toiling German people, which is a member of the family of peoples fighting for their emancipation. This truth the Communist Party will declare to the great masses of the German people, for it is not a party fighting for a crust of bread on behalf of the industrial workers, but a party of the struggling proletariat fighting for its emancipation, an emancipation that is identical with the emancipation of the whole people, of all who toil and suffer in Germany. Schlageter himself cannot now hear this declaration, but we are convinced that there are hundreds of Schlageters who will hear it and understand it.

MAHATMA GANDHI: REVOLUTIONARY OR COUNTER-REVOLU- TIONARY ?

A Reply to Romain Rolland and
Henri Barbusse¹

By EVELYN ROY

THE learned articles from the pen of M. Romain Rolland, which recently appeared in the monthly review *Europe*, and the reply thereto in *Clarté* by Henri Barbusse, on the subject of Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the Non-violent Non-Co-operation Movement of India during the years 1920-1922, have opened a new field of discussion between the two opposing camps of European radical intellectualism. M. Rolland, the protagonist of Non-violence, has offered to the world a new argument and, as he conceives it, a new proof of the efficacy of this doctrine as applied to political struggles. He discovers Mr. Gandhi a year after the latter has been consigned to the oblivion of a six years' gaol sentence, and in eloquent and poetic language describes and interprets his career as leader of the Non-Co-operation Movement, in order to prove his own theory that Non-violence, based upon suffering, self-sacrifice, and brotherly love, is the only philosophy that can save European civilisation from ultimate annihilation.

M. Barbusse, belonging to the opposite camp of those who believe in opposing force to force, dictatorship to dictatorship, and the ultimate survival of the fittest, replies to the articles of M. Rolland by attempting to upset the whole basis of the latter's thesis as to Gandhi's true rôle in the Indian movement. Mr. Gandhi, he asseverates, is not what M. Rolland imagines him to be—an apostle of love, sacrifice, and suffering, come to redeem

¹ *Mahatma Gandhi*, by Romain Rolland; *Revolutionnaires d'Orient et d'Occident*, by Henri Barbusse.

the world with a new gospel and a new vicarious atonement. On the contrary, Mr. Gandhi is a revolutionary to whom Non-violence is but a masterly tactic in the face of a difficult situation. Had Lenin been in Gandhi's place he would have spoken and acted as did the latter, declares M. Barbusse ; both are for compulsion; both are realists. Gandhi took care to base himself upon the working and peasant masses. He always defended the poor and the oppressed. The revolutionary movement of India is more a social struggle than a nationalist one, and the fight against the British bureaucracy is a characteristic form of the class-struggle.

So writes Henri Barbusse in a valiant effort to disprove the arguments of Romain Rolland and to defeat his object of using Gandhi as a new stick wherewith to beat the programme and tactics of Bolshevism. It may not come amiss for those who have spoken and written critically on the Non-violent Non-Co-operation Movement in India, during the past two years, to add a few words to this controversy in an effort to shed new light on what is, after all, a dark subject for the majority of European intellectuals. It is not our present purpose to analyse the Non-Co-operation Movement here; this has been done exhaustively in two books by Manabendra Nath Roy, published in 1922 and 1923 (*India in Transition* and *One Year of Non-Co-operation; from Ahmedabad to Gaya*²). Therein the social forces underlying the Gandhi movement, as well as the significance and rôle of the latter upon Indian life as a whole, have been dealt with from the standpoint of historic materialism. Our immediate object is to take the articles of M. Rolland and to point out in them certain outstanding misstatements of fact and consequent wrong conclusions which are in themselves sufficient to negate the whole force of his argument without going to the opposite extreme of declaring Gandhi to be that which he is not and never will be—a "true revolutionary," whether of the violent or non-violent variety.

M. Rolland is to be felicitated upon his praiseworthy study of the Gandhian polemics, and of his more or less accurate knowledge of the main course of events in Indian political life up to the time of Mr. Gandhi's incarceration. Such knowledge is rare in a European, and betrays a real interest in the subject on the

² The Vanguard Bookshop, Post Box 4336, Zurich, Switzerland.

part of this distinguished *savant* and *littérateur*. It is not his knowledge of the main events of Mr. Gandhi's spectacular career that we call in question, but his interpretation of those events to suit his own purposes. We regret that the first two articles on Mahatma Gandhi which he wrote have not come to our hands. We have only the final two, but they contain enough to prove that M. Rolland, in his enthusiasm for the new prophet that is to save the world, has taken too much for granted as to the rôle of Mr. Gandhi in the Indian Nationalist Movement, and has been too hasty in his conclusion, vital to prove his own thesis, that that movement has already attained its goal, or is indisputably about to do so, as a result of Mr. Gandhi's leadership, based upon the doctrine of suffering, sacrifice, and soul-force.

Let us touch briefly upon some of the threads of M. Rolland's arguments that all tend towards the main conclusion. In the first place he vastly over-estimates the success of the programme of Non-Co-operation in that which concerned the boycott of schools, law courts, and government posts and titles. The number of those resigning their places and titles under government was infinitesimal; the giving up of practice by lawyers was confined to a limited number of Congress politicians and patriots, for a very limited time. The majority returned to their practice before the year was ended. Only in the schools was there a notable response on the part of the young, enthusiastic, and idealistic students, and this was later acknowledged as one of the greatest mistakes of the whole campaign to bring these thousands of young men away from their studies without supplying them with any alternative means of study or of gaining a livelihood. This whole part of the Non-Co-operation programme has been such a recognised failure that it is no longer spoken of nor regarded as part of the national activities, although theoretically it has never been abandoned.

The boycott of foreign cloth and of liquor shops attained greater success, because here Mr. Gandhi and the Congress hit upon a means of directly attacking the government exchequer at its source. The boycott of liquor is not, as M. Rolland mistakenly observes, intended as a measure of "healthful discipline" and "necessary hygiene." On the contrary, it was an attempt to cut off one of the great sources of revenue of the Indian Government,

which retains control of the liquor traffic and reaps huge profits therefrom. The boycott and picketing of liquor shops was so largely successful in cutting off this source of Government revenue that huge deficits were admitted in that Department, and the Government energetically opposed itself to this side of the campaign from the very outset. As M. Rolland rightly observes, Mr. Gandhi deserves to be remembered as a social reformer long after his political triumphs and failures are forgotten. His plea for the removal of untouchability was a righteous one, but we cannot say with truth that it has attained any measure of practical fulfilment among those Hindu orthodox who constituted the chief followers of the Mahatmaji. (Social revolutions are not made from above, but from below by the inexorable working of economic laws. Untouchability and caste will disappear from Indian society, and are disappearing, not as a result of the impassioned pleadings of a Mahatma, but because of the advent of industrialism and the break-up of patriarchal traditions. >

<The boycott of foreign cloth constituted the most important clause of the Non-Co-operation programme, not only because it coincided with Mr. Gandhi's reactionary social philosophy that decried the advent of modern civilisation and preached the cult of the spinning-wheel and homespun, but because the backbone of the Non-Co-operation Movement founded upon sacrifice, suffering, and soul-force was the native mill-owners, whose competition to Lancashire products was immensely stimulated by the preaching of the doctrine of boycott of foreign cloth and the wearing of *Swadeshi* (home-manufactured goods). It was the mill-owners of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras who financed the Non-Co-operation Movement, who, together with the landlords of India, represent the rising bourgeoisie which insistently claims for itself a place in the sun. The Congress fund of one crore of rupees raised in 1921-22 was largely donated by the rising capitalist class of India, to whom the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms did not grant the economic expansion which it craved. This fund, largely on paper, constituted the string which controlled the activities and dictated the tactics of the Mahatmaji in critical moments; it lay behind his "address to the hooligans of Bombay and Madras"; it lay beneath his exhortation "not to make political use of the factory

workers; it constituted the real reason for his failure to declare mass civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes, and for his insistence on the tactics of non-violence and respect for law, order, and private property.

We do not make these statements for the sake of disillusioning M. Rolland as to the spiritual rôle of his new Messiah, but in the interests of truth and the correct interpretation of historical events. The proof for these statements can be found by referring to the list of contributors to the Tilak-Swaraj Fund, and to certain very interesting disclosures made by members of the Congress opposition on the manipulation of the Tilak-Swaraj Fund in the interests of Indian capitalism. It will be replied that Mr. Gandhi was not responsible for the sins of his followers, but Mr. Gandhi made himself responsible for them on innumerable occasions; does not M. Rolland himself exclaim: "He had become in truth the conscience of India." This was on the occasion of the riot of Chauri Chaura, when Mr. Gandhi for the last time repudiated mass-action and ordered the retreat from Bardoli, which every honest Indian now recognises to have been the greatest betrayal of the movement that could have been made.

The riot of Chauri Chaura and the right-about-face of Mr. Gandhi from the road that led to revolution back to the blind alley of reformism constitute the turning-point of his career and the acid test by which his whole philosophy will be judged by generations to come. Mr. Gandhi, after having for the third time declared the inauguration of mass civil disobedience, for which the Indian masses expectantly waited, for the third time retracted his order and disowned those simple followers who had taken him at his word. Not only did he urge the rioting peasants to deliver themselves up for judgment and make confession, but he stands personally responsible for the passing of the Bardoli resolutions in the face of his countrymen's opposition, which denounced, once and for all, all forms of aggressive action and limited the national activities to weaving, spinning, and praying. Here stands the revolutionary exposed in his true colours as a timid social reformer, terrified at the greatness of the movement he was called upon to lead, and endeavouring vainly to crush it within the limits of his own reactionary philosophy.

The result of Chauri Chaura and the shameful retreat of Bardoli, which M. Rolland describes as "an act of exceptional moral value," (was the condemnation of 228 peasants to death by hanging for the crime of having attempted to better their miserable condition (a sentence whose barbarity put even the British Government in India to shame and was later reduced to nineteen death sentences); and the temporary dislocation of the whole Non-Co-operation Movement, followed by the arrest of its leader, and wholesale Government repression and police terrorism throughout the length and breadth of India. But Mr. Gandhi never flinched from his resolution and the Bardoli "Constructive Programme," which enjoins upon the Indian peasants to pay rent to the Zemindars (landlords), and assures the latter that the Non-Co-operation Movement in no way attacks their property rights, remains the measuring stick by which to judge Mr. Gandhi's status as revolutionary or reformer.

"Why did the Government arrest Gandhi?" inquires M. Rolland, naïvely. And he replies, "Because his non-violence was more revolutionary than all violence." M. Rolland is once more mistaken. The British Government in India arrested Mr. Gandhi because it realised that his hold upon the country, and by country we mean the rebellious masses, was so weakened that it could safely put him away without awakening any great popular resentment. And such in fact is the case. The silence that fell upon India at the arrest of the Mahatmaji was not the triumphant vindication of the philosophy of soul-force, nor the disciplined obedience of the masses to the injunctions of their leader, but the acquiescence of the multitudes in the arrest of a leader who had ceased to lead them; whose repeated acts of betrayal of the true interests of the rebellious workers had cut him and the Nationalist Movement as a whole completely off from the dynamics of mass-action. >

Never did M. Rolland speak more truly than when he refers to the vast upheavals of the Indian proletariat and peasantry as "having only the slightest connection with the Non-Co-operation Movement." < The great mass-awakening that shook the Indian continent at the close of the war, and which came as a result of many world-factors as well as internal economic forces, coincided

with the rise of the aggressive campaign of Non-violent Non-Co-operation, but was not synonymous with it, nor even identified with it until Mr. Gandhi, by dint of his compelling personality and instinctive political sagacity, succeeded in welding the two together into a temporary and artificial unity, much as he succeeded in binding together the Hindu-Mussulman communities. Not by means of an honest, straightforward programme of social and economic emancipation for the Indian masses, even at the expense of the propertied classes, but by means of playing upon the religious superstitions and susceptibilities of the ignorant and illiterate workers and peasants, to whom "Gandhi Raj" was promised within one year and to whom "Gandhi Raj" meant non-payment of rent and taxes and access to land with better living and working conditions for the exploited city proletariat—thus did the Mahatma win his ascendancy over the rebellious mass-movement and seek to combine it with that of the bourgeois intellectuals and propertied classes for an increased share in the exploitation of these same Indian masses.

But such tactics, depending upon the compelling personality of one man and the religious frenzy of the multitudes, were built upon sand. After repeated and innumerable betrayals at the hands of their bourgeois leaders, the Indian workers and peasants have fallen away from the Nationalist struggle and have resumed their interrupted fight for better wages, fewer hours of work, better living conditions, and the amelioration of their desperate economic condition. The divorce of mass-energy from the Non-Co-operation Movement, signed and sealed by the Bardoli decisions repudiating all aggressive tactics and forbidding the declaration of civil disobedience, resulted in the collapse of the latter, and delivered it over as an easy prey into the hands of the waiting Government. The only strength of the movement had lain in its backing by the rebellious masses; it was the threat of direct action on a nationwide scale, of which the demonstrations and *hartals* during the visit of the Prince of Wales were but a foretaste, that made the Government stay its hand so long. It was only when the movement rendered itself impotent by repudiating all mass-action that the Government lifted its hand and struck with deadly ferocity.

As a result of the Bardoli retreat the Indian movement was

thrown back into hopeless confusion, from which it is only just recovering, slowly and painfully. The arrest of Mr. Gandhi assisted this recovery by removing what had proved to be a force making for reaction and leaving the field clear for new leaders to take his place.) M. Rolland is mistaken in observing that "the Movement has victoriously resisted the redoubtable test of the first year without a guide." There have been guides—able and competent ones, who sprang to take the place of those removed from the scene of action. (Mr. C. R. Das, late President of the All-Indian National Congress, and founder of the Swaraj Party, is the acknowledged successor of Mr. Gandhi as an All-India leader. He has snatched the fallen standard and is carrying it forward in the struggle between Indian bourgeois nationalism and British Imperialism—a struggle which is destined to be a long one, and which M. Rolland is far too sanguine in declaring: "It appears certain that Indian Home Rule is no longer in question; in one shape or another it is inevitable. India has conquered—morally!"

In that final word lies the whole crux of the dispute at issue. To M. Rolland the gigantic struggle that is convulsing the Indian continent to-day is a moral battle between the forces of good and evil, between the Adversary and the Hosts of Heaven. Mr. Gandhi is the new Messiah who has appeared to lead this spiritual warfare, waged not only on behalf of India, but of the entire world. India's triumph will be a world triumph of the forces of light over darkness, of spirit over matter, of God over Satan. With such a conception of the Indian struggle for freedom we have nothing to do; it embodies the exaggerated subjectivism of the disillusioned post-war intellectual, flying to the realm of metaphysics to escape from the cruel logic of facts and realities. For the scientific Marxist, who conceives the world to be built upon economic forces, subject to material laws, such a conception has all the grotesque mediævalism of the gargoyle, and we conceive of the minds of these sentimental idealists as full of such gargoyles—unreal, grinning, and out of tune with the age in which we live. They cease to be romantic curiosities and become dangerous when they seek to put their conceptions to political use—and the exploitation of Mr. Gandhi in the interests of counter-revolutionary pacifism

is such a political application of these ideas. M. Rolland and the whole school of Spiritual Imperialists, who hold that the world is to be redeemed by soul-force, self-sacrifice, and suffering, are endeavouring to use Mr. Gandhi as a proof of their own thesis that Europe has brought about its own annihilation by the use of violence, of which Bolshevism is the final and concentrated form making for ultimate destruction of all that remains of European culture and civilisation. India, they declare, has been saved by the use of spiritual weapons—let Europe emulate India's example and save herself.

The argument sounds convincing till we examine its premises and find them false. India is not yet saved; she is still struggling to pull herself out of the slough of economic backwardness, social degeneration, and political subjection—all more or less contingent one upon the other. Her present struggle is a very material one for land and bread. It is for this that the peasants of the Punjab, the United Provinces, Bengal, Madras, and the whole of India have shed their blood; it is for this that the rising proletariat has organised great strikes of months' duration, often at the cost of freedom and even life. It was for this that the Indian workers and peasants followed the Mahatmaji, and when he repudiated this goal it was for this that they left him, to resume the struggle on the economic field, eschewing political action. The political struggle, which will enthrone the Indian bourgeoisie in a living partnership with the Imperial overlord, is far from finished; but the lines of class-cleavage in Indian society grow every day more marked, and the development of the class-struggle side by side with the Nationalist one, and often antagonistic to it, is ever more distinguishable. In this struggle Mr. Gandhi definitely aligned himself on the side of the bourgeoisie; and however much of a religious prophet he may be, however largely he may figure as a social reformer, and despite his really great contribution to the progress of Indian nationalism in the field of agitation and organisation in the future development of the Indian revolutionary movement, Mr. Gandhi must be counted among the counter-revolutionaries and not, as M. Barbusse mistakenly supposes, among true revolutionaries. He it was who conceived of the brilliant tactics of aggressive Non-

Co-operation, based upon non-payment of rent and taxes; he it was who found an outlet for the movement by the slogan of Non-violence; he it was who for the first time carried the idea of Swaraj among the Indian masses. But it was equally he who, frightened by the shadow of revolution that hung over the land; alarmed at the threat to the established order which such a revolution implied; terrified at the thought of bloodshed and his own inability to control the forces of mass-energy once aroused—it was equally he who sought to beat back this rising tide of revolution by repudiating those very forces which he was called upon to lead.

∠ The tired intellectuals of Europe may look to the East in search of a new Messiah, destined to appear miraculously to save them from the clutches of reality. But to all honest revolutionaries who understand the real forces that underlie such great movements as the Russian and Indian revolutions, all talk about “spiritual warfare,” and the triumph of non-violence over violence, is dismissed as the babble of children or the fevered eloquence of intellectual degeneration in search of new illusions. Mr. Gandhi sought to pit his individual philosophy and moral scruples against the armed might of the greatest power in existence—the British Empire—and he inevitably failed. But he would not have failed so miserably had he been gifted with the revolutionary understanding which places economic forces and material laws above the weakness of the individual, and had relied upon the resistless power of the Indian masses to fight their way to freedom. Mr. Gandhi sought to interpose his own will between the Indian masses and this inevitable struggle, and was swept aside to make way for others better able to interpret the imperative needs of the movement. Well for him that he is canonised by the disillusioned, post-war intellectualism of the West.

THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS AND WORKERS' EDUCATION

By MARK STARR

AMONG other things to be discussed at Plymouth will be the report of the General Council's Education Sub-Committee. Whether its recommendations be accepted or not the material the Sub-Committee has gathered in its investigation makes the time opportune for (a) a summary of the present position, and (b) a restatement of the differences between the various bodies operating in this field, all anxious to secure T.U.C. support.

Interest began at the Congress held at Cardiff (1921) where the following resolution was adopted :—

That this Congress is of opinion the time has arrived when the Trade Union Movement should consider the best means of providing for the educational needs of its members. It declares that the recommendations of the Trade Union Education Inquiry Committee offer the basis of a scheme whereby the varied educational needs and demands of Trade Unionists may be met.

It, therefore, instructs the General Council to co-operate with the Trade Union Education Inquiry Committee as to the best means of giving effect to the aims and objects of the inquiry, including the taking over and running of existing Trade Union Colleges, including the Central Labour College and Ruskin College.

This was sent round to the affiliated bodies with questions to find out what was being, or going to be, done, and to ask for opinions on the possibility of a joint scheme as implied in the resolution. Printed with these questions were particulars of the recommendations of the T.U. Education Inquiry Committee and the favoured Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee—of which body, more later. In addition to the bodies given below, representatives were met from the Co-operative Union and the Working Men's Club and Institute Union.

In the Report to the Southport Congress (1922) all these bodies were listed as willing to participate in any scheme *provided it did not essentially interfere with their policy*. However, the General

Council was dissatisfied with existing facilities, even if an all-inclusive scheme could be made. It favoured the specialised education to train T.U. branch officials, and local and national political and industrial representatives, and quoted the Syllabus of the German Trade Union Federation as its model. The Report made reference to the 'untouched problems of the education of adolescents, apprentices, women, seamen and rural workers, and laid it down that it was necessary " to develop a strong working-class sentiment throughout the movement, supported and made intelligent by such a body of knowledge as will deepen the conviction that industry and society must be organised and run in the interests of the community, and that this can only be accomplished through the growth and development of the workers' own organisations and institutions." In simpler words, that the workers must educate themselves to destroy capitalism.

An ideal Inclusive Scheme concluded the report. It was hoped to influence the Board of Education to recognise the Unions as an education authority for their members. The W.E.A. and Ruskin College have received State grants without interference, so have Works Schools run by, and for, the employers. Why then, in the name of logic, cannot the T.U.C. set up an organisation which would use public funds in every possible case.

However, the recommendations accepted were for the General Council to continue negotiations, and to be empowered to take over Ruskin College, the Labour Colleges, and the W.E.T.U.C., provided that involved no increase in affiliation fees.

The negotiations were continued and the Joint Committee (members of General Council and of T.U. Inquiry Committee) co-opted, in a consultative capacity, representatives of the following educational bodies :—

GROUP A (RESIDENTIAL): *Labour College, London*.—Jointly owned and financed by the National Union of Railwaymen and the South Wales Miners' Federation.

Ruskin College, Oxford.—Supported by various trade unions, the Co-operative Union, and the Club and Institute Union. (This College receives additional income from Government grants and other sources.)

GROUP B (NON-RESIDENTIAL): *National Council of Labour Colleges*.—To which are affiliated the Labour College, London, the Scottish Labour College, the Plebs League, forty-four provincial

non-residential Labour colleges, the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, and by the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers for whom it is organising a scheme of classes throughout the country.

Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee.—A body formed to work the Educational Scheme established by the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation. Controlled and financed by the Confederation, the Railway Clerks' Association, the Union of Post Office Workers, and the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen.

The Scottish Labour College.—This body, in addition to the usual class work, provides for full time bursary students. The principal Unions supporting it are the Lanarkshire Miners, Fife Miners and Mid and East Lothian Miners, Scottish Shale Miners, and the national Unions of the N.C.L.C.

All the above were willing to become part of the Congress scheme with the stipulations, in the case of the N.C.L.C., of freedom to compete for T.U. branch affiliations, either against the W.E.T.U.C. or the W.E.A., and in the case of the Labour College of the continuance of its present policy and curriculum.

In regard to Group A it was found that the approximate yearly maintenance cost of the board and tuition of ninety students (fifty at Ruskin, forty at the Labour College) would be not less than £47,000, which would be increased when the Scottish L.C. resumed its pre-war day tuition. Hence, the Committee could not recommend taking over while its hands are tied in the matter of calling in further support.

The evidence collected by Group B revealed a remarkable growth in the adult workers' education movement. The N.C.L.C. reported for the winter session 1922-23 :—

<i>Evening Classes</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Whole-time tutors</i>	<i>Voluntary tutors</i>
529	11,998	15	250

There were no separate figures given for the W.E.T.U.C., but the W.E.A., of which it is a part, claims to have enrolled not less than 22,000 students, some of whom have undertaken three year courses of planned study. Although in relation to the eleven to twelve millions of British workers the total may seem small, it must be remembered the N.C.L.C. classes specialise in subjects of direct importance to the workers, and the number of students actually attending classes is no measure of the influence of this work.

In addition to the above investigations, G. D. H. Cole and

J. W. Bowen (U.P.W.) presented a report upon "The Education of Young Workers," which advocated the provision of young workers' clubs with sports, popular talks and lectures, libraries, dramatic and rambling groups, choirs, and such like. Obviously, without enlarged and revived Trades Councils to take over the running of these activities, little is likely to be done. The report will only have eased the conscience of the General Council.

This is the summary of recommendations which Congress will be asked to accept :—

- (1) That the time is not yet opportune for giving full effect to paragraph (b) of the Southport Congress resolution, but that the General Council through the Joint Education Committee shall continue its efforts by consultation with representatives of working-class educational bodies for the purpose of co-ordinating such activities, and with a view to giving full effect to the provisions of the Southport resolutions.
- (2) That the General Council call a conference of representatives of affiliated unions which have provided or contemplate the provision of educational facilities for their members with a view to developing a united purpose and policy in trade union educational work.
- (3) That pending the General Council being able to submit a practical scheme of educational work as required by paragraph (e) of the Southport Congress resolution, the Council be empowered to create a special educational fund by (a) a grant from the Trades Union Congress funds up to a maximum of £1,000 per annum, and (b) by such voluntary grants as may be obtained from the affiliated unions in response to an appeal to be issued by the Council. The fund thus created to be available for assisting such working-class educational institutions as may be approved by the General Council.
- (4) That special consideration be given by the Joint Committee to the educational needs of women trade unionists.
- (5) That the recommendations with regard to the question of education for young workers be endorsed.

Now Congress in discussing this should be as well informed as possible upon the difference between the bodies which it is proposed to link into an all-inclusive scheme. It will not be good enough to belittle the very real difference, or make easy and superficial analogies between the squabbles of religious sects and the division between the W.E.A. and the N.C.L.C. Probably Congress will vote, in the name of "fairness," to support both in order to avoid

the problem of settling between them, but that does not lessen the need of understanding.

As it happens the T.U. Inquiry Committee (save one member) and also its parent, the W.E.T.U.C., and many prominent members of the General Council are already on the side of the W.E.A. Mr. J. M. Mactavish, Secretary of the W.E.A., acts with Mr. Fred Bramley as secretary of the Joint Committee (*i.e.*, the Subcommittee of T.U.C. General Council *plus* the T.U. Inquiry Committee).

The differences between the two bodies are as follows : (a) Source of support, financial and moral ; (b) attitude towards the Universities ; (c) purpose of the educational work.

In regard to (a) : The W.E.A. receives assistance from the bequests of Sir E. Cassel, and its classes depend upon the grants made by State education authorities. Among recent tributes to its usefulness is that of Lord Inchcape (quoted in *The Work of the Seafarers' Education Service*, p. 18). Ruskin College (affiliated to the W.E.A.) was able a few years ago to get an appeal for its support signed by A. J. Balfour, Robert S. Horne, and Lloyd George. And in last June its Principal got Mr. Fisher (ex-Minister of Education), in withdrawing the charge of "reading nothing but Marx at Ruskin College," to pay a tribute to its "excellent work." Like the W.E.A. it accepts State grants and "non-political" bodies find it a safe place for their students. It is not mere coincidence that many of those working for "harmony" in adult workers' education are also prominent in the Alliance of Employers and Employed.

Regarding (b) the controversy in the *Daily Herald* (June 13, 1923) was very significant. The W.E.A. believes in linking the Universities' teachers with the classes of the worker. One writer, from Jesus College, in the *Herald* controversy opined that "for every undergraduate who is feeling the social conscience awakening within, there are at least twenty who are assiduously cultivating the Fascist temper." There are also the Parliamentary election results in those places. It seems the teachers should begin at home. We have not yet descended to the state depicted in Sinclair's *The Goose Step*, but unconscious bias can be seen even in the books of the so-called progressive elements in the Universities. No wonder even

the T.U.C. Report (Southport) said : " Universities do not always provide the best atmosphere for training such teachers," *i.e.*, for T.U. classes.

In the matter of (c) the W.E.A. indulges in " uplift " talk about " developing individual character " and " the exercise of social rights and responsibilities," while the N.C.L.C. advocates the independent education of the workers in social science in order to destroy wage-slavery.

It deserves and needs special T.U. support just because it cannot expect help from the State so long as it is under capitalist control.

In one case an education authority did make a grant to a N.C.L.C. class, but it was not repeated, and in most cases it is difficult even to hire the school buildings.

They who would sup with the devil need a long spoon ; so do those who accept help from vested interests to educate the workers.

The T.U.C. stands at the parting of the ways in workers' education, as it has stood before in political and industrial matters. The road of independence is more difficult, but its end is not in doubt.

FURTHER SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

Translated and Annotated by MAX BEER

VIII

MARX'S SPEECH OF DEFENCE BEFORE THE COLOGNE JURY, 1849¹

ON February 9, 1849, Marx stood on trial before the Cologne jury, charged with having incited the people to sedition in his public appeal of November 18, 1848, calling upon the Rhenish population to refuse to pay taxes and to arm themselves against the Prussian authorities. For the understanding of the whole conflict the following remarks may be serviceable.

The German middle-class revolution broke out in March, 1848. On March 18, the Prussian Guards were beaten in the streets of Berlin. King Friedrich Wilhelm IV promised a constitution, but called the old United Diet together, the majority of which consisted of feudal nobles and landed proprietors, to legislate for the coming Prussian National Assembly and to prepare an "Agreement" between the Crown and the people. The Diet fulfilled its duty in its legislation of April 6 and 8, 1848. At the same time a Liberal Cabinet, with the bankers Camphanson and Hansemann at the head, prepared the elections for the National Assembly. On May 22, the Assembly was opened, but proved powerless or inefficient to secure freedom for the people as against the Crown and the army. None the less, the Assembly was a thorn in the side of the old powers, and it was violently dispersed in the middle of November, 1848, by General Wrangel's troops. Hence the call of Marx to active resistance. The Public Prosecutor, arguing from the laws of April 6 and 8, which were passed by the United Diet, demanded severe punishment of the accused, but the Cologne jury brought in a verdict of "Not guilty." Marx's speech took over two hours in delivery; its purpose was to arraign the Prussian authorities, to explain to the German bourgeoisie the meaning of its own revolution, and to encourage it to carry on the revolutionary work to its logical conclusion—a middle-class democratic republic.

We take from Marx's speech the following passages:—

"How did the laws of April 6 and 8, 1848, come about? By the co-operation of the Government and United Diet. In this way they thought to give continuity to the legal state of things and to patch up the break caused by the revolution, which had just put

¹ *Karl Marx vor den Kölner Geschworenen*. Hottingen, Zurich, 1886.

an end to that legal state of things. . . . For, what was the United Diet? The representation of old and decayed social conditions. The revolution which had taken place had no other aim but to bury the old society. And this representation of a defeated society was called upon to give organic laws which should recognise, regulate, and organise the achievements of the revolution against that very same old society! What absurd contradiction! The United Diet was overthrown together with the personal monarchy. How, then, could it legislate? Whence came the idea of allowing the United Diet, the representative of the old society, to dictate laws to the National Assembly, the representation of the new society born in the revolution?

"In reply to those questions it is stated that that was done in order to uphold the legal foundation of society. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, what do the old authorities mean when they argue in favour of upholding the legal foundation of society? They mean to maintain laws that sprang from the conditions of a past society and which were made by the representatives of obsolescent or past social interests, and which are therefore in opposition to the interests and needs of the new society.

"Society does not rest upon Law. This is a juridical fiction.

"Just the reverse is the truth. Law rests upon society; it must be the expression of the general interests that spring from the material production of a given society against the arbitrariness of any single individual.

"Here, the code of laws, which I hold in my hands, has not created modern civil society. It just happened the other way. The civil society that arose in the eighteenth and developed in the nineteenth century found its legal expression in the code. As soon as it ceases to correspond with the social conditions, the code will be as effete as wastepaper.

"You cannot make the old laws into the foundation of new social developments. They issued from the old conditions, and they must go down with the old society. And they necessarily change with the changing conditions of life. To maintain the old laws against the needs and claims of new social developments amounts really to the hypocritical assertion of obsolete exclusive interests against the interests of all.

" This plea for the upholding of the legal foundation intends to make those exclusive interests into ruling interests, while they are no more ruling; its purpose is to subject society to laws which are condemned by the very conditions of life of this society, that is, by its manner of creating the means of life, its trade and commerce, its material production. It aims at maintaining the function of legislators who but pursue their own exclusive interests, that is, at going on misusing national power in order to make the interests of an obsolescent minority have precedence of the interests of the majority. It is therefore in opposition to current needs; it impedes development; it prepares social crises, which eventually find their solution in explosive eruptions, in political earthquakes or revolutions.

" That is the true meaning of the plea for upholding the legal foundation. . . .

" Gentlemen of the Jury, let us not deceive ourselves as to the nature of the struggle which broke out in March, and which was later on continued between the National Assembly and the Crown. Do not imagine it to be one of those usual contests between the Front Bench and the Opposition, or a fight between politicians who are Ministers and politicians who want to be Ministers. It is quite likely that some members of the Assembly imagine themselves to be involved in such sham fights. The position is, however, not decided by the opinion of those members, but by the historic rôle of the National Assembly as it issued from the March revolution. We have to do not with a political conflict of two parliamentary parties based on the same social principles, but with a conflict of two societies, a social conflict which has assumed a political form. . . . The political expression of the old society was the Crown by the grace of God, an independent army, a hectoring bureaucracy. The social basis of this political power was the privileged landed property. . . . The National Assembly, on the other hand, represents modern society, with its manufacturing and commercial basis, the political expression of which is Parliamentary government, the subordination of the State machinery, that is, public finance, the army, the bureaucracy, &c., to the needs of material production and circulation. Modern society knows no caste-like Estates of the Realm, but classes, formally equal before

the law. Its progressive development depends on the conflict of classes.

"Royalty by the grace of God, the supreme political expression of the old feudal-bureaucratic society, can never make real concessions to modern society. Its instinct of self-preservation, the interests of the Estates who stand behind it, will continually impel it to withdraw the concessions, to reassert its old glory, to risk a counter-revolution!

"*After a revolution, the counter-revolution is the vital urge of the defeated Crown, the defeated power. This urge will continually operate and renew itself. But the new society cannot rest unless the official and traditional machinery, by means of which the old society forcibly reasserts itself, in short, unless the State thereof is demolished and removed.*"

IX

MARX ON THE VITAL POINTS OF HIS *CAPITAL*

In the years 1850-1870 Marx and his friend Friedrich Engels lived apart—the former in London, the latter in Manchester. Marx kept him well posted with information regarding the progress of his *Capital*. He was particularly anxious to initiate him into his work, so that Engels might spread the doctrine and continue the mission to which Marx devoted his life. The letters which they exchanged on economic, philosophical, literary, and political subjects contain a great deal of information on the various questions treated in *Capital*. They were published in four volumes under the title *Briefwechsel zwischen Engels und Marx* (Stuttgart, 1912-1913). For the purpose of showing what Marx himself thought of his main achievement in economics, we quote the following from Marx's letters, dated August 24, 1867, and January 8, 1868, respectively:—

"The best thing in my book (*Capital*, vol. 1)—and on it depends the proper comprehension of the meaning of wage-labour—is, first, the treatment of the two-fold nature of labour, according to the circumstances in which it expresses itself as use-value or exchange-value. Secondly, the treatment of surplus-value is done independently of the special forms, such as profit, interest, rent, &c. This will be shown particularly in the second volume of *Capital*. The treatment of this subject by the classical economists, who mix up the special forms with their general source, is an *olla podrida*."

"I read Dühring's review of *Capital*. . . . It is curious that the fellow did not perceive the fundamentally new elements of the book. They are as follows:—

"(1) In contradistinction to all former economists, who from the onset treat the various fractions of surplus-value, in their fixed forms of rent, profit, interest, as something self-evident, as economic categories which need no explanation and no tracing back to their origin, I deal first with the source from which they spring, namely, surplus-value, in which they are still, so to speak, in solution.

"(2) All former economists, without exception, failed to notice that if a commodity has use-value and exchange-value, then also the labour which is embodied in the commodity has a two-fold nature, namely, use-value and exchange-value. The mere reduction of the commodity to labour *sans phrase*, as it is done by Smith, Ricardo, &c., must involve us in an inextricable tangle. The recognition of this point is the whole secret of the critical attitude towards political economy.

"(3) The wages of labour are, for the first time, revealed in my book to be an irrational form, behind which is concealed the social relation between the exploiters and exploited. I demonstrated this relation in both forms of wages—time and piece wages."

It may perhaps be advisable to give some commentary on those points, which Marx regards as vital to an understanding of his critical attitude. And I can do this best by starting with the two-fold nature of value.

According to the economists who wrote before Marx, the worker received for his labour a certain quantity of means of subsistence or wages sufficient to replace the labour he has expended in the work; the capitalist and the worker exchange equivalent values, one gives a certain quantity of labour, the other a corresponding quantity of means of sustenance. The pre-Marxian economists believed to have disposed of the whole wage problem by showing that the economic relation between employer and employee was based on the law governing the exchange of values.

Then Marx came in and argued, You, political economists, have shown that all commodities have a use-value and an exchange-value. You have further shown that labour is a commodity. If so, then labour must also have a use-value and exchange-value. The capitalist, as a matter of fact, buys the use-value of the commodity labour power, which has this remarkable quality that it produces exchange-value far in excess of its use-value or the wage paid for it.

Now, this excess is surplus-value, the source from which profit, interest, and rent are drawn, or from which all non-productive members of society are fed and clothed and housed. While the pre-Marxian economists, Petty, Smith, Ricardo, &c., did not particularly inquire into or had no consistent

view of the source of profit and interest or did not distinguish between surplus labour and profit, &c., Marx looked, above all, for the source which supplies the accretions of capital, and then showed the distribution of that surplus value, in the form of profit, interest, and rent, among the various classes of society. The only economic category which was much investigated was rent, but only because it constituted a surprofit. Ricardo's problem was not as to source of rent *per se*, but as to its nature of surprofit, or how did it come about that land yielded a profit to the farmer as well as to the owner?

As to point (3) concerning wages as an irrational form, it will be best to refer the reader to Marx's *Capital*, vol. I, pp. 590-592 (English edition, Chicago, Kerr & Co., 1921), where it is shown that under the appearance of wages, which are supposed to be the value of labour, there is concealed the domination of Capital over Labour. The wage which is but a compensation for the expenditure of labour power, and therefore only for a certain fraction of the working day, appears as the value or the price of the whole working day, which thus includes also that fraction of the working day which is not paid for.

"The wage-form thus extinguishes every trace of the division of the working day into paid and unpaid labour. All labour appears as paid labour. Under villeinage, the labour of the worker for himself and his compulsory labour for the lord differ in space and time in the clearest possible way. In slave labour, even that part of the working day in which the slave is only replacing the value of his own means of existence, in which, therefore, he works for himself alone, appears as labour for his master. All the slave's labour appears as unpaid labour. In wage-labour, on the contrary, even surplus labour or unpaid labour appears as paid. There the property relation conceals the labour of the slave for himself; here the money relation, the cash nexus, conceals the unrequited labour of the wage-labourer. Hence we may understand the decisive importance of the transformation of value and price of labour-power into the form of wages, or into the value and price of labour itself. This phenomenal form, which makes the actual relation invisible, and indeed shows the direct opposite of that relation, forms the basis of all the legal notions of both labourer and capitalist, of all the mystifications of the capitalist mode of production, of all its illusions as to liberty, of all the apologetic shifts of the vulgar economists."

(The earlier instalments of this series of Max Beer's annotated selections from the literary remains of Karl Marx appeared in the July and August issues of the LABOUR MONTHLY (Vol. V, Nos. 1 and 2), which can be ordered through any newsagent or obtained direct for 8d. each post free, or both for 1s. 3d., from the Publisher, at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1.)

The World of Labour

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GEORGIA

Manifesto of Ex-Mensheviks

IN view of the opinion generally held, and supported so passionately by certain prominent Labour parliamentarians, that the masses of the Georgian population are groaning under a hated foreign yoke, the following manifesto (reproduced verbatim) should prove of interest. It emanates from a conference of former rank-and-file members of the Menshevik Party, recently held at Tiflis. Eighteen hundred Tiflis workers sent delegates to this conference, the majority of whom were old militants of the Menshevik Party.

For some months past there have been numerous letters in the Tiflis Press from ex-Mensheviks declaring their entire dissociation from the counter-revolutionary policy of the Menshevik *émigrés*—Jordania, Tseretelli, and their like. The disgust of the rank-and-file Menshevik workers with their some time leaders also found striking expression at a delegate meeting of Tiflis railwaymen in April last. The whole assembly resigned *en bloc* from the Menshevik Party.

The accompanying manifesto is therefore to be taken as one of the culminating points in a process that has been continuing for some time. That process may be described as the liquidation of the counter-revolutionary elements in Russian socialism, the liquidation of the S.R.'s and the Mensheviks. Already the liquidation of the S.R.'s has been completed at the Moscow conference of S.R. members on March 18 of this year : and the most remarkable symbol of the liquidation of Menshevism is the rallying to the Soviet Government and the conversion to Communism of the outstanding Menshevik leader, Martinov.

To the International Proletariat

Comrades, workers! The Tiflis Conference of former members of the Menshevik Party has decided to dissolve its organisation and to rally to the banner of the Communist International.

The Central Committee of the Georgian Menshevik Party has accused us of deserting our Party under fear of coercion and persecution by the Tcheka.

Comrades, before the working class of the whole world we repel this accusation. The Georgian Menshevik Party is being left, not by isolated individuals, but by the masses of workers and peasants, who, during the long years of the Tsarist regime, took part in underground revolutionary action. No one will dare to accuse these masses, who have sacrificed everything for the revolution, who did not blench before Tsarism, before penal servitude, and before torture, of changing their political convictions out of cowardice.

The workers and peasants do not study in universities, but in the day to day struggle, which teaches us that our place is no longer in the Menshevik Party. This Party, which

won its laurels during the first Russian Revolution, when we were struggling against the autocracy, laid down its arms, during the world war, in common with the rest of the Second International, before the imperialist bourgeoisie. After the October Revolution the Georgian Menshevik Party definitely entered on the path of counter-revolution, under cover of the struggle for Georgian independence.

Comparing the conduct of the Menshevik Government with that of the Georgian Soviet Government, we see the first forcing the working class to bow to the yoke of the bourgeoisie, and the second showing the working class the true path to Socialism. That is why we have decided to leave the Menshevik Party.

Our former Menshevik leaders, *émigrés* abroad, spread the myth that the Moscow Communists conquered Georgia for imperialist ends, forcibly occupying the country and suppressing its independence. The reformists help in the diffusion of this myth in order to lead the workers of Western Europe away from Communism.

Comrades, workers! This myth is a mixture of truths that deceive and plain lies.

Our former leaders hide from you the fact that up to the October Revolution they were Russian patriots, standing, in opposition to the Bolsheviks, for "great Russia," one and indivisible. As adversaries of the Russian Federal Republic, they vehemently reproached Lenin with his so-called defeatism, his contribution to the dismemberment of "great Russia," his campaign for the freeing of the oppressed nationalities of Russia, for their right of self-determination and even of separation. Our leaders only became the protagonists of Georgian independence after the October Revolution, solely in order to separate themselves from the Soviets, and not concealing that, immediately the Soviet power was overthrown, Georgia would become part of the Russian State once again.

Our former leaders hide from you, comrades, the fact that while the Menshevik Party was in power, Georgia in reality only possessed the shadow of independence. The Georgian Menshevik Government at first had to act under the orders of the German generals, the defenders of the Georgian landowners, and later under those of the English generals, who only tolerated Georgian independence in so far as the Menshevik Government supported the Entente in the struggle against the Soviets by helping in the recruiting of the Denikin and Wrangel armies.

Our former Menshevik leaders are lying when they say that the Communists of Moscow occupied Georgia for imperialist ends. We know that the Communists of Moscow, Lenin and Trotzky, were opposed to the entry of the Red Army into Georgia. The Georgian Communists took the initiative in bringing the Red Army into Georgia, and then confronted their comrades of Moscow with the *fait accompli*. They did this, we now see, from truly patriotic motives.

The Georgian Communists could not bear that Georgia, with such a glorious revolutionary past, should be transformed into an instrument of counter-revolution, of imperialist machinations against the Soviet power, into an open arena for various nationalist conflicts.

Finally, our former leaders give a totally distorted view of the results of the sovietisation of Georgia. The Georgian Menshevik Government deprived Georgia of its sources of wheat supply by the separation from Soviet Russia. To-day, under Soviet Government, the Georgian workers and peasants are no longer troubled by famine. The Georgian Menshevik Government, whose members changed suddenly from Russian patriots to Georgian chauvinists, excited nationalist passions, and provoked ceaseless internecine strife between the Georgians, Armenians, Abkhazians, Adjarians, &c. The Soviet Government put an end to this strife, and re-established peace throughout Transcaucasia. The Georgian Menshevik Government, while forming a united front with the feudal and bourgeois nationalists against "the Russian barbarians," did not dare to apply even its own modest agrarian programme. The Soviet Government, in the year following its advent, confiscated for the benefit

of the peasants the land of the big proprietors. Under the Menshevik Government in Georgia the eight-hour day only existed on paper. Under the Soviet regime the workers everywhere work only eight hours, or even, if the conditions of labour are too severe, the working day is reduced to six hours.

Our former leaders used to frighten us by saying that when the Bolsheviks came they would put the land to fire and sword, destroying and ruining Georgian civilisation. Actually it was the Menshevik Guard (whose name was changed by the English from Red Guard to National Guard, and which was chiefly composed of bourgeois elements) which ruthlessly burnt down villages while suppressing the revolts of national minorities. These crimes are publicly admitted by their author, Djugelli, in his *Diary*. And the National Guard committed these violences despite the protests of those workers who were in its ranks.

Everyone admits that the Red Army, in contrast to the Menshevik National Guard, has always behaved in the most exemplary manner in Georgia. When the Menshevik Government left Georgia it destroyed bridges and removed money and valuables. The Soviet Government, far from taking anything, shared its meagre resources with the Georgian Republic in order to help in the economic reconstruction of Georgia; and no one will deny that, in two years, the Soviet power has done much in this direction. For instance: the repairing of roads, the rebuilding of bridges, the construction of new railway lines, the building of five electric power stations, the restoration of the Tchatakh foundries, the re-fitting of the spas of Borjom and Abastouman, the setting up, with Russian materials, of silk manufacture, the opening of People's Palaces, of rest homes, of kindergarten, of workers' faculties, the publication and distribution of Marxist literature in the Georgian language, &c. All this is not Russification, but contributes to the development of Georgian national culture.

The sovietisation of Georgia has been fatal only to the bourgeoisie, to the priests, to the landowners. The Georgian workers and peasants are only now beginning to breathe freely. Having seen what the Soviet regime is like, they are very naturally leaving the Menshevik Party *en masse*, in spite of the deep-rootedness of Menshevism in Georgia, and of the great services it formerly rendered to the revolution.

To conclude, comrades, we are desirous that our experience should assist you to discern the path which leads the working class to its own emancipation: that of the reformist Menshevik Second International, or the revolutionary path of the Communist International. We have made our decision once and for all.

The Menshevik Government, despite the protests of the majority of our party organisations, replaced the Red Flag on the Palace at Tiflis by the national tricolour. The Soviet Government has hoisted anew the Red Flag, and we swear to defend it against both the open enemies and the pretended friends of the working class.

Long Live the Socialist Revolution!

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Federated Farmer-Labour Party

The Chicago Convention

ON July 3, 4, and 5 the Convention of the Farmer-Labour Party met in Chicago. This Convention marked the most recent stage in the movement for the establishment of an independent political party of Labour in the United States. During the past three years this movement has been steadily gaining in strength, despite many reverses. It has been struggling against middle-class "radicalism" and against the hesitation of the leaders of the movement whenever it came to the point of actually establishing a Labour Party and beginning a great political drive among the industrial and agricultural masses. The Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political

Action, held in February, 1922 (which excluded the Workers' Party), failed completely because its conveners were still dominated by the "non-partisan" ideology of Mr. Gompers and the leading elements of the American Federation of Labour.

The leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party, responding to the growing demand among the masses for the formation of a *bona fide* independent working-class party, summoned the Convention for July 3. In the summons the Convention was described as a "monster political convention" to which all "labour, farm, and political groups," both local and national, were invited to send delegates "for the purpose of devising means for knitting together the many organisations in this country in such a manner as will enable the workers to really function politically."

The reply to this call came noticeably from the rank and file, from local labour bodies, trades councils, union locals, &c. The big International Unions and State Federations of Labour for the most part refused to participate, or else ignored the summons. Giving this refusal as an excuse, the Socialist Party also declined to sit in the Convention. This put the leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party in a serious position: for in the Convention it was quite evident that the militant and revolutionary elements would predominate. From this moment exclusive interest centred on the Workers' Party and the rôle it would set itself in the Convention.

The Workers' Party went into the Convention knowing what it wanted, and determined to get it—a federated party of the agricultural and industrial masses. The Farmer-Labour Party leaders, headed by John Fitzpatrick, President of the Chicago Federation of Labour, did not bring forward any concrete proposals to lay before the Convention. They tried to exclude the Workers' Party by making the Convention a purely Farmer-Labour Party affair, to be followed by a general conference in which "invited organisations" like the Workers' Party should be allowed to participate. When this attempt failed, the report of the Organisation Committee on the Workers' Party resolution

in favour of the immediate formation of a Federated Farmer-Labour Party in which shall be included local unions, central labour bodies, state federations, labour political groups, labour fraternal organisations, and co-operative organisations

was attacked by the Old Guard of the Farmer-Labour Party. They were voted down and the resolution carried, by six hundred to forty. At last, the Old Guard were reduced to attempting to frighten delegates with the bogey of Bolshevism. They moved a resolution declaring against the formation of the Federated Party, demanding that the Convention should continue the old Farmer-Labour Party without change, and that all organisations affiliated to the Communist International or advocating the overthrow of the government by violence should be barred. By five hundred votes to fifty this resolution was laid on the table. Fitzpatrick and his followers were beaten, and left the Convention, taking with them some fifty delegates, mostly, it is said, from an old stronghold of the Farmer-Labour Party—Cook County, Illinois. "The officials of the old Farmer-Labour Party," it has been said, "wanted to isolate the Workers' Party in order to paralyse the driving force toward

a Federated Farmer-Labour Party. The Workers' Party had to isolate the group of officials in order that the Federated Party could be organised."

Except in the Press of the Workers' Party and the Trade Union Educational League, which have greeted with enthusiasm the formation of "the first Mass Party of American Workers and Farmers," there has been, from the organ of the doctrinaire "Marxists" of the Proletarian Party, through the *New Majority* (organ of the Farmer-Labour Party) to the Socialist *New York Call*, a steady stream of abuse of the Communists for "packing" the Convention and causing a "split" in the Farmer-Labour Party. The facts of the case appear to be that, through its own delegation, and through delegates from other organisations who were members of the Party, the Workers' Party had about two hundred of the six hundred and fifty delegates present, representing in all a claimed total of some six hundred thousand workers and farmers. But far more than their actual voting strength and their excellent generalship in the Convention (which is admitted on all sides), the Workers' Party carried the day because they voiced the desires of the four hundred or so non-party delegates. When the Farmer-Labour Party officials were urging that the time was still not yet ripe for a Labour Party, an old farmer dramatically expressed the real wishes of the mass of the delegates by exclaiming: "The time is ripe, over-ripe, the time is rotten." It was to feelings like these that the Workers' Party gave a lead, and, so far, a successful lead.

It is noteworthy that the initial chorus of execration in the Press has now taken a rather different turn. The most vehement opponents of the Federated Party are admitting that, after all, the Federated Party may become "a real force in American political life." "Time alone will show," a writer in the *New York Call* says guardedly, in the issue of July 29. On July 8, a *Call* editorial had said, with scornful certainty, "To consider for a moment that they [*i.e.*, the Communists] have created a party organisation of national scope at Chicago is the last word in humour." Latest reports indicate that affiliations to the Federated Party are coming in from numerous local labour bodies: the largest to date is that of the Los Angeles Labour Party, representing 11,000 workers. A Convention of the new Party is fixed for January, 1924.

Principles and Programme of the Party

The Statement of Principles of the Party opens—

"The government of the people for the people and by the people," which has in the past been the boast of American political life, no longer exists in this country. To-day the Government of the United States is a Government of, for, and by Wall Street, and the financial and industrial system which it represents.

This thesis is developed in several paragraphs. American imperialism is exposed, and the exploitation of the farmers by the banking interests denounced. Such conditions as these, the Statement continues, demand the formation of a political party representing the industrial workers and farmers, who will "wrest control of the government" from the hands of its present masters. Until this control has passed to the workers and farmers there can be no genuine public ownership of industry.

But in order to make more clear the conflict of interests between the employing class and the working and farming classes, and thus aid the masses in their struggle against exploitation and oppression, we propose an immediate programme of public ownership of all public utilities. It must at all times be

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NOTES of the MONTH

*The Two Camps in Germany—The Setting and the Picture—Counter-
Revolutionary Preparation—The Choice for Europe—Can the
German Workers Win?—An Even Balance—The
Condition of Success—Do We Stand with
Curzon?—Isolation to be Broken*

A PIECE of news from Germany of interest to LABOUR MONTHLY readers illustrates the direction of events: our friend and contributor, Max Beer, the last of whose series of unpublished passages of Marx's writings we print this month, tells us that he has joined the Communist Party. This stray evidence of the wholesale streaming into the Party that is taking place (rumour has it that a special staff has had to be established to receive the daily flood of new adhesions) affords a glimpse of the alignment that the crisis is compelling, when the reserved and detached Socialist scholar and historian feels the time has come to step down from his books and take his stand in the ranks of action, and that there is only one camp for every honest man and socialist to meet the Fascist menace—the Communist Party. It is no longer the individual case that is of interest: it is the clear resolution of social forms in the face of the compulsion of events; the disappearance of the hesitating centre, whose passing from the field of socialist theory and discussion we commented on a year ago, translated now into practical action; the definite confronting of the issue of Communism or Fascism which is now facing Central Europe and will shortly face all Europe and eventually Britain.

ALL that is happening in Europe only goes to throw into relief the central situation. The sabre-rattling of Poincaré and Foch are as pigmy a spectacle as the antics of Ludendorff and Hoffmann in 1918 before the social forces they were unloosing. The alarums and excursions of Italy and Spain and the Balkans are manifestly the symptoms of disturbance and not the disturbance itself. Even the Anglo-French crisis, which overshadows every issue and translates it into terms of itself, is only the

division of the imperialist camps as in the war, which by their division release the forces of their eventual conqueror, but close up against these at once when released.

THE central fact of the whole political situation is that the world struggle between the working class and capital, let loose by the war of 1914, is entering on its second stage, and that the second and decisive battle of the revolution is preparing in Germany. Against this the forces of counter-revolution are marshalling all over Europe, seizing points of vantage with sudden, sharp, decisive strokes, in Italy, in Greece, in Bulgaria, in Spain, perhaps next in Czecho-Slovakia or in Bavaria itself. Against this background of gathering storm the isolated military and national ambitions of Italy, of Bulgaria, of Jugo-Slavia, of Spain see their chance of realisation unmolested by hasty pirate strokes amid the general confusion. Against this expected issue the near-sighted greed and calculation of French imperialism reckon the gains to be made from the confusion and the ultimate military domination to be attained. Against this menace to its own prospects British policy wrings its hands helplessly, defeated in Italy and the Balkans, defeated in the Near East, defeated in the Ruhr, and follows in practice at the heels of France.

IN all this welter of confusion the one certain point and hope for the future is if the workers win in Germany, and the union of working-class Germany and working-class Russia can form the rallying basis of social order and cohesion for the settlement of Europe. On no other basis can the present destructive conflicts and reckless rivalries be solved; in no other direction is there any conscious, creative, constructive force at work, equal to meeting and answering the problems of to-day.

CAN the German workers win? The immediate odds are still heavily against them. They are without arms. They are weakened by years of suffering and underfeeding during the war and after the war. Against them the Fascists are well supplied with arms and funds and are powerfully organised. Still more serious, the workers are weakened by division through the Social

Democratic leaders taking service with the big capitalists in the Grand Coalition and busily performing the preparatory work of Fascism by suppressing the Workers' Councils, working-class journals, &c. Although the Social Democratic rank and file are showing signs of dealing with this, it is doubtful whether their will can express itself rapidly enough through the official machinery. It is thus certain that the working class will not be concerned to provoke a struggle.

NEVERTHELESS, when the struggle comes—as every sign indicates to be likely to follow on the outcome of the Ruhr occupation, whether that outcome be surrender or collapse—there are elements in the situation favourable to the German workers. They have shown themselves able in their overthrow of the Cuno Government to act as a united force under the leadership of the Workers' Councils and the Communist Party. The very collapse and hopelessness of the existing situation and all bourgeois policy incline whole sections of the population to rally to them as the only hope. The lower ranks of Fascism are susceptible to Communist propaganda, which by its direct appeal to concrete issues and its exposure of class divisions has clearly had some effect. The German workers, it may be said, are readier in many ways than any workers have ever been in any country for the approaching struggle: but the struggle itself is more menacing and formidable than any that has faced the working class since the battle of the Russian workers against world-capitalism on twenty-two fronts.

IN this situation the whole outcome depends, as it did in the Russian case, on one condition—the action of the workers in other countries. The fate of the German revolution will not be determined in Germany: it will be determined in Europe. Germany is ringed round—in Poland, in Czecho-Slovakia, in France, and close at hand in Hungary and Italy—by White armies waiting to give succour to their Fascist friends. The German coasts are at the mercy of the British navy. It will rest with the workers of these countries to determine whether the German workers are to be crushed by military intervention or indirect subvention and handed over to the mercy of the Fascists, or whether

the workers of the other countries will stand solidly by them to the full extent of their power and resources. Everything depends above all on the British, French, and Czech workers. Will they be able to rise to the situation? Let it be remembered that there will be no long protracted period this time, as in the Russian example, for gradual awakening. The conditions are wholly different: the nerves of European politics are now all attuned to the revolutionary issue, and in an industrial country like Germany the decisive period will be short and sharp.

THEREFORE it is at this moment terrible and tragic that British Labour policy is buried in old issues of the revision of the Treaty and the rest, and deaf and blind to the living issue here and now. At this moment of all moments, when the working-class issue is everything and the national alignment is meaningless in comparison, British Labour policy is engaged in proclaiming its national solidarity in foreign policy with a Tory Cabinet, because its Prime Minister has used some phrases of international nomenclature which the Labour Party once used. At a moment when the sword of Fascism is hanging over the necks of the working class of Europe, the Labour Party is openly proclaiming its unity with Curzon, the direct advocate and supporter of every Fascist movement. These statements are not exaggerations, but the actual statements of responsible Labour organs.

Foreign policy [declares the *New Statesman*] is for the time being incomparably the most important sphere of governmental activity, and within that sphere there are no definite party differences. Lord Curzon and Mr. Jack Jones are substantially of the same opinion—which is the opinion of all England.

And the *Labour Press Service* declares:—

The *Spectator* is an influential and reputable Conservative review: but the words which it uses express the sentiments of the Labour Party and indeed of the whole nation.

This at the moment when the sharpest dividing issue since the Russian Revolution is facing the working class and the bourgeoisie. "There are no definite party differences." "Lord Curzon and Mr. Jack Jones are substantially of the same opinion." Is this the expression of British working-class feeling to go out to encourage the workers of the Continent? If it is not, then the speediest

measures need to be taken by every active element of the working-class movement to remedy them: for at present these are the expressions that are going out, and every word is a stab in the back for the German workers and a direct incitement to Fascism.

TO anyone attempting to survey the international working-class situation to-day the British movement presents a disquieting spectacle of self-absorbed isolation and blindness to actual issues. The dramatic appeal and warning of Fimmen at the Trades Union Congress was not a personal episode: it was the impact of the international movement upon the closed national consciousness of the British movement. In the light of the international crisis the public political expression of the British Labour movement during the past month took two forms—the Summer Schools, which broke out in such abundance, and the Plymouth Trades Union Congress. It is only necessary to consider these against the background of the European situation to get a sense of the position. The Summer Schools were happily engaged in mapping out beautiful charts and diagrams of how a Labour Government would administer everything in detail without injuring anybody. This occupation was considered to be a way of being “practical.” The Plymouth Trades Union Congress needs no comment. Last year we analysed with care the contribution of every leader to the Congress in order to illustrate the character of the proceedings. This year it is unnecessary: the comment is universal, and the old leaders by an exhibition they must very much regret have given the order for their own funeral. The new movement is bound to arise and to replace the old leadership; and though it will not at first be very much more clear or positive, it will mark at any rate the beginning of serious politics in the British Labour Movement. But in the meantime the German situation is here now, as the unemployed situation is here now; and it is urgently necessary for every available force in the working-class movement to rally on these at once.

THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

By R. PAGE ARNOT

THE forthcoming Imperial Conference has been very little talked about. To the Economic Conference which takes place at the same time a considerable amount of attention and space in the press has been allotted. But the Imperial Conference itself has been kept in the background. The press has been studiously vague about it. No politician has heralded its arrival with eloquent orations. As far back as April last the Prime Minister expressly deprecated any discussion in the House of Commons on this subject. One result of this reticence is that the workers are in almost complete ignorance of the significance of this conference or of the issues it will raise. On the other hand every effort is being made to interest the public in the Wembley Empire Exhibition next spring. It is quite safe and even useful that their thoughts should be concentrated in that direction.

This reticence is not without good reason. It is felt that while the power and the majesty and the vast resources of the British Empire should be prominently impressed on everyone's mind, it is distinctly dangerous that any of the conflicting policies of that Empire should be publicly discussed. Thus, just that very moment when Labour is being reminded of its heavy responsibilities as regards the Empire and foreign affairs is chosen to hide the actual politics of the Empire and prevent the worker from getting any real idea of that for which he is said to be responsible. Labour is told that it has a responsibility. The nature of that responsibility is not revealed to it, nor the fact that a most precarious position has been reached in the Empire's internal politics. In point of fact the thing that Labour is not allowed to know is that the British Empire is faced with certain dissolution.

The Central Government has no longer any political hold over the Dominions. The attempt to gain such a hold by building up from periodical Imperial Conferences to a permanent imperial machinery of government has proved a failure. The experiment

dates back for nearly forty years, but it is in the last twelve years that the experiment was rapidly brought to the testing point. The test failed. The experience of the colonial conferences of 1887 and 1897 was followed by the South African War, when for the first time colonial troops fought along with the regular army. The idea of a closer concentration of power had already begun, and sufficient ground had been covered at the colonial conference of 1902 to transform it on the next occasion into the Imperial Conference presided over not by the Colonial Secretary but by the Prime Minister. This was in 1907. Things had moved much further when Mr. Asquith presided at the Imperial Conference of 1911. The war with Germany was now imminent. The Agadir incident had just occurred. The outlines of foreign policy, the issues of war and peace, were explained to the Dominion representatives. But at that time Mr. Asquith could definitely refuse the Dominions any voice in, any control of, imperial policy.

The war produced a new situation. The Dominion Premiers were constantly in London from 1915 onwards, and in 1917 with the Imperial Conference of that year the movement reached a climax. During that year the Dominion Premiers had formed part of the War Cabinet, and the gigantic problems of the war were subject to an Empire directorate. The whole Empire was for the time being under one political control.

Two or three years before the war, an anonymous group had been formed in various centres throughout Britain and the Dominions for the purpose of working out schemes for a Federation of the British Empire under unitary control. After a little time this group started the publication of the *Round Table*, as a review of the politics of the British Empire. Though mainly drawn from governing class circles, the Round Table group had at first comparatively little influence and their propaganda took little root. Politicians paid no heed to them and continued the simple propaganda of sentiment and flag-wagging. The war proved the best propagandist of the Round Table group. It revealed suddenly to the soldiers and politicians the political and military weakness of their rule. The war did more than propaganda. It actually provided, as we have said above, an Empire directorate. Accordingly in 1917, in the emotions of the Imperial Conference, the idea of

Empire Federation began to take concrete shape. Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues began to see visions of the British Empire becoming a self-contained unitary State. The dream of Empire got hold on them.

The end of the war brought as sudden a change; and the years that follow are the story of the fading of their dream. Not that they were aware of this immediately. Plans began to be laid for alterations in the constitution of the Empire. It was all in vain. At the Imperial Conference of 1921 they received a rude shock; the Dominion Premiers refused absolutely to allow the proposed constitutional conference (generated in the enthusiasms of 1917) to be held at all. Signs had not been wanting of this development. The Dominions had been separate signatories to the Versailles Treaty. They also signed the Two-power Pact by which Britain and America were to have guaranteed military support to France. But to the signatories of this Pact there was one notable exception. Canada refused to sign. This meant that in the event of a war arising from this Pact Canada intended to remain neutral. Now, it would not have been possible for Canada to maintain a position of neutrality and at the same time continue her allegiance to the British Crown. Neutrality meant secession from the British Empire.

Since the Imperial Conference of 1921, these significant signs of break-up had multiplied. The tour round the Dominions of Admiral Jellicoe to co-ordinate Empire defence was met everywhere with coolness and in some cases with openly expressed hostility. This was less so in the case of Australia. Australia is still "loyal," but that is because of the intense need of a supply of capital from Great Britain. The speeches of General Smuts cabled over the wire (it is only General Smuts' speeches that are cabled in any fullness) showed that he was continually trying to persuade his reluctant audiences that South Africa should remain within the Empire. Mr. Lloyd George's famous Chanak telegram urging the Dominions to prepare for a war with Turkey was greeted with resentment in the Dominion Parliaments.¹ Finally, in the spring of this year, the refusal of

¹ For this, and the Halibut treaty, and also the economic penetration of the U.S.A. into Canada, see Mr. H. P. Rathbone's articles in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* in June and July of this year.

Canada to allow the British Ambassador at Washington to sign the Halibut Fishery Treaty between Canada and the United States was treated both in Canadian and American journals as a great point gained in slackening what little Empire control remained in the hands of Whitehall.

The vision of a seated Britannia with all her daughter nations growing about her, growing bulkier every year, has proved to be Mr. Kipling's dream. It was a pretty picture only, embodying the old folks' idea of what family life should be. It has no relation to realities, at any rate in the second decade of the twentieth century. Even Joseph Chamberlain, who might have been the Bismarck of the British Empire, came half a century too late. The dream of a white Empire is gone for ever. The cold realities are showing themselves more and more clearly: and the Dominions of the twentieth century are seen to be going their own way as did the American colonies 150 years ago.

A different, but equally serious, indeed, far more serious, problem faced them—how to allay the growing consciousness and unrest of the four hundred million human beings who were usually lumped together as “the coloured races of the Empire.” Again the war had made a profound change. Policies that had previously been discussed in a dilettante fashion suddenly became a pressing necessity. If the system of exploitation was to be maintained over these four hundred millions, a quarter of the population of the whole earth, it was necessary to find within each subject race some class or section which in return for special privileges would be ready to support the continuance of British rule. In effect this meant an alliance with the native bourgeoisie wherever that bourgeoisie was sufficiently developed. Accordingly, in 1917 the promise was made to India for a measure of self-government; and by the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme the promise was made into a reality for a small section of the peoples of Hindustan. The Indian bourgeoisie were taken into partnership, and it was proudly said that India had started on the road to self-government. To Egypt, to Palestine, to the Mandatory States of Mesopotamia and Greater Arabia the same principle was applied. Even the bourgeoisie of little Malta, after the post-war disturbances, received self-govern-

ment in non-military matters. Throughout the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, which remained formally as well as actually under the despotism, advisory councils were set up, on which again certain sections of the native inhabitants were represented. The pæans over the liberty enjoyed under the British Empire for all its subject races rose higher than ever.

Unfortunately, these measures will only afford temporary relief. The same processes that called into being a more or less developed native bourgeoisie with growing nationalist consciousness are developing a consciousness of oppression and exploitation amongst the native proletariat and the masses of peasants, nor can *their* discontent be allayed in the same manner. For them there is no way out but a complete end to the system of exploitation.

Throughout the whole of the Crown Colonies and in all dominions except Australia and Canada, Empire is maintained on a basis of coloured labour. It is significant that when the schemes of emigration were being discussed that resulted in the Empire Settlement Act of 1923, South Africa made it clear that they had no use for further white labour and could not therefore be a party to the emigration schemes. There is thus being prepared for the future the most embittered form of human strife—a class war which is also a racial revolt. Nothing can stop this, certainly not the granting of privileges to limited sections of the native populations; the black labour empire is a contradiction for which they can find no solution save dissolution.

For an example it has not been necessary to wait for the results of historic development. The social developments that follow in the train of world capitalism are fearfully rapid nowadays. In 1921 at the Imperial Conference it was found necessary, as a concomitant of the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme, for the Indians to be given the assurance of an equal status in the Empire. For two years since then there has been in Kenya a strife at times rising to civil conflict between the white settlers and the immigrant Indian traders. The Colonial Office has been forced to withdraw its proposal of a constitution: it has weighted the balance in favour of the white settlers, and now even tame Indians like the Hon. Srinivasa Sastri are complaining that if this sort of thing happens it becomes impossible for them to keep the Empire together. This case of Kenya

land, on which there was so little discussion in the public Press, is of the same order of historic importance as the attempt of Lord North to impose taxes on the American colonists. The expedients of the British bourgeoisie to maintain their political domination over coloured labour are doomed to failure no less surely than their dream of white empire.

It is under these inauspicious conditions that the Imperial Conference of October, 1923, assembles. Much could be written to show in what spirit, as expressed in their farewell speeches, the Dominion Ministers are sailing to London. But a more concise estimate of the situation is provided by the June and September issues of the *Round Table*. For the Knights of the Round Table the time of great expectations is past: and their sombre outlook confirms the contentions of this article. They point out that the Dominions will refuse to be committed to any foreign policy that may involve them deeply in European affairs: and their melancholy conclusion amounts to this, that Great Britain must have no committal European policy at all. Their own proposals for political solidification of an Empire are few and tentative. (They propose that the Dominions should have accredited ambassadors in London.) Whether their proposals are entertained or not (the latter is more likely) they make no practical difference. Alike in European affairs and in the internal politics of the Empire, their carefully considered suggestions to Downing Street amount to a policy of drift—until the next war, when drift must pass into dissolution. There is only one parallel to their tone of hesitation. That parallel is found in the timid attitude of the Austro-Hungarian statesmen before the Dual Monarchy collapsed. If then it is realised in governing-class circles that the British Empire politically has become as ramshackle a State as the dominions that owed allegiance to the House of Habsburg, to what means will they turn? The answer is clear. The way of salvation for the British Empire is to be sought in economic arrangements; and it is these arrangements that will be the subjects of the separate Economic Conference.

The agenda of the Imperial Economic Conference will include :—

- (1) Fuller development of natural resources.
- (2) Discussion of preference tariffs.

- (3) Shipping and communications.
- (4) Emigration.
- (5) Sundry subjects such as technical research, unification of trade practices, &c.

Preferences which are already mutually granted between this country and the Dominions on a few customs duties will not be much further developed. On the foodstuffs from the Dominions there will be no preference duties. The British bourgeoisie dare not raise the price of their own manufactured goods which would follow from the dearer cost of labour that would result from dearer bread. Nor can they risk retaliation from their present customers, either against their manufactured goods, still less against the one British raw material export—coal. Clearly on the side of Great Britain alone there is little or nothing doing in the way of preference.

To relieve the present burden of unemployment an attempt will be made to speed up emigration schemes, but the poverty of outlook is well displayed by the trifling sum—three million pounds—allotted for this purpose under the Empire Settlement Act. The quality of capitalist statesmanship is even better shown by the following passage from a pronouncement this spring by the First Lord of the Admiralty, in which he relates how he secured a re-christening of the Government Emigration Committee:—

The word "emigration" was, I felt, unsuitable, both because of its associations with old unsatisfactory conditions, and because it conveyed suggestions of expatriation, loss of citizenship and severance of home ties, altogether inappropriate in the case of those who simply changed their domicile in order to settle in some other part of the same Commonwealth. The Committee and Office were accordingly re-named Oversea Settlement Committee and Office, and the words "emigration" and "emigrant" have since then been confined, in official usage, at any rate, to emigration to foreign countries, and have been replaced, where the Empire is concerned, by "migration" and "migrant," when the matter under discussion is the actual passage, and "Oversea" or "Empire Settlement" and "settler," where the aspect under consideration is the future of our fellow citizens in their new homes.

We may omit the other subjects of discussion as less important and come to the development of natural resources. Here it is gravely necessary for the British bourgeoisie to find more of their raw materials within the Empire, particularly in the case of those

that have come from the United States. Our exports to the United States in the past just about balanced our imports from them, and of these one of the largest was raw cotton. Now the British bourgeoisie have to send to America, not only the payment for raw cotton, but also the annual debt tribute. Our exports will not be able to bear this double burden, and the £ will continue to sink in relation to the dollar unless Empire cotton takes the place of the American article. But cotton is only one thing out of many. The Dominions and Colonies, in their wide extent and diverse climates, are rich in every sort of raw material. It only requires the sinking of British capital to make these many countries fructify and bear fruit a hundredfold. Therefore this export of capital to the Colonies is the real meaning of the phrase "development of Empire resources"; and efforts in this direction will be made at the Conference.

A bold scheme of capitalist reconstruction would declare for an Empire Zollverein—or Customs Union—the essence of which would be free trade within the Empire. This Empire free trade would only have a meaning if it built up an industrial system by which the Dominions remained in the position of primary producers furnishing foodstuffs and raw materials in exchange for manufactured goods. This or something like this is the scheme put forward by the *Round Table*. That the Dominions will accept it or even look at it there is not the slightest likelihood. You cannot restrict Australia or Canada to primary production; their career as manufacturing countries has already begun. South Africa, since the war, is beginning to demand that a market shall be found in England for *her manufactured goods*. Indian cotton mills, enjoying a protected tariff, are sapping the life of Lancashire. The new Tariff Board in India is now discussing protection for the Indian steel industry, and the demand is for a tariff of 33½ per cent. against English steel. This means that the dream of the Empire as a self-contained economic whole is also doomed to fail: and every attempt to make it a reality by feverish exports of capital merely shatters the fabric of the dream. The development of Empire resources may proceed apace; capital will be exported from this country to aid that development; but the capital investments will not only be—or even mainly—in primary producers' industries. The capital exported from

Britain will be used to build up in the Empire the manufacturing centres that will soon be free from even a shadow of dependence on British manufactures. If London will not float the loans and capital issues, New York will. Therefore the very steps that are being now taken to bind together the Empire will result in its final disintegration as an economic unit.

Political reconstruction has failed as regards the Dominions. It will equally fail as regards the Empire over coloured labour. A full system of Empire preference they dare not attempt, still less a scheme for Empire free trade. The control of the Government, of the City, over the Empire is reduced to money lending, the same sort of control as the great financial firms like Rothschild, or Baring Brothers, or Schroeder exercise over a South American or Balkan State. And it is just this exercise of money lending that will inevitably loosen and defeat all other bonds, and finally its own.

The sign that our ruling class partially realise the difficulties that encompass them is the changed way in which the Empire is spoken of. Only our grown-up public school boys continue to talk in the old flamboyant manner. The statesmen and big industrialists are more cautious. As may be gathered from Mr. Amery's remarks quoted above, they place much virtue in a change of name. Accordingly the phrase "the Britannic Commonwealth of Nations" was much in favour at the Imperial Conference of 1921, while the sub-title of the *Round Table* now runs "a review of the politics of the British Commonwealth." Similarly, the objects of the Empire are now publicly represented as being cleansed from any taint of domination.

At the 1921 Conference, Mr. Lloyd George, making, as it were, the best of a bad job, said of the British Empire :—

It is based not on force but on goodwill and a common understanding. Liberty is its binding principle. Where that principle has not hitherto been applied it is gradually being introduced into the structure.

Again, the *Round Table*, in its most considered statement on the approaching Imperial Conference, begins as follows:—

The British Commonwealth exists not for purposes of conquest, or exploitation, or power, but in order to secure peace and freedom, and the right to work out their salvation for themselves to all the peoples and races within it.

No doubt they mean what they say. But their meaning and their change of tone has been determined by the change of circumstance.

What is to be the policy of the Labour Party towards the British Empire? In the past the instinct of the working-class movement was sure. Labour interfered in Empire affairs only to take the part of the oppressed nationalities and subject native races. It looked forward to their emancipation and the break-up of the whole system of exploitation. But of late years there has been a change of attitude, if not amongst the masses of workers, at any rate amongst the leaders. An example of the change was the Labour Party Executive's condemnation of the tactics of the Indian nationalist movement. Perhaps the change can be best shown by a quotation from Mr. Snowden's new booklet, "If Labour Rules." Mr. Snowden says:—

So long as a spirit of Imperialism dominates the Great Powers, the withdrawal of British government from dependencies like India and the Crown Colonies will not leave these dependencies in the possession of self-government, but will leave them a prey to the predatory designs of other Powers.

The policy of a Labour Government towards the dependencies of the British Empire will be to ensure the populations humane and just government; to secure for them the enjoyment of their own property; freedom and liberty to develop their own culture; to freely confer upon them powers of self-government as rapidly as they are educated to use them—and, in short, to pursue unremittingly the policy of qualifying these dependencies to become self-governing Dominions.

There is really, as far as words go, not very much to choose between this and the quotations I have given above. It is in exactly the same tone as the honeyed accents of capitalist statesmen bent on reconciling the Dominions and Dependencies to a continuance of "the Britannic Commonwealth." It may be it is wise to soothe the apprehensions of the governing class, anxious already on its own account and doubly anxious with the approach of a Labour Government. But it is no policy for the working class. At the very moment when it has become clear that the Empire is no longer a developing but a disintegrating economic unit, Mr. Snowden, blind to these facts, suggests that Labour should moralise the Empire and hold it together. If this policy is adopted by other leaders, it will simply involve the Labour Party in the inevitable breakdown of the capitalist schemes for Empire reconstruction.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

By R. PALME DUTT

THE propaganda of the Empire as a cult for popular consumption has been assiduously cultivated in this country, but has never taken root.

The real basis of the Empire is not the artificial cult of Empire Days, Kipling, the King-Emperor, &c., but a severely material basis woven into the lives of everyone and holding them by ties not always seen.

As a result our counter-propaganda has commonly missed the mark. It has made the mistake of fighting the Empire as an idea, by attacking or ridiculing "Empire-mongers" or "imperialism," or occasionally arousing sentiment over especially atrocious samples of British rule.

The result is no real opposition to the Empire, but only a sentimental tradition of opposition, which is not really understood and is therefore never translated into anything positive and is rapidly discarded as old-fashioned prejudice by Labour politicians when they rise to be taken in by the governing class.

We need to change this by attacking the real material basis of the Empire, by laying bare its results in working-class division and corruption, racial separation, tyranny and militarism, and the destruction of working-class internationalism, by making clear the inevitable break-up and destruction of its material structure, by exposing the new plans of the Imperialists as an attempt to arrest this decay and cut off the British workers from the tide of the world-revolution in a prison house under conditions of artificial isolation bound to bring great suffering on the working class, and by showing the way to counter this effectively in attacking the system at its weakest spot, and changing from the position of a White Labour aristocracy having Utopian "sympathies" with other sections to the leaders of a working-class revolt of all the exploited and subject forces against the real seat of power of British capitalism.

This transformation of British Labour politics can only take place as the result of a very patient and widespread explanation of

the real position of the British working class, of the plans of the Imperialists, and of the future prospects awaiting the workers. Socialist propaganda in this country is still almost exclusively national in character (" Britain for the British ") with an added dose of " internationalism " as a kind of preventive against war, and is thus wholly unsuited to modern conditions.

While actual post-war experience is changing and is bound to change this outlook, the expression of this change in programme and policy is still to come. The Empire is still the unspoken premise of all British Labour and trade union politics. Modern capitalism as a conflict of world systems, the displacement of white labour by Asiatic and African, the shifting of the basis of world capitalism and the de-nationalisation of capital, all these fall outside the prim suburban photo-frame of " Labour and the New Social Order."

What is the British Empire? Why has this collection of miscellaneous and unassociated territories, states, populations, and economic systems, scattered and sprawling over every quarter of the globe, come into being as a single political system dominated from this island?

According to the *Daily Herald*, quoting Seeley, it all began " in a fit of absence of mind." The great colonial wars of the eighteenth century were not fought for the sake of the colonies; on the contrary, they were fought because of the quarrels of diplomatists and kings and other habits of the bad old past, and the colonies were an accidental result.

Because the French were in Canada and could be attacked there when we were at war with them, we acquired half of the Continent of North America. *Because* the Dutch were in South Africa when we broke up their sea power we established ourselves at the Cape, whence we have spread far northward.

It was *only when* we found ourselves in occupation of vast expanses of territory in all parts of the world that we developed what psychoanalysts would call the " Imperialist complex."—*Daily Herald*, August 13, 1923.

This quotation is worth noting as a good example of current Labour expression on the Empire. Its servile repetition of imperialist elementary school history, which not even any bourgeois historian of standing would take seriously, is a striking illustration of the political irresponsibility and easy swallowing of capitalist claptrap that follows from a non-Marxian outlook. The practical conse-

quence is that the Empire is blissfully accepted; all that is attacked is a mysterious state of mind called "the Imperialist complex" existing as a bee in the bonnet of certain professors and others who call out for a higher birth rate, larger armies and navies, &c. "Imperialism," declares the sapient leader-writer, "seems to be a kind of lunacy." The "British people," however, intend to have nothing to do with it: they "will not be treated as pawns for crazy Imperialists."

The windmill "Imperialism" having been thus successfully disposed of, the British Empire is of course cheerfully accepted. As John Scurr declared at the I.L.P. Summer School, speaking as hypothetical Labour Minister for the Empire:—

The organised worker was apt to assume Imperialism was wrong. [Foolish organised worker!] We might be opposed to Imperialism, but *we must admit the Empire was a concrete fact*, whose existence carried with it duties and responsibilities that Labour would be cowardly to ignore.

It is this kind of deliberate Imperialist cant, consciously contrary to all direct working-class interests and politics, that we have got to expose, smash, and exterminate from the movement if the British working class is to recover from the yellow associations that entangle it and enter on a clear direct fight with the forces of capitalism. This can only be done by a constant and tireless statement of the plain facts of the position.

What is the British Empire? The British Empire may be defined as the expansion of the first great capitalist State into the non-capitalist world. This condition explains its scattered and unscientific character. It is not the natural association of some large unit, such as the United States, Russia, or Central Europe. It is as haphazard as the pluckings of the ripest fruit in an orchard by the first invader. Britain was the first State to reach that strength of capitalist economy at home to carry through a successful colonial policy, as against France, Spain, or Holland—that is, the domination of territories all over the world for trade, tribute, and monopolies. The success of this early colonial policy made possible the vast development of British manufactures which established Britain as the classic country of industrial capitalism and so brought it first in the field again for the new imperialism of our day—the imperialism of direct finance-capitalist exploitation which has added the remaining threat to the British Empire.

What, then, is the British Empire? It is conquered territory added to the estates of the British bourgeoisie for the purpose of larger scale exploitation. It is thus a great plantation of pure capitalist slavery. It has no other link—racial, religious, geographical, or sentimental—save the single link of capitalist exploitation. Therefore it has no future save for and within capitalist exploitation. Capitalist Germany may become Workers' Germany, a living section of the Workers' International. But the capitalist British Empire can become nothing but the capitalist British Empire, since its only liberation is its dissolution.

Around this slave-plantation is endeavoured to be woven the myth of free association in order to conceal its artificial character. So legends of free settlers, pioneers, explorers are made to replace the records of freebooting, piracy, slave-trading, plunder, penal settlements, extermination of natives, &c., which have accompanied the extension of capitalist rule. The British Empire, where seven in eight are subject to autocratic rule, is held up as the palladium of liberty. Even, so great are the concessions which the bourgeoisie are prepared to make in this present hour of difficulty, they are prepared to call the Empire a Commonwealth—a step that has proved highly successful and popular in Labour circles.

What is the "Commonwealth"? The Commonwealth is the association of *garrisons* of the Empire around their masters, the British bourgeoisie—garrisons a little restive and discontented, inclined to bargain increasingly and insist on their rights, sometimes even toying with the thought of starting on their own or (as with Canada) taking service under a new master, but essentially recognising their identity of interests with their masters so long as these have the cash and the power. Into this circle of White garrisons is being also introduced tentatively, and in the face of considerable distrust and prejudice, the representatives of the rising bourgeoisie of India, who, it is hoped, will help to buttress the weakening White garrison in the Indian treasure-house of exploitation.

Because these privileged garrisons consist of both colonial bourgeoisie and white workers, these two elements, however divided between themselves, are at present united against the vast mass of coloured workers and dispossessed races who form the

basis of pure exploitation in the Empire. Hence arises the peculiar character of "Dominion Labour," even when most "advanced," in its demands for its own members, its isolation from the international movement, its imperial solidarity, its unity with capitalism in all national issues, its citizen-militarism, its bitter opposition to all outside the privileged ranks, and even readiness (as in South Africa) to blackleg on the coloured workers when these are striking to improve their conditions. It is the garrison outlook, politically termed the Imperial outlook.

This hidden spring of capital-Labour harmony, whose results are so conspicuous in the Dominions, is no less operative among the white workers of the home country, although with less consciousness and open expression owing to the lack of direct confrontation with the non-privileged strata. The British workers are nearer in instinct to a simple working-class outlook of sympathy with all workers, and the contrary imperialist outlook has to be laboriously instilled by their leaders; while the conscious expression of imperialism, the Social Democratic Federation, most closely corresponding in outlook to Dominion Labour, is in Britain a manifestly exotic growth without roots in the movement. Nevertheless the deeper workings of the same principle are no less present, revealing themselves in the weakness of working-class solidarity and easy corruption of sections, the unlimited success of capitalist doping processes of sports, Press, and drink, the facile waves of jingo and anti-alien emotions, and the national isolation and capitalist dependence of the working-class movement. This unity with capitalism, which is at the root of the separation of the British workers from the international working-class movement, is simply the reflection of a material situation that has temporarily placed a section of the world proletariat in a peculiar position. This temporary situation is bound to disappear with the advancing tide of world capitalism and world revolution, and the beginnings of that process are strongly visible. But until then the outlook reflecting that situation is bound to be isolated. The outlook of Dominion Labour and, in its own way, of British Labour is "middle class" in the sense of not realising the necessity of ranging itself either with the international bourgeoisie or with the international proletariat, but regarding itself as holding some peculiar position of immunity or

"freedom" and sharing with the bourgeoisie a tutelary guardianship of the "subject," "native," or "non-adult" races. The realisation of the falsity of this position, and that the interests of the white workers are not identical with those of the bourgeoisie, is the first step to their own emancipation.

There are no "free" and "subject" races in the Empire. This is the fundamental fact that cannot be too often proclaimed. There are only jailers and jailed. There are only palace slaves and plantation slaves. And the palace slaves play unconsciously into their masters' hands by looking down upon the plantation slaves as inferior beings, and discuss gravely in their masters' language whether it is "safe" to give to them the "freedom" that they, the palace slaves, enjoy. That is the epitome of the Empire and of the situation of the British workers in the International.

What, then, are the issues that are now facing this system and the workers within it? Why is the whole form of bourgeois policy now concentrated on the Imperial Conference, and why is every attempt being made to attune Labour expressions to it? The answer to this question is the key to the future in British Labour policy.

On the structure of the Empire as it was in 1914 the war delivered a tremendous shock. The British bourgeoisie was fighting for its existence. Therefore every element of subjection under them was stimulated by the opportunity of the war into asserting itself and becoming conscious of its strength. "Unrest" became a universal feature of the Empire, from Ireland to India and from the Clyde to the Rand. The separate garrisons took advantage of their indispensability to establish their claims to independent existence, even while recognising their identity of interest for the moment. But deeper than this seeming "constitutional revolution" within the palace came the revelation of the real forces beneath, the seething of the vast masses of exploited and dispossessed on whose backs the Empire is built. The moment the garrisons were weakened by the drainage of the war, revolt broke out on every side.

The eventual victory of the British bourgeoisie in the war, at the cost of placing themselves in the hands of the American bourgeoisie, enabled them to concentrate their attention on overcoming the forces of revolt and rebuilding their shattered structure.

This was the task of the past four years. By the success of the capitalist offensive at home, by the skilful playing of section against section in the different parts of the Empire, by the conciliation of the upper bourgeoisie in India, Ireland, and elsewhere, by open and even humiliating concessions to the Colonies, and by ruthless suppression of all the revolting exploited elements, this task was accomplished. With 15,000 Republicans jailed in Ireland, with Gandhi jailed in India, with the dead strikers on the Rand and the dead tribesmen on the Bondelswartz, with the treacherous surrender of Black Friday, and the shootings of Amritsar and the bombing of the Mesopotamian villages, order was restored in the Empire.

At length in 1923 the imperialists could turn to reconstruction, and the long-delayed Imperial Conference due to settle all questions after the war could be held. With the Imperial Conference comes the new task to repair somehow the damage done and rebuild a stronger system for the coming trials of external and internal struggle. The Imperial Conference is a conference of imperial reconstruction to make of the dissolving and disintegrating Empire a single closely-knit unit.

It is rapidly clear that this unification cannot be achieved simply in political terms, as was hoped in the days of the war and just after. The disintegration has gone too far for that. The independence and even open defiance on the part of the Colonies, revealed above all in the Chanak crisis and the Canadian-United States Treaty, made even the touching on this ground dangerous, and can only leave the hope that the excitement of war, when the time comes, will enable all to work out for the best.

The only hope of unification now is on economic lines. Such a unification would fit in very well with the existing situation and aims of the British bourgeoisie. The failure of Europe and the competition of America in the Pacific field naturally turn attention to the possibilities of a more economic and self-sufficing organisation of their own domains. In the face of all existing facts the conception of the Empire as an economic unit gains ground, and the increasing prevalence of this artificial and essentially militarist conception strikingly reveals the decaying forces and desperate straits of capitalist production.

It is unnecessary here to demonstrate the economic weaknesses of this conception. The proportion of Empire trade is roughly one-third of the total of British trade, and has remained practically at the same proportion both before and since the war: nor is there any prospect of altering this radically in a rapid time save by artificial means (subsidies, preference, special credits, &c.) such as would be far too costly for present resources. The only possible basis of unification would be the abandonment by the Colonies to Britain of the most profitable forms of manufacturing production and relegating themselves to primary production—the exact reverse of their present line of development. On the contrary, at present, the most favourable form of British trade with the Colonies is the export of machinery of production—in other words, the weapons of their own undoing. The whole process of capitalist development of the Colonies and India compels that they shall become increasingly every year the rivals and not the colleagues of Britain.

But what matters here is the immediate significance of these proposals for the working class. For there is no question that these proposals will be presented in an attractive light, in the guise of a busy harmony of international exchange and production, offering work and prosperity for all. And the Labour coquettings with the conceptions of the “British Commonwealth of Nations” and all the other baits of progressive imperialism make the success of such a propaganda fatally easy. Therefore it is essential from the earliest moment to set out in the harshest possible outline what these proposals mean in fact.

The new plans of the imperialists mean in brief three things for the working class.

First, they mean what is euphemistically described as “Scientific Distribution of Surplus Population”—or, in other words, compulsory emigration of the proletariat according to the needs of the moment of capital. This proposal can only be accomplished in the most barbarous form of the planting of slave-colonies after the fashion of the eighteenth century, since all voluntary forms are impracticable, as has been abundantly revealed by the failure of the Empire Settlement Act, which in fourteen months of its operation has only been able to spend one-twentieth of the funds

with which it was provided and settle 32,000 persons. The fate of the unhappy wanderers, dumped as unwanted from home, has been vividly revealed in the fortunes of the harvesters in Canada and the homeless immigrants in Australia.

Second, the plans of the imperialists mean a system of preference, rebates, special freights, credits, subsidies, guaranteed purchases and prices, or whatever other method and juggling may be adopted to establish in fact a protectionist system of the Empire. The Colonial representatives have all made abundantly clear that on no other basis can business be done. The establishment of such a system, with the inevitable raising of prices and creation of monopolies it will involve, will break down all possibility of the maintenance, far less recovery, of working-class standards, and will grind out a temporary and artificial imperial reconstruction from the unlimited exploitation of the workers. The final and inevitable outcome of such a development, of which signs are already not lacking, would be the establishment of some kind of tariff on food (perhaps in the form of control of foreign purchases and a guaranteed price within the Empire) which would mean the final subjection of the industrial workers.

Third, the establishment of such a system, although under the peaceful and benevolent guise of free trade within the Empire, being in fact an exclusive system of so large a part of the earth's surface *against* the world outside, would inevitably mean the bitter hostility and combination of the world powers outside, and in consequence a period of heavy militarist rivalry leading up to a culminating war which would wipe out every gain that could be accomplished by the intensive economic development of the Empire.

These are the real and practical dangers which the new plans of the imperialists are bringing to the British working class. It is because of these dangers that the easy toying with the Empire and Empire development by Labour politicians (the Tory motion in the House of Commons on Empire development was officially received by the Labour Party with "general support": "They were," declared their spokesman, Mr. A. Short, "interested no less than hon. members opposite in the progress and development of the British Empire") is not an act of sentimental folly, but

of direct treachery to the most vital interests of the working class.

To fight these dangers will need the most vigorous rallying of every effective force of the working-class movement. It is no good endeavouring to fight them on the old liberal formula of free trade. Free trade is out of date in its old liberal *laissez-faire* sense and has ceased to hold. It held against the new imperialist attack in the decade before the war because it was maintained by the combination of the industrial workers and the older capitalist interests of textiles and shipping. Both these holds are weakening to-day. The Bradford resolution on a tariff has revealed the weakening hold in textiles. The Glasgow revolt against free trade has revealed the weakening hold in Labour. Tariff reform and the Empire is the British form of Fascism, the British form of winning over the workers to capitalist leadership by appearing to offer them some prospect of solid advantage and development.

Against these it is necessary to set a positive alternative, and not the negative grounds of free trade and national self-government. The new tendencies that are showing themselves are a symptom of the fact that the national basis has broken down, and that a wider than national economic organisation is already essential in the present conditions of production. But the Empire is only the extension of all the old nationalist evils on to a larger scale. The only practical alternative now that meets the actual needs of present-day production is the Workers' International, the World Union of Soviet Republics for the world organisation of production.

We have reached a stage when the only alternative to the Empire is the International, and we have got to show that the International is the only alternative to the Empire. We have got to show that the Empire is a slave-compound, leading nowhere, and with destruction and war as its outcome. And we have got to show that the International is the real path of the British workers as of the Colonial workers in the Empire, united in revolt and in the common struggle of mastering the conditions of production, and united with all the other workers of the world in the future reign of free humanity.

THE "LAST RESERVE" OF THE BOURGEOISIE AT WORK

By A. THALHEIMER

THE "Great Coalition" in the form of the Stresemann-Hilferding Cabinet has now been on the job for some time. It styles itself the "last reserve" of the bourgeoisie, the last constitutional government which Germany can have.

This expression must not be taken too literally. According to the historical experiences of other countries and also according to the present organisation of political forces in Germany, it is necessary to reckon with the possibility, indeed the probability, that while the bourgeois-socialist coalition is the last reserve of bourgeois rule, still other bourgeois-socialist or even "pure socialist" combinations can follow the Stresemann-Hilferding Cabinet.

A comparison with the Russian Kerensky period is very instructive in this respect. The signs of the period of the death-struggle of the Kerensky Republic were precisely these quick changes in the composition of the Cabinet, the hasty alteration of the personnel and the party composition. It would certainly be rash to assume that the German bourgeoisie cannot overcome some of the next revolutionary uprisings by setting up new cabinets or changing the personnel of the existing one. Stresemann and Hilferding may consider themselves the last cards in the hand of the German bourgeoisie, but it will still make half-a-dozen new governmental combinations, will throw overboard its "undesirables" as cumbersome cargo, and will also take on board its leaky vessel the present leaders of the social democratic opposition, Messrs. Paul Levi, Dissmann, Crispian, &c., if it believes that it can thereby keep afloat.

What is still possible in the way of bourgeois-socialist governmental combinations depends entirely upon the tempo in which the now moving popular masses go through the political development which will lead them to a radical break with the bourgeoisie and with bourgeois "democracy."

The fact that the Cuno administration could be followed by that of Stresemann-Hilferding, the "Great Coalition," proves, above all, that only a minority of the working class is ready as yet to fight for a Workers' and Peasants' Government, although, apparently, the majority of the working class has already had its fill of the "Great Coalition."

The hour for a Workers' and Peasants' Government for the first step to the proletarian dictatorship comes when the overwhelming majority of the working class not only desires a break with the bourgeois coalition, but is also ready to fight for the Workers' and Peasants' Government by the most extreme means.

Secondly, it is necessary that at least a strong section of the petty bourgeoisie be sympathetically neutral. Thirdly, that there be a deep cleft in the great bourgeoisie itself.

Organisationally, the class organs of the proletariat, the factory councils, control committees, and defence units, must already have been widely developed and must have acquired for themselves a commanding authority among the masses.

The organisational positions of reformism must be in an advanced stage of disintegration.

Therefore, politically and organisationally, there is still a good stretch of ground to be covered before the conditions are ripe enough to secure victory for the working class.

How much time is necessary for this only history can decide. That the conditions for the victory of the working class in Germany are rapidly ripening is shown by thousands of facts.

The Stresemann-Hilferding Cabinet embodies the attempt of the middle bourgeoisie, with the help of the reformist party and the trade union bureaucracy, to end the Ruhr struggle and re-organise the resources of the bourgeoisie within the country by imposing some sacrifices upon the great bourgeoisie.

It is self-evident that no government can transform the deep-rooted chaos of Germany into order in a few weeks.

But a few weeks suffice to judge whether the government has its eyes fixed on the right goal, and whether it has the strength to reach it.

In this respect a decisive judgment concerning the Stresemann-Hilferding government can already be delivered.

The first step to be taken is the attempt to extract from the industrialists and bankers a definite fund of foreign bills, in order to support the exchange of the mark and, further, to put the standard of currency on a new basis. It is clear that only complete national confiscation of foreign bills can accomplish this purpose. The government did not dare to take this step, it has limited itself to calling for voluntary donations of securities. The exchange already cold-bloodedly anticipates, not in words, but in dry hard figures, the absolute futility of this proceeding.

A confiscation of foreign bills would certainly run foul of the bureaucratic apparatus of finance and taxation administration, which for a long time since has been objecting to any such action.

The class organs of the workers, the factory councils, and control committees could create a new apparatus, but—to appeal to them would be tantamount to declaring the middle-class State ripe for abolition. This could not be considered by any bourgeois-socialist coalition government. The same hold good for foreign trade and price control. The tax reforms which the government announced with a great fan-fare of trumpets are already as good as dead. The employers replied to the new taxation laws, which are by no means drastic (they are only gold taxes), in two ways:—

First, by transferring the burden to prices, even before the taxes are paid (as a matter of fact, they never will be paid). In most industries the level of the world-market prices has already been exceeded; in the heavy industries, many times over.

Secondly, by the stoppage of production. The so-called factory tax, which is calculated according to the number of employees working in the factory, is the immediate occasion of this step. Further motives behind it are to lower wages and to pauperise the working class generally.

The bourgeoisie as a class thus distinguishes itself from the bourgeoisie as a government.

This signifies practically the preparation for a *coup*, for the dictatorship of the right wing bourgeoisie, under cover of the present government and with its timely co-operation. That is the significance of Gessler's remaining in the government. Gessler is the official connecting link with the Right dictatorship towards which the great bourgeoisie is steering.

The liquidation of the Ruhr conflict is naturally dependent upon the success of the attempt, be it by the bourgeoisie or by the working class, to get the sums necessary to pay Poincaré. The government will never get these sums from the bourgeoisie, and in order to maintain them exclusively from the working class a victorious dictatorship of the right is necessary.

The prospects of the Stresemann-Hilferding government liquidating the Ruhr struggle are therefore not great, although its urgency to have done with the business is certainly very great, and the essence of its foreign policy is the desire to liquidate the Ruhr struggle.

But it is well known that good will or bad will alone accomplish nothing in this wicked world.

Meanwhile real wages have fallen further, inflation has increased, and the currency has further deteriorated. The next wave of the mass movement is already beginning to rise. The "last reserve" of the German bourgeoisie has in these few weeks already crumbled to a marked degree.

IMMIGRATION AND AUSTRALIAN LABOUR

By E. R. VOIGT

IN considering the immigration policy of the Australian Nationalist Federal and State Governments in general, and that of the N.S.W. Nationalist Government in particular, it is well to recollect that the vigorous anti-immigration policy of the Trade Union movement—stimulated by the arrival of boatloads of immigrants at a time of unprecedented industrial depression—has forced the Australian immigration authorities to abandon their open industrial immigration policy.

To-day the Australian Nationalist Governments have been driven back to a point where they can only seek to justify an immigration policy covering farm workers and domestics.

No doubt the authorities consider themselves safe in directing the stream of immigrants into these channels, for no comprehensive reports are made to, or published by, the Government concerning unemployment in the agricultural and pastoral occupations, while in domestic service so few workers are organised that very few reports concerning unemployment are made to the Department of Labour and Industry.

It should be emphasised that in no State in Australia does there exist any machinery for ascertaining with any degree of precision the extent of unemployment. There is no Federal or State Unemployment Insurance in Australia, and comparatively few unemployed register at the State Labour Exchanges.

The various State Governments compile their statistics of unemployment from returns received periodically from certain of the trade unions. These unions do not comprise more than 25 per cent. of the workers employed in industry. According to the *New South Wales Government Gazette* (Vol. xxxiii, February 28, 1923) in January this year trade union reports in New South Wales covered only 105,993 workers out of a population of 2,129,693 (1921).

It will be seen therefore that the tendency of all Government reports on unemployment is to minimise its extent. This, of course,

dovetails in admirably with the tendency of the various State Governments to boost Australian industry, for the first task of every new Australian Premier is to journey home to London for financial assistance. What is more natural than that the bagman should praise his wares?

The demand of the State Immigration Authorities for immigrant farmworkers is discredited by the statistical reports—inadequate as they are—of the various Governments.

A cablegram, dated April 13, 1923, which appeared in the Sydney press referring to Sir George Fuller, Premier of New South Wales, then in London, stated:—

Sir George declares that unemployment in New South Wales is confined to city workers, and now trifling in extent (1), while there is an abundant demand for farm workers and domestics, who are the only kind of adult emigrants Australia is accepting.—*Sydney Daily Telegraph*, April 16, 1923.

Let us examine this “abundant demand” as expressed in terms of agricultural progress or retrogression.

According to the *Quarterly Statistical Bulletin* of the New South Wales Government (Nos. 183 and 187), the New South Wales estimated wheat harvest 1921-22 and 1922-23 was as follows:—

				Grain Area.	Grain Production.
				Acres.	Bushels.
1921-22	..	..	..	3,169,200	45,280,000
1922-23	..	..	..	2,799,600	29,090,000

This great slump in grain production is due largely, but not wholly, to the great drought which still obtains over the greater portion of the State.

It should be evident, therefore, that with a diminution of acreage of over 10 per cent., and with a crop 35 per cent. less than that of the previous year, there is not enough work to-day for the farm workers employed a year ago.

This decline in wheat production is not confined to New South Wales. The Commonwealth wheat production for the past three years was as follows:—

					Bushels.
1920-21	..	..	..	..	145,873,850
1921-22	..	..	..	..	129,088,806
1922-23	..	..	..	..	108,811,162

(*Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics, Commonwealth Government Bulletin No. 90.*)

It is therefore a cold-blooded criminal act on the part of the Australian Immigration Authorities to attempt to induce large numbers of British workers to emigrate to Australia for the express purpose of farmwork.

Were there a shortage of workers in agriculture in Australia, wages and labour conditions generally would not be so indescribably bad as they are.

Before a large audience in the Sydney Domain last April, Mr. Mahony, M.H.R., proceeded, with the help of statutory declarations and other documentary matter, to prove that engineers and other artisans who had come to the Commonwealth in consequence of literature supplied from Australia House had been forced to accept 15s. and £1 per week on farms because no other work was offering.

The Sydney *Daily Mail* (April 16, 1923), quoting Mr. Mahony, states:—

When the Commonwealth Government got the immigrants on the ship, its welfare officer submitted an agreement for them to sign. This promised to provide work on the land at 15s. a week for the first four months, and 17s. for the following eighteen months.

In his view, the Federal officer was being made use of by the farmers' organisation for the purpose of obtaining adult labour at sweated rates.

The immigrant had to work six weeks before he received any pay.

One of these men had stated that he had to work from 4.0 a.m. till 8.0 or 8.30 p.m., and the agreement provided that such men had to obey all "lawful and reasonable demands" of the employer.

This is a fair sample of bad conditions that obtain on the land in Australia. Worse could be quoted, for in some cases ex-soldiers have been put on the land and received a pittance of 5s. per week and keep that a convict would consider a hardship. (Warriors Farm, Mulgrave, N.S.W.)

The question that arises is: why do the Nationalist governments of Australia pursue a policy of immigration to the land? In Australia, as in Europe, the direct pressure upon the governments comes from finance and industry.

It will, however, readily be grasped that in view of the diminishing wheat production, the bulk of the immigrants (1) either refuse to go on the land after learning on arrival of the unsatisfactory

labour conditions or (2) after securing temporary employment at sweated rates filter back to the towns and industrial centres.

In inducing large numbers of British workers to emigrate to Australia, even for the purpose of going on the land, the Australian Governments are carrying out effectively the demands of the industrial magnates for a still larger surplus of factory labour.

It can well be imagined that with an unemployed pool of—at a low estimate—9.6 per cent. Australian capitalism regards the 14 per cent. pool of its British colleagues with envy, and looks forward to the time when wages will be driven down past the level of that of the British worker to continental coolie standards.

For it must not be forgotten that the geographical isolation of Australia makes immigration difficult and emigration impossible for the average worker. This restriction on the circulation of the Australian workers is further intensified by the isolation of one industrial centre from another by the great arid spaces of the Commonwealth. Let there be no mistake, a 14 per cent. unemployed pool in Australia would place the employers and their Nationalist Parliamentary Executive in a better position to batter down the standard of living of the Australian workers than is the case in Britain to-day.

WHAT NEXT IN THE MINING INDUSTRY ?

By D. J. WILLIAMS

TO present an adequate indictment of the present "agreement" in the mining industry would require many pages. Words can hardly convey a clear idea of the depth of its ravages, both on the standard of life of the miners generally and on the Miners' Federation itself. In many places—in South Wales in particular—its impact has been so severe as seriously to imperil the existence of the Miners' Trade Union.

It did not take the miners long to realise from bitter experience that this agreement was, in fact, no agreement at all. It was as blatant a piece of dictatorship as ever came from the coalowners. Time after time the miners rejected it; eventually the leaders came to the rescue and literally forced it upon their followers. The result was inevitable—a coalfield in bondage. Even from the point of view of what has become classically known as "true" Trades Unionism, the agreement should never have been signed by the leaders.

Its operation is pernicious in the extreme ; it gives the miners nothing but a coolie standard, whilst it guarantees to the bondholder, the landowner, and the capitalist all the natural rights of property. Instead of being the first, wages are the last charge on industry. Before the payment of a living wage to the miner comes a whole series of propertied claims on the industry—debentures, royalties, wayleaves, directors' fees, and other costs. The agreement made no provision at all for the war-time developments of the mining industry—the immense amount of over capitalisation that took place as a result of those halcyon days. In many instances the nominal capital was trebled, while, through neglect of repairs and the desire to "make hay while the sun shone," the real capital depreciated. In the terms of the agreement no reference is made to this; yet on the basis of this immense inflation wages and profits stand in the ratio of eighty-three to seventeen. It needs no great stretch of the imagination to realise what the actual ratio is.

The Folkestone Conference has done nothing to alter all this.

A majority of the delegates were instructed to vote for ending the agreement ; at the last moment one group—the Durham delegates—backed out. (The Council of the Durham Miners' Association, representing all the lodges in that field, has asked the delegates to explain "their traitorous action.") And nothing will be done by the leaders, to whose influence this result was due. The Executive meet the owners again on October 5 to propose "modification" of the agreement. But the result of this meeting will be that of all the other similar meetings—nothing. It is evident that the time is opportune for a consideration of some alternative to the agreement. In this respect the trend of recent opinion amongst the leaders is interesting as revealing their attitude to the future of the workers' struggle. "Respected" opinion seems to reveal two main currents. Amongst one section there appears to be a conviction that the agreement is not bad "in principle"—whatever that may mean—but that it simply wants "reasonable application." The remedy suggested is that the ratio of wages to profits should be altered. Needless to say, this will leave untouched all the vicious features of the present agreement—the sectionalising of the industry, the absence of any control in any shape or form by the miners, the relegation of wages to the last charge on industry, the failure to provide for the unemployed of the industry, and its segregating of the Miners' Federation from the rest of the Labour movement. If the destinies of the miners are to be left to the sweet reasonableness of the coalowners, the present era of semi-feudalism is likely to be continued indefinitely.

Many leaders have expressed their opinion that, as an alternative to the present agreement, the basis of cost of living wages regulation should be resorted to. They point out with what success such a policy obtains amongst other sections of organised labour. It must be admitted that such a plea has a considerable fascination for the miners just now, when their own wages are so far below the cost of living figures. That, however, does not mean to imply that the pursuance of such a policy is the proper course to adopt. Quite the contrary. Every policy to be followed in the trade union movement should be judged from the two-fold standard of (*a*) how far it would encroach upon capitalism and give control to the workers; and (*b*) to what extent it would rally the workers to a united front.

Manifestly the cost of living basis has nothing to offer in this direction; all the factors upon which wages are based are determined and regulated outside the industry. Wages move up and down as if actuated by some mysterious, unknown force. Within the industry a free hand is given to the employers to do as they like. The trade union in this case is on the high road to become a glorified benefit society. This is actually what has occurred in more than one union; and unless the Miners' Federation steer clear of such a course the same fate awaits it.

Much has been said and written recently about the need to reconstruct the Trade Union Movement after the debacle of Black Friday. What course this reconstruction should take has never been made very clear. To some, doubtless, it means nothing more than to herd the members back to break membership records in numerical strength. It should have been made abundantly clear that the failures of Trade Unionism in the past have not been caused by lack of numbers. If that were so the problem would be rendered infinitely easier. The defects of the movement lie deeper. Reconstruction, therefore, merely in order to get members back is not enough: indeed, it is only here that the problem begins. To get the members back and follow the same course which led to Black Friday is surely nothing else than to invite a rehash of that disaster.

Here it will be seen that the problems of the miners are more and more becoming general problems for the whole Trade Union Movement. To get a union back to its war-time strength is not enough. What is needed is a new orientation in Trade Union activities; not so much a mechanical retreading of the old paths, as a courageous endeavour to bring the movement into line with the new realities of a new situation. Industrial action has long ago left the stage when a Trade Union fights for and by itself. Once a Trade Union, be it ever so powerful, decides to grapple seriously with the actual realities of the every-day struggle, it will be found that the issues involved are ever more far-reaching. Up to now there has been no uniform attempt to deal with these issues. True, we have been treated to a number of phrases about the creed of unity and the need for unity. But they remain phrases; they lack "the spirit which giveth life." There is hardly a petty craft union but which makes of such phrases an ornamental stock in trade.

Unity, apart from some definite object of unity, is and can be nothing but a figment. What British Trades Unionism needs to-day above all is some clearly defined objective. The strength for this objective will lead to unity as nothing else can. A unity that is to be more than a formal unity must be based on true issues; it must be seasoned in the storms of struggle. A common solidarity in the face of a common foe will be far more effective in bringing about unity than will be the fiat of a thousand conferences. Unity does not "come to pass"; it is forged on the anvil of conflict. In the working-class movement we do not—as some leaders seem to imagine—set out first to achieve a paper unity and then proceed to fight: it is the common experiences of the fight that lead us on to unity of purpose, programme, and objective.

An examination of the aims of the various sections of the workers' industrial movement to-day will reveal that these aims vary from section to section and from union to union. The object of some is still the elementary one of the rights of combination; others place before them the control of industry. Between these two extremes there is an endless variety of aims.

It is evident that this can never lead to common action, can never give that consciousness of common solidarity so imperatively necessary if the mistakes of the past are not to be repeated. In the past these differences always show themselves at the critical moment—at the time when action is contemplated. It will be the same in the future if the old tactics are persisted in.

However strong the miners, or any other body of workers that have built up their unions as independent bodies, whose connection with other bodies is merely a formal one, they will be still subject to the old limitations. If the miners decide on one objective, another union on another objective, these unions can never successfully pull together. In a time of trial the defect will reveal itself. Professions of a common front will serve only to accentuate the collapse when it comes. The only lasting binding tie for the unions is not a nominal affiliation to the Trades Union Congress, but the common objective of the every-day struggle of the whole organised movement.

There are many issues upon which the whole movement could be rallied. The present demand of the miners to scrap the

existing agreement should serve as a starting point for a thorough revisal of the whole policy and programme of the Trade Union Movement. A common wages policy for the whole movement would mean a common front to fight for better wages. This would at once broaden the consciousness of the workers to a sense of their common interests; while the actual pursuance of such a policy would go far towards removing the numerous obstacles that at present obstruct the path to a common understanding.

This, then, should be the next step in the mining industry : to bring pressure on the powers that be to bring the whole movement into line upon the basis of uniformity of programme, policy, and purpose.

FURTHER SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

Translated and Annotated by MAX BEER

X

THE FOUNDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL¹

THE following fragment forms part of a letter written by Marx to his friend Frederick Engels, in Manchester, telling him of the foundation of the International and particularly the drafting of the Inaugural Address and the Rules of the new association. This letter shows at the same time the great importance which Marx attached to any forward movement of organised Labour. Of interest are likewise his critical remarks about the ethical appeals to society.

The other part of the letter deals with Bakunin, who had paid a visit to Marx, after an interval of sixteen years. Marx speaks of the excellent impression which Bakunin made upon him, and also of some conversation with him concerning the denunciation which David Urquhart had published.

From the same letter it is further evident that Marx had contributed economic articles to Ernest Jones's *Notes to the People* in the years 1851 and 1852.

“ *London, November 4, 1864.*

“ DEAR FREDERICK,—. . . Some time ago London workmen sent to their Paris friends an address concerning Poland and invited common action in this matter. Whereupon the Parisians sent to London a delegation, headed by M. Tolain, the Labour candidate at the last Paris election, a decent fellow. A public meeting was arranged for September 24, at St. Martin's Hall, by Mr. Odger, a shoemaker, chairman of the Council of All London Trades Unions (also of the Trades Unions Suffrage Agitation Society, which is connected with Mr. Bright), and by Mr. Randall Cremer, mason, secretary of his union. (Those two Labour leaders had arranged the great meeting of the trade unions in favour of the Northern

¹ Marx and Engels, *Briefwechsel*, vol. iii, p. 188.

States of U.S.A., which was held under the chairmanship of Bright at St. James's Hall, likewise the Garibaldi Demonstration.) A certain Le Lubez, a Frenchman who speaks an excellent English, was sent to me to inquire whether I would take part on behalf of the German workmen, and send a German workman to speak in that meeting. I sent Eccarius² who acquitted himself exceedingly well, while I assisted as a dumb figure on the platform. I was aware that this time it was no sham affair, but that on the part of London and Paris Labour there came real 'powers' into play. I therefore made an exception to my rule and did not decline the invitation.

"At the meeting, which was crowded to suffocation, for there is evidently a revival of the working classes taking place, Major Wolff (Thurn-Taxis, the adjutant of Garibaldi) represented the London Italian Working-men's Society. A resolution was carried to establish a Working-men's International Association, the General Council of which should have its headquarters in London and should serve as intermediary between the workmen's societies in Germany, Italy, France, and England. It was resolved also to hold a general Labour congress in Belgium. The meeting appointed a provisional committee; Odger, Cremer, and several others—partly old Chartists, old Owenites, &c.—for England; Major Wolff, Fontana, and other Italians for Italy; Le Lubez, &c., for France; Eccarius and myself for Germany. The committee was empowered to co-opt a certain number of members.

"So far so good. I attended the first meeting of the committee. A sub-committee (myself included) was appointed for the purpose of drafting a declaration of principles and provisional rules. Illness prevented my being present both at the meeting of the sub-committee and the subsequent meeting of the provisional committee. I learned, however, that the following occurred in those two meetings: Major Wolff moved that the rules which he had drafted for the Italian Working-men's Societies should serve as material for the drafting of the rules of our new Association. I saw the stuff later. It was evidently the work of Mazzini, from which you may infer

² J. G. Eccarius, a German tailor, who lived in London from about 1850 till his death in 1890. He published a pamphlet in criticism of J. S. Mill's "Political Economy" and was Labour correspondent of *The Times* during the First International.

the spirit and phraseology, in which the real question, the Labour question, was treated. Likewise, how the nationalist business was shoved in. Then Mr. Weston, an old Owenite, now a manufacturer, a very amiable and good fellow, submitted his own programme, an extremely confused document and of unconscionable length.

"The provisional committee, to whom those documents were submitted, instructed the sub-committee to recast the Weston and Wolff papers. Wolff himself left for Naples to attend there the Congress of the Italian Working-men's Societies and to get the latter to join our Association.

"There was again a sub-committee meeting, which I failed to attend, owing to the invitation having reached me too late. Le Lubez submitted a declaration of principles and the remodelled Wolff rules, which were adopted for consideration of the provisional Committee. The latter met on October 18. Eccarius having informed me that there was danger in delay, I attended that meeting and listened with dismay to the reading of the paper which Le Lubez had prepared and which was purported to be a preamble to the declaration of principles. It was a Mazzinian pie, covered with crusts of French socialism. The rules of Wolff were likewise adopted, which, apart from all other defects, were quite impossible, since they presupposed a sort of central government (of course, with Mazzini in the background) of the European working classes. I mildly opposed, and after a discursive debate Eccarius moved that the sub-committee should again recast the rules. On the other hand, the "sentiments" of Le Lubez were adopted.

"Two days later, on October 20, Cremer, Fontana, and Le Lubez came to my house concerning the recasting of the rules. As I had not had the papers of Le Lubez and Wolff in my hands before, I could not prepare anything, but I was determined from the outset to consign the whole stuff to the waste-paper basket. In order to gain time I proposed to discuss first the rules. We settled down to a discussion, and it was 1 o'clock a.m. when we got through the first of the forty rules. Cremer then proposed that the meeting of the provisional committee which had to take place on October 25 should be postponed to November 1, when he hoped we should be prepared to put something definite before the meeting. All the papers were left to me, which I then put aside, and I wrote

'An Address to the Working Classes,'³ a sort of review of the adventures of the working classes since 1845. Instead of the forty rules I put ten. As far as foreign affairs are touched upon I speak of countries and not of nationalities, and I denounce Russia and not the smaller fry. The sub-committee approved my draft, but I was obliged to put into the preamble of the rules two phrases about 'duty' and 'right,' likewise about 'truth, morality, justice,' which, however, are so placed that they can do no harm.

"The provisional (now general) committee adopted my drafts unanimously and with great enthusiasm. Le Lubez was instructed to translate the 'Address' into French and Fontana into Italian. Potter's *Beehive* is meanwhile our official organ. I have to translate the 'Address' into German.

"It was very difficult to write the thing in such a manner that our views should be published in a form which would be acceptable to the present point of view of the Labour movement. The same people, on whose behalf I wrote the 'Address,' will in a few weeks hold meetings under the auspices of Cobden and Bright. It needs time before the revived movement will permit of the old boldness of speech. It was therefore necessary to be *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo*.⁴ As soon as the stuff is printed, you will get it." . . .

XI

MARX'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS TO HIS ECONOMICS

It has been shrewdly remarked that the pleasure which one takes in reading Ricardo is the best indication of one's general progress in economics. A similar remark may be applied to the subjoined notes which Marx, in August, 1862, jotted down in a letter to his friend Engels, concerning some of the main features of his economic work. Those who take an intelligent interest in these notes of Marx may be said to have an advanced knowledge of Marxist economics. We have here the first attempt to present his theory of surplus value, profit, average rate of profit, rent. While translating them I have somewhat re-arranged and put in a closer logical order the sentences and conclusions of Marx, but in meaning and terms they are not altered.

In the same letter Marx speaks of the chronic crisis of his own financial

³ Since then known as the "Inaugural Address."

⁴ Uncompromising as to principle, conciliatory as to form.

condition, owing to the outbreak of the Civil War in U.S.A., which put an end to his work on the *New York Tribune*, and says : " It is a real wonder that under these conditions I can still continue working on my economic theories." He then presents his friend with the following summary of his theoretical problems about average rate of profit and rent."⁸

" You know that I divide capital into two parts: (1) into constant capital (raw materials, machinery, buildings), and (2) into variable capital, or that part of capital which is spent on wages. Constant capital reappears in the value of the product. Variable capital contains less materialised value than the workman gives in labour back for it. Let us denote constant capital by the letter c , and variable capital by the letter v .

" Suppose that the necessary labour (that is that part of the daily labour which is necessary for the reproduction of the wage) amounts to eight hours, and that the labourer works twelve hours, then he replaces the variable capital plus one-half of it. This 50 per cent. of excess labour I call surplus value.

" You know further that I lay much stress on what I call the organic composition of capital, that is on the proportion of constant and variable capital, employed in the various trades. This ratio varies in the various trades. In highly developed textile industry, for instance, the ratio between constant and variable capital ($c : v$) is 80:20, in the tailoring business it is 50:50, in some very highly developed trades it is 90:10, in another trade it is, say, 70:30. We see, then, that the organic composition of capital varies considerably. And as it is only variable capital which produces a surplus value or profit, since profit is nothing but the proportion of surplus value to the total capital advanced, then it theoretically follows that equal capitals but with different organic compositions will produce unequal surplus values and therefore different rates of profit.

" Suppose, as above, that the surplus labour is equal to 50 per cent. If, for instance, £1 value is the product of one working week, then the total wage bill of thirty labourers will be £20 and the value of the produce of their labour £30. That is, the labourer receives two-thirds of a pound and he produces £1 value.

" The amount of surplus value which a capital of £100 produces

⁸ Marx and Engels, *Briefwechsel*, vol. iii, pp. 77 sqq.

in different trades will vary according to the ratio in which capital is divided between its constant and variable elements. I denoted above constant capital with the letter *c*, variable capital with the letter *v*. If in the textile trade the organic composition is *c* 80, *v* 20, then the value of the produce is equal to 110 (assuming, as above, 50 per cent. surplus value or surplus labour). The mass of surplus value is equal to 10 per cent., likewise the rate of profit, that is £10 profit on a capital of £100, the total profit is £110. Take now the big tailoring trade, the organic composition is *c* 50, *v* 50, the surplus value 25, the total product £125. Take another trade, where the organic composition is *c* 70, *v* 30, the surplus value 15, the total product £115. Finally, take a trade where the organic composition is *c* 90, *v* 10, the surplus value 5, the total product £105.

"We have here, with the same exploitation of labour, for equal amounts of capital in different trades, very different amounts of surplus value, and hence very different rates of profit.

"However, if we consider the four capital outlays as forming component parts of a single whole, we get an average rate of profit as follows:—

I. <i>c</i> 80, <i>v</i> 20, value of the produce	110	..	profit rate equal to	10 per cent.
II. <i>c</i> 50, <i>v</i> 50, " " "	125	..	" " "	25 per cent.
III. <i>c</i> 70, <i>v</i> 30, " " "	115	..	" " "	15 per cent.
IV. <i>c</i> 90, <i>v</i> 10, " " "	105	..	" " "	5 per cent.
Total capital £400. Rate of exploitation 50 per cent. Profit 55 per cent.				

"This amounts to an average profit of $13\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

"The total capital (£400) considered as being the property of the capitalist class yields an average profit rate of $13\frac{3}{4}$. And the capitalists are brothers. Competition, transfer of capital, or withdrawal of capital from one trade to the other renders it possible that capital outlays of equal magnitude in different trades, despite their different organic compositions, yield the same average rate of profit. In other words, the capital outlay of any single manufacturing business yields an average profit rate, not according to the surplus value which it produces, but as an integral part of the total capital of the employing class. It is a share capital of a big concern, and its dividend is paid proportionally to its magnitude out of the total mass of surplus value (or unpaid labour), which the whole variable capital of the labouring class produces.

"In order that each of the four capitals given in the illustration, I, II, III, IV, should earn the same average profit, they must each sell their goods for £113. I and IV sell above their value, II and III below their value.

"The price fixed in that manner is equal to the expenses of capital plus the average profit, and it is this price which Adam Smith calls the natural price, cost price, &c. It is the average price to which competition between the different trades (by the transfer and withdrawal of capital) reduces the prices in the different trades. Competition, then, does not reduce the commodities to their values, but to their cost prices, which may be sometimes above, sometimes below, or on par with their values, according to the organic composition of the capitals, as was shown above.

"Ricardo confuses value with cost price. He therefore believes that if absolute rent existed (that is, a rent quite independent of the different degrees of fertility of the soil) then agricultural produce, selling as it does above the cost price (that is, the advanced capital plus the average profit), would likewise permanently stand above its value. Which, of course, would be inconsistent with the law of value. He therefore denies that there is such a thing as absolute rent and assumes only differential rent.

"However, his identification of value of commodities and cost price of commodities is thoroughly wrong, and was traditionally accepted by him from Adam Smith.

"The facts of the matter are these:—

"Assume the average organic composition of all non-agricultural capital to be c 80, v 20 (at 50 per cent. surplus value), then every £100 will emerge from the productive process with a surplus value or rate of profit of £10. Total £110.

"Assume now that the average organic composition of agricultural capital is c 60, v 40. Then the product, at the same rate of exploitation (that is 50 per cent.), will be £120, and the profit rate 20 per cent. If the farmer sells his agricultural produce at its value, he sells it for £120, and not for £110, its cost price, for which he would have to sell it if there were competition in land. But here the landlord comes in and takes from the farmer the £10 as absolute rent, or the difference between value and cost price.

"Low organic composition (that is, relatively high variable

capital) means really low development of the productivity of labour in any sphere of production. The organic composition of agricultural capital, which is, say, $c\ 60, v\ 40$, while the composition of industrial capital is $c\ 80, v\ 20$, shows that agriculture has not attained to that degree of productivity which manufacture has reached. As soon as agricultural capital reaches the composition of $c\ 80, v\ 20$, absolute rent will cease and there will but remain differential rent, which is but surplus profit, and which of course may also occur in certain manufactures as long as they enjoy special technical, topographical, or any other advantages. I shall deal with differential rent in my book, as I think that Ricardo's assumption of a constant deterioration of agriculture is devoid of all foundation.

"With regard to my definition of cost price as distinguished from value I may remark that apart from the difference between constant and variable capital, which emerges from the immediate process of the production of capital, there is still to be considered the difference between fixed and circulating capital, which emerges from the process of the circulation of capital. But this would complicate matters here. I only desired to give you a rough outline of my views about surplus value, cost price, rent, in criticism of Ricardo. But you will admit that by clearly considering the importance of the organic composition of capital a good many difficulties and problems easily solve themselves."

[Concluded]

(The earlier parts of Max Beer's series of annotated selections from the literary remains of Karl Marx, of which the above is the final instalment, appeared in the July, August, and September issues of the LABOUR MONTHLY (vol. v, Nos. 1, 2, and 3), which can be ordered through any newsagent or bookseller, or obtained direct from the Publisher of the LABOUR MONTHLY, 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1, for 8d. each post free, or 1s. 9d. for the three numbers together.)

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

The Communist International and the German Situation

THE Stresemann Government of the "great coalition"—the "last reserve of the bourgeoisie" it has been called—is negotiating terms of surrender with French imperialism. The working masses of Germany are face to face with the most tremendous danger that has so far beset them—a union of the German bourgeoisie with the forces of Entente imperialism. Such a union would ensure the ruthless exploitation of the German masses on a hitherto unheard-of scale. Germany would become, like Austria, the helpless colony of Entente imperialism.

In this situation the forces of the Second International have relapsed into despair and have done little more than proclaim the inevitability of defeat. They have talked much of the collapse of European civilisation, but they have made no attempt to lead the German masses out of the slough into which the German bourgeoisie has betrayed them.

It is striking to remark the difference between the vague and uncertain utterances of all brands of Socialists on the German situation with the vigorous manifesto of the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions, which we reproduce in full herewith:—

To the Workingmen and Workingwomen of all Countries!
Comrades,

The German working class and the entire working population of Germany now stand in the greatest danger. The armies of French Imperialism occupy the Ruhr, the industrial heart of Germany. The French occupation officers forbid the export of coal and iron from the Ruhr into Germany, whereby unemployment in the Ruhr must result. Now they begin to interfere with the supply of money which is necessary to pay the workers in the Ruhr. Ever more shameless becomes the pressure of the bayonets of French Imperialism upon the breasts of the Ruhr proletariat. The Ruhr is now a powder-magazine which any spark may blow into the air. There is the danger of bloody massacre.

In unoccupied Germany economic anarchy is on the increase. The German bourgeoisie will not pay taxes and allows the German Government to satisfy the needs of the State by means of the bank-note press. The mark falls every day; prices rise every day. The position of the proletariat is becoming more and more unbearable.

Despite all the efforts of the Social-Democratic leaders and the Trade Union bureaucracy to quieten the working class with promises of strong action, the German

proletariat aroused itself, and by means of a strike-uprising overthrew the capitalist Cuno Government. Its place has been taken by the Stresemann-Hilferding Government, a coalition of the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats. They promised to tax the bourgeoisie, they promised to better the position of the working class, but their first act was to dissolve the Central Committee of the Factory Councils, their first act was to threaten the revolutionary proletariat.

Whilst the bourgeois and Social-Democratic Government dissolved the Central Committee which alone was in a position to comprehend the spontaneous movements of the proletariat, to prevent anarchy, to prevent unnecessary conflicts, organised capital began its attack upon the working class. As a protest against the new taxes, it threatens to close the factories. In Berlin the whole tramway system is on the point of being closed down. The workers are to be discharged so that municipal undertakings may be leased to private capitalists. Then the capitalists would make good the deficit by turning half the workers on to the streets, and lowering the wages of the other half. The purpose of all these manœuvres is clear. The working class must be brought to despair, it must be drawn into battle before it has brought its forces into battle array.

Meanwhile the organisation of armed Fascist bands continues. At the given moment they will hurl themselves on the unarmed proletariat.

Comrades, the German proletariat has behind it the revolution of 1918-19, the sad experiences of the rule of "democracy," which was nothing else but a mask for the dictatorship of capitalism. It will certainly not allow itself to be taken by surprise, provoked, or massacred. In ever-increasing numbers the workers stream into the ranks of the Communist Party of Germany, which is growing steadily into a great party of the masses.

The Social-Democrats are receiving retribution for all their traitorous acts, for the unatoned murder of Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, Leo Jogisches, for the slaughter of 20,000 proletarians by the white guards under Noske, for all the services which they have performed for capitalism. A large part of their working-class membership is deserting them, another part demands an end to the traitorous policy of coalition with the capitalist bourgeoisie, and a return to the class politics of the proletariat. The more decisive the struggles of the German proletariat become, just so much more does the Social-Democratic Party crumble. And with it crumbles the strongest support of the German bourgeoisie.

The situation in Germany is approaching a climax: and unless all signs are false, revolution is the goal.

The German proletariat will in these struggles not only be faced by the armed forces of the German bourgeoisie. There is also the menacing danger that, in the moment when the latter attack it, when it finds itself in the decisive struggle with the capitalists, the bourgeoisie of the Entente and their vassals will forget their hostility to the German bourgeoisie and hasten to its aid. There is the danger that France, Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia will attempt to occupy Germany in order to subjugate the working class and to conclude a definite pact with the German bourgeoisie over the bodies of the German proletariat. There is the danger that British Imperialism and the vassals of the Entente will attempt by blockade to prevent the import of food-stuffs into Germany.

Comrades, Workers of the whole World, we appeal to you to hold out your hands to protect the German proletariat. In mass meetings everywhere draw the attention of the international proletariat to the situation in Germany, above all collect money to support strikers, now beaten to the ground, to support the Press and the fighting organisations of the German proletariat. Demonstrate in the streets with the slogans: "*Peace with the German working class! Hands off Workers' Germany! Withdraw the armies of occupation from the Rhineland, the Saar, and the Ruhr!*" Explain to the soldiers of France, Belgium, and Great Britain that they only strengthen their own

exploiters when they allow themselves to be used as the executioners of the German proletariat.

To the revolutionary workers and Communists of France, Belgium, Great Britain, Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia falls the historic task of imposing an impassable barrier between their capitalists and the German proletariat. To the workers of countries with a high *valuta* falls the duty of making the greatest efforts for the material support of their comrades in Germany.

Up with the fight for the emancipation of the German proletariat from the yoke of Entente and German capitalism!

Down with capitalist intervention against the German Workers!

Long live international working-class solidarity!

Help the German proletariat!

Long live the German Workers' and Peasants' Government!

Long live the Communist International!

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU OF THE RED INTERNATIONAL OF LABOUR UNIONS.

On August 25 an open letter was sent to the Second International and the International Federation of Trade Unions (the Amsterdam International) in the following terms:—

The events in Germany confront the international labour movement with a most serious historical task. Twenty million German workers, the flower of the international proletariat, are entering into the struggle against the German capitalists and against the imperialists of the Entente. The approaching struggles will fill the whole political history of the next period. The outcome of these struggles will decide the fate of the international labour movement for many years. All the events of the political history of the next epoch, and in particular the fate of the whole labour movement of the world, will turn upon the outcome of the German crisis which is now developing.

The events in Germany have, in the most obvious manner, an enormous importance outside Germany. In no country can the workers hold aloof from events in Germany. Every worker whose heart beats true for his class must hasten to aid the German proletariat fighting under the red flag. The cause of the German workers is the cause of the workers of the whole world.

We approach you with the proposal to consider in common all practical measures which can, shall, and must be undertaken by all international labour organisations in support of the revolutionary proletariat of Germany. And this support can take many forms.

- (1) In Germany Fascism is rearing its head. All international labour organisations must help the German revolutionary workers in repelling Fascism.
- (2) The German capitalists are flinging thousands of revolutionary workers upon the streets. These workers are left without a crust of bread. The task of all international labour organisations is to assist these proletarian victims of the class struggle.

To-morrow, perhaps, the French and Polish bourgeoisie will attempt to afford open assistance to the German capitalists in the armed overthrow of the German labour movement. The international labour organisations must be ready to render all these attempts unavailing.

The fight for peace is the chief task of everyone to whom the life and well-being of the workers is dear. The international labour organisations must be on the watch. At your Hague conference you issued the call to fight against war and for the preservation of peace. The danger of war is now, undoubtedly, imminent.

In view of all this we suggest to you to hold along with us a joint international conference which shall be devoted to the following questions:—

(1) Organising of all round support for the German workers by the international proletariat.

(2) Appropriate measures for conducting the struggle for peace.

We propose to call this conference for not later than September 10.

The crisis is developing with such rapidity that every day is precious. We suggest that the place of the conference be Moscow, but we are ready to hold it in any other suitable town.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU OF THE RED INTERNATIONAL OF LABOUR UNIONS.

Neither of the Internationals so approached has seen fit to reply.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Anthracite Miners' Strike

ON September 1, 155,000 miners in the anthracite fields struck work. The dispute between the anthracite operators and the United Mine Workers of America is one of long standing. For years the anthracite mine workers have been in an unfavourable position, by comparison with their colleagues in the bituminous (soft coal) fields. The basic wage per day in the bituminous fields, for instance, is \$7.50: while in the anthracite fields it ranges from \$4.20 to \$5.42, sometimes sinking as low as \$3.25. The class of work is the same in both fields.

The operators have argued that, since anthracite miners work an average of 271 days a year, as against an average of something under 200 days a year in the bituminous fields, the inequality in *annual* earnings tends to be eliminated. On the other hand, it appears that while (in 1921) anthracite miners earning \$1,100 to \$1,200 a year worked 272 days, those earning \$1,700 to \$1,800 a year worked 373 eight-hour days. That is to say, these latter worked seven more days than there are in the year in order to earn as much as \$150 a month.

In 1920 the Anthracite Coal Commission awarded the miners a 17.8 per cent. wage increase. But in the same year the soft coal miners, whose wages were already much higher than those in the anthracite field, received a 27 per cent. wage increase. Anthracite miners have consequently felt that they were defrauded of this extra 10 per cent.

A further grievance has been the refusal of the operators to institute the check-off system for the payment of union dues. By this system the company deducts so much from the men's wages, and pays the sum direct to the union treasurer. The system has been in successful operation in the bituminous fields for a quarter of a century. Further, the operators themselves employ the check-off system for a number of purposes: yet on this question of union dues they declare it "illegal."

The miners' demands can be summarised as follows:—

- (a) Increase of 20 per cent. in wages of contract miners and \$2 a day for day workers.
- (b) Adoption of the check-off system.
- (c) Coal to be paid for by weight, instead of by the car of varying size and capacity.

- (d) Uniform wage rate to supersede existing numerous local variations.
- (e) General eight-hour day, by elimination of twelve- and fourteen-hour shifts.

When the strike began, Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania was appointed arbitrator. He proposed a 10 per cent. wage increase, the recognition of the union by the operators, but no check-off system. These terms were at first refused by the miners' officials, but further negotiations led, on September 8, to the signing of a two years' agreement on this basis. The eight-hour day was included, and a substitute for the check-off system in a clause which promised the provision of "facilities for the collection of union dues by union officials."

This agreement went to a special miners' convention for ratification on September 17, and work was resumed on September 19.

HUNGARY

Railway Strike

ON the fourth anniversary (August 2) of the establishment of the dictatorship of Admiral Horthy in Hungary, the locomotive drivers and firemen went on strike. Ever-soaring prices were making any wage increase illusory. They accordingly demanded a standard wage equivalent to 50 per cent. of the pre-war rates.

The Hungarian Government immediately took the most violent measures against the strikers. Martial law was declared, strike leaders and many strikers arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned, strike meetings forcibly broken up, union funds confiscated. Blacklegs were enrolled in large numbers and freely provided with arms. The railway workers, in their desperation, took to cutting telephone wires and attacking blackleg-run trains. But individual acts of sabotage were of no avail in face of the organised force of the Government. After lasting for three or four days, the strike completely collapsed. The men returned to work unconditionally: not only were they entirely defeated on the wages question, but they had not even secured any guarantee against victimisation.

It is of supreme interest to observe that this strike was carried out by a "yellow" union, professedly "non-political," and largely led by Fascist and Nationalist elements—the "Awakening Magyars." This union was formed under the direct auspices of the Horthy government when it seized power: the *bona fide* railwaymen's union having been dissolved and declared illegal, and the railwaymen forced to join the "yellow" organisation. The strike has shown that even a government-formed "class-collaboration" union cannot for ever stand aside from the class struggle when its members are forced to revolt through sheer starvation.

That there were political intrigues behind the assumption of the leadership of the strike movement by the Fascisti appears to be generally admitted. It is known that there has recently been a split between the Horthy government party and the extreme nationalists under M. Gömbös, who, with true Fascist demagoguery, is prepared to appeal to the working masses for aid in attempting a *putsch*.

The counterpart of the Fascist leadership of the strike may be found in the attitude of the Hungarian Social-Democrats. Their calibre may perhaps

be best adjudged by the recent speech of Peyer, one of their Parliamentary leaders. He demanded that the Horthy government take "energetic steps" against Communists, and declared that the present activity of the police in this direction was totally inadequate.

It is therefore not surprising to find that the Social-Democratic leaders were meticulous in dissociating themselves from the railway strike. They publicly condemned the movement, both in Parliament and in the columns of the bourgeois press. The excuse offered for this desertion of the striking railwaymen was the singularly hypocritical one that they were not in a *bona fide* trade union, for it must have been perfectly well known to the Social-Democrats that the Horthy régime has not for one moment tolerated any such organisation.

It is in accord with this formation of a united front with Horthy against the railway strikers that rumours are heard of a secret understanding between the Horthy government and the Social-Democrats. At present, it is true, this understanding is alleged only to apply to certain taxation proposals, which have aroused the opposition of the Fascisti. But the "Great Coalition" in Hungary is clearly a political probability.

BOOK REVIEWS

LABOUR OVER THE THRESHOLD

How Labour Governs: A Study of Workers' Representation in Australia.
By V. Gordon Childe. (Labour Publishing Company. 12s. 6d.)

FOR thirty years a great number of earnest souls in Australia have spent their best energies in building Labour parties. Encouraged by the temporary absence of many conditions which have hampered the development of social democratic movements in old-world countries, they have achieved luminous success. At the outbreak of the war Labour was "in power" in the Commonwealth and in five out of the six States. Sympathisers in Britain still point vaguely and enviously to Australia as a place where Labour rules.

What has all this meant to the Australian workers? How do they stand after these thirty years of striving and success? From books it has been impossible for observers on this side to judge. Mr. Childe's is the first to consider the Australian Labour Movement dispassionately and seriously in relation to the needs and aspirations of Australian workers. In spite of its title, *How Labour Governs* does not directly answer these questions.

An elaborate study of this question, and also of the peculiar aims and ideals of the Labour Parties, is promised in a sequel. In the present book Mr. Childe, making practically full use of his personal knowledge of present-day Labour leaders, and of his exhaustive researches in the files of Labour papers, deals primarily with the effect of parliamentary power on the Labour Movement itself. This plan allows him to throw indirectly a great deal of light on the wider question as well.

His book has two themes: the corruption of a movement which began with definite intentions of emancipating the Australian working class, and has become only a vast machine for capturing parliamentary power—with which, when it has been captured, the Movement has not known what to do; and the failure of the many attempts of those who were "tired of the tortuous methods of the politicians" to save the workers by direct action.

In the latter connection, Mr. Childe traces since about 1907 "the periods of revolt against the supremacy of politicalism occasioned by the shortcomings of that policy, its slowness, and at last its evident bankruptcy."

Hardly one of a long series of great strikes has succeeded. The attempts inspired by I.W.W. propagandists to reorganise the structure of trade unionism collapsed, to be revived again recently only in a very watered and hesitating form. His facts show that—whatever may have been the success from time to time of free-lance and systematically revolutionary unions like the seamen and the miners—the Australian Movement has become incapable of using large-scale strike action successfully.

The corruption of the parliamentary movement is studied in great detail. Numberless instances and illustrations are given of, amongst others, the following four tendencies:—

(1) The history of Parliamentary Labour Parties is one of consistent

insubordination against the movement. Dominating personalities have refused even to abide by caucus decisions. It is safe to say that most leading Australian politicians have acted on the theory that, once they have obtained seats in Parliament, they are the Movement. Nearly every Labour Government has steadily resisted the efforts of conferences to compel them to give effect to the Party platform, especially the Party's industrial demands—preference to unionists, shorter working day, the right to work, &c. Politicians have been able to browbeat their critics by blackmail. They have argued that no one but themselves knows how to win elections, and point to the dangers of a Labour defeat if their freedom is hampered. W. A. Holman, the peculiarly able adventurer who was Premier of New South Wales in 1916, told Conference that he was "the only man who tried to concentrate his mind on how political power is to be obtained." At the 1915 Conference a delegate suggested that "a motion might as well be carried to hand the movement over to Holman to do what he liked with."

(2) A long series of scandals testifies that ordinary common or garden graft, as crude and democratic as the traditional Tammany game, has been an unsavoury characteristic of Australian Labour parties. The corridors of the Houses of Parliament seem at once to affect many of the most earnest Labour leaders. In many cases this graft has been employed not so much to the personal advantage of the deputy as to that of the general electoral chances of the Party.

(3) Dozens of politicians elected by Labour supporters to carry out a Labour programme have soon transferred their welcome services to the anti-Labour Parties. William Morris Hughes and the crowd that with him deserted Labour on the conscription issue are only the most famous of a long series of renegades. One of the first was Joseph Cook, an active young miners' leader in the early 'nineties, who, after twenty years' leadership of whatever anti-Labour Party was in the ascendant, is now a baronet, living an elegant life of peacockry as Australian High Commissioner in London.

Most of the names that loom largest in Mr. Childe's story belong to men who have ended as rats.

(4) Labour Governments have not only neglected to carry their platform into effect; in several cases they have initiated movements directly hostile to the workers. Thus, to please the farmers, a member of the New South Wales Parliamentary Party in 1915 proposed to absolve them from the terms of a Bill requiring decent housing accommodation for shearers and agricultural labourers. In 1913 Labour Premier McGowen called for "volunteers" to man the retorts during a gas strike. It was a Labour Federal Government which passed the merciless War Precautions Act, which was used only against militant workers.

This process of corruption has not ended. In the last two years, with which Mr. Childe does not deal, there have been numerous instances of the same tendencies. The indifference of ex-Premier Dooley to the instructions of the New South Wales Executive required his temporary expulsion from the Party. Revelations of the systematic faking of pre-selection ballots, even by such trusted officials as John Bailey (President of the N.S.W. Section of the Australian Labour Party), led in May to the expulsion of four prominent

members of the Parliamentary Party. *Common Cause*, the official organ of the miners, affirms that "only the fringe of the dirt has been shifted so far." Recent renegades to the anti-Labour parties include two of the oldest and most prominent Federal members. The last days of the Dooley Government in New South Wales were marked by free use of the police to crush unemployed demonstrators, and by a campaign led by the Treasurer to reduce the minimum wage of State employees.

Thus this peculiarly favoured, carefully organised, and successful movement has become so demoralised as to be impotent. Mr. Childe's statement of the facts is indisputable. What is the reason?

Mr. Childe's answer is simple. The proletariat is utterly incapable of governing. It is ridiculous to expect a Labour Movement to have as its aim the alteration of the social structure to put an end to the enslavement of the workers. All attempts become only scrambles to secure benefits for individuals. With an olympian superciliousness Mr. Childe draws a sweeping moral to flatter what would appear to be a private habit of anarchic cynicism.

This is nonsense. The facts do not require any such tired explanation. Mr. Childe himself hits the nail on the head when he says that:—

for three decades the forces of Labour have been concentrated on the effort to capture the parliamentary machine, and the trade unions have been made subservient to the political Labour Parties.

It is a pity that the promised sequel could not have been made a part of the present book. An enumeration of the "achievements" of Labour Governments and a study of the peculiar aims of the Parties would make clear the reasons for the general disillusionment and for the perpetual squabbles. It is because Labour Governments have steadily been more interested in winning the doubtful votes of small farmers and other non-proletarian classes than in standing boldly in defence of the workers that the movement has become so opportunist as to be bankrupt.

Compulsory arbitration has been available to settle Labour disputes. In a time of rising prices and brisk demand for labour it was ready to register imposing wage increases. With easy conditions on the industrial front, what more could a faithful trade union official do for the workers than help put a Labour Government into power and so, presumably, deprive employers of the power to prevent the inevitable march of the workers to greater and greater security? The movement, throwing everything over to put politicians into power, has become almost completely absorbed in one little side-track of the workers' struggle.

Naturally, the politicians have considered that they are the movement. It is this one-sided emphasis, this absorption in the game of putting both hands out for votes, that has detached the politicians further and further from the class-struggle. The industrial movement has been regarded as something quite distinct from the parliamentary, something to which the political leaders owe no obligation, something which must be snubbed and muzzled if parliamentary popularity is to be achieved. Thanks to the deification of simple "Labour-in-politics," the movement has been refined away almost out of existence. There is no adequate machinery to use for the class struggle; there is only an electoral apparatus, at the service of people who have generally swallowed whole the

opportunist philosophy of the capitalist political parties. In these circumstances, there is no reason to be surprised at the demoralisation of Parliamentary Labour or the failures on the neglected industrial front.

During the last three years there have been several signs that important sections of the movement are awakening to the necessity of putting an end to this concentration on vote-catching. At the end of 1920, the President of the Australian Labour Party admitted that "members of the Federal Executive know that the masses of the working class are not satisfied with the reform programme of the A.L.P." What seemed an entirely revolutionary step was taken; an All-Australian Trades Union Congress was summoned by the A.L.P. Executive to prepare a new objective and platform for the Party. This sudden reconciliation of the hitherto distinct industrial and parliamentary wings resulted in the adoption of a new militantly socialist objective for the parliamentary parties, which even the opposition of a number of the old-gang politicians could not defeat. The 1922 Federal elections, when this new objective was shelved, left Labour in a wretched minority. The 1923 Queensland elections, when the new objective was made the central issue, returned a supposedly ruined Labour Government with a greatly increased majority—a moral that has gone deep. At the same time plans for One Big Union have been revived as part of a scheme for the unification of all Labour forces to prepare an offensive against capitalism. The tendencies are still confused, but after thirty years the Australian Movement is coming, painfully and laboriously, to undo its past, and to start again with the definite intention of thinking of the whole class struggle rather than simply of electoral chances.

It is fashionable to look to Australia for examples. The one plain lesson Australian experience teaches is that detachment and emasculation of the parliamentary struggle results simply in the ruin of the movement.

E. M. H.

HOW THE WORKER LIVES—IN INDIA

Report on an Inquiry into the Wages and Hours of Labour in the Bombay Cotton Mill Industry. By G. Findlay Shirras. (Labour Office, Government of Bombay, 1923. R.3.)

Report on an Inquiry into Working-class Budgets in Bombay. G. Findlay Shirras. (Labour Office, Government of Bombay, 1923. R. 3.14.)

IN no other country but India would Government Labour Reports deserve the special attention that these two have attracted. The reason is not far to seek. On account of its size and population, India now claims to rank sixth among the industrial countries of the world. Yet amid the voluminous statistics and reports turned out by the Government of India there is included next to nothing on the conditions of life of the growing ranks of Indian industrial workers. One thinks, for instance, of the casual evidence of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18. The Bombay Government Labour Office, the first and still the only one of its kind in India, was not formed until as late as April, 1921. With the publication of its *Labour Gazette*,

beginning in September, 1921, for the first time a little, though only a very little, detailed information has become available. It has now issued the two reports above, which represent the first fruits of its inquiries into labour conditions in Bombay.

Where accurate data are so scanty, any store of precise and relevant information is likely to receive a ready welcome. But official reports on labour matters can never be accepted without close scrutiny. It is not the more reassuring to be aware that it is an avowed motive behind the Bombay Government investigations to provide the basis for the settlement of labour disputes, now as much a normal phenomenon of Indian industry as in any Western country. It is, accordingly, not surprising that these two reports are no exception to the rule, and can only be regarded as unbiassed from the viewpoint of the ordinary employer of labour. They provide, especially the one dealing with working-class budgets, a mass of interesting data not hitherto available on the conditions and standard of life of Bombay workers; but much of the evidence and general conclusions can only be accepted with reserve, if not condemned as untrustworthy.

Take, for instance, the first inquiry into the wages and hours worked in the mill industry. Its results are not a little vitiated by the fact that they depend purely and solely on voluntary returns made by the employers on forms submitted to them to fill up. Even so, it is interesting to notice that the returns, which relate to rather less than 200,000 workers, indicate an average daily wage, for men, of only twenty annas (about 1s. 8d.). Assuming four weeks of six days worked in the month this would only yield a monthly income of 30 rupees (about £2). Women are, of course, paid much less; the average monthly wage being only half that of men. Even the *average* hours of labour represent a total of sixty hours or over for a working week of six days.

The second inquiry provides some startling evidence of the appalling living conditions necessitated by these incomes. Yet it is very doubtful if the budgets presented (even if accurately compiled) represent more than a small proportion, and that on the whole a relatively better-paid portion, of the total industrial population. Of 2,473 families investigated, only 340 had a monthly income of 40 rupees or below. The average earnings per month for male wage-earners works out in these budgets at over 42 rupees per month. Yet the first report returns the average monthly earnings per head in 1921 for cotton-mill workers throughout the Presidency as 33 rupees (about 44s.) for men and 16 rupees for women. For the 603 single men's budgets compiled, the average income figure is not stated, but it appears as if it would work out at near 45 rupees. As conditions are, factory-workers in Bombay with this income cannot by any means be regarded as belonging to the lowest-paid class. In support of this it may be mentioned that not long ago the Department of Statistics published some figures for January, 1921, of average monthly wages in State establishments and in typical industries. They show clearly that it is by no means uncommon for even skilled workers to receive about 20 rupees (=26s. 8d.) or less per month.

The rapid growth of the Bombay industrial proletariat, the absence of real legal protection for the workers, and the indifference of the millowners, have resulted in conditions which can only be compared with those described

by Engels in his account of the state of the working classes in England in 1844. The housing conditions of the Bombay millworkers are notorious, and some appalling details are given in the book. The following are some of the conclusions arrived at :—

About 97 per cent. of the working-class families live in single-roomed tenements; 70 per cent. of the total tenements in Bombay consist of one room only, and 14 per cent. of two rooms. Two-thirds of the population of Bombay City live in one room as against 6 per cent. in London. There are 3,125 one-roomed tenements containing at least two families, 270 of them housing five or more families in the single room.

It is eloquent of the quality of these dwellings that out of 2,473 cases, the water supply was reckoned good in 234 because there was "at least one tap for eight tenements." In 1,423 cases there was only one tap for between eight to ten tenements, in the remaining 816 cases the single tap served for more than sixteen tenements.

The natural result is shown in the figures of infantile mortality in Bombay. The average number of deaths under one year per 1,000 births during the five years ended 1922 was 572. The figure in 1921 was 666. The corresponding figures in other towns in 1921 were 281 in Madras, 135 in Berlin, 95 in Paris, 80 in London, 71 in New York. The direct connection between overcrowding and the high rate of infantile mortality is shown by the fact that for whole families occupying one room or less the mortality figure reaches the awful figure of 828, decreasing as the number of rooms increases, until for four or more rooms it is as low as 133.

The comfortable assurance of the sentence in the summary is in the typical tone of official optimism. It says, "the question of housing leaves much to be desired, but is receiving the closest attention by Government and local authorities."

In view of the size of the incomes mentioned, it is not surprising that the investigators discover that "the standard of living and comfort is not a high one." On the average, not less than 56·8 per cent. of the income is spent on food. The expenditure on education is little or nil. The following conclusions drawn in the report testify to the conditions of nourishment dictated by these incomes:—

The quantity of cereals consumed by the industrial workers in Bombay compares favourably with the minimum prescribed by the Bombay Famine Code. *It falls, however, below the scale prescribed for jails.*

Even though the ordinary worker has a somewhat greater variety in his food, the figures are sufficiently compelling for even the British liberal-capitalist organ, the *Times of India*, to admit that:—

It is indeed established that the average Bombay worker is less well-fed than a convict in jail, and can afford to consume only a little more than a man in receipt of relief under the Bombay Famine Code.

Jail prisoners and famine victims are not usually taken as standards of healthy nourishment. The results in the case of the Bombay factory workers might have been even more startling if the standard of comparison had been army rations or some such scale of diet.

At the same time, the report is very careful to please its patrons by its

insistence that the remedy is not to be found in increased wages. Increased wages, it points out, as often as not lead to increased consumption of liquor and increased absenteeism. Thus the conclusion is reached, "in short, extra wages are sometimes spent on what tends not to increase efficiency but to decrease efficiency. Spending wisely may be regarded as the whole crux of the labour problem."

It is stated at the outset that the inquiry "was set on foot at the instance of his Excellency the Governor in consequence, mainly, of the difficulty of ascertaining the true facts of the cost of living." But, as a matter of fact, the information that is given under this head, and the tables and graphs that are compiled, can only be regarded with serious misgivings.

In the first place the budgets are not representative of more than a small proportion of the workers, and there is reason to suspect that budgets of workers earning relatively high wages preponderate amongst them.

In the second place the manner of compiling the budgets is inevitably open to serious defects. With a population so largely illiterate as that of Indian workers, it will be very rare indeed for written accounts to be kept by any of the workers concerned. For information, therefore, casual inquiry has to be relied upon.

Further, only five heads of expenditure are considered, viz., food, fuel, clothing, rent, and miscellaneous, the last amounting on the average to over 18 per cent. and including such items as drink, amusement, interest on debts, &c. But occasional expenditure, as on marriages, funerals, and festivals, is not taken into account, although it is a recurrent item in the lives of the workers. It may be mentioned here that no less than 47 per cent. of the families investigated were in debt (chiefly owing to the extra expenditure involved on marriages, &c.), and "the usual rate of interest is 75 per cent. per annum, and in a few cases 150 per cent."

Another very important reason why the official figures of the cost of living index bear no relation to the actual expenses of the workers is that the prices used in the compilation of the cost of living index are those paid on a *cash* basis. Of the total families investigated, however, only 33·8 per cent. made their purchases on a cash basis, the rest made their purchases partly or entirely on credit (entirely so in the case of nearly 40 per cent. of the workers). The prices they actually pay for commodities are accordingly greater than those used in the compilation of the cost of living index.

A further very significant feature which does not receive the emphasis it requires is the use of the average family budget deduced from this inquiry for the purpose of determining the increase in the cost of living since July, 1914. The method gives not the present cost of the pre-war standard of living but the pre-war cost of the present standard; it assumes that the pre-war standard was exactly the same and certainly no better than the present. Since the rise in prices and the lagging behind of wage-increases during the 1914-21 period have generally involved a substitution by the workers of cheaper articles for more expensive ones, the method adopted gives a figure for the increase in the cost of living which makes out that it has risen less than is actually the case, or as would be shown if the pre-war standard were taken as the basis.

For all these reasons, then, the calculating of the rise in the cost

of living is open to grave suspicion. Most of the factors mentioned, especially the use of cash, if not wholesale, prices and of the 1921 standard as a pre-war one, tend to lower the cost-of-living index. It is, therefore, remarkable to find that the curve of the cost-of-living index during 1921 and 1922, based on these budgets, shows actually higher figures than the official index as published monthly in the *Bombay Labour Gazette*. It can only be concluded that the official index must seriously under-estimate the rise in the cost of living. Is it to be wondered at that Mr. J. Baptista, the President of the All-Indian Trade Union Congress, has given his written opinion that the official index "merely mocks the hard-worked and ill-paid labourer"? Whether the worker himself would corroborate this view we cannot tell, for he is as yet too inarticulate to say. But it would not be surprising if all these Government inquiries into his condition, however accurate their data, seemed to him little better than a mockery.

C. P. D.

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NOTES of the MONTH

*The Menace in Germany—A Class Issue—Hushing up the World
Revolution—The Silence of Knowledge—Black Dictatorship
or Red—Democracy in Practice—A New Capitalist
Offensive—The Bourgeois United Front—The
Decisive Hour*

BEFORE the terrible state of events in Germany it is not easy to write quietly in terms of theoretical analysis. When crowds of starving men and women are besieging shop windows with no money to buy, and are driven down by armed police with swords and revolvers, then it is difficult to believe that the most constitutional democratic socialist cannot feel some indignation, and not least when he realises that that sword was put in the hands of the policeman by a social democrat instead of helping the starving men and women. Against the black alliance of Stinnes, French militarism, and the Second International, combining at this moment to crush down the German workers to the extreme of exploitation and subjection, it is difficult to believe that every active force in the working-class movement would not rise in immediate opposition or would fail to realise the deadly threat conveyed to the whole European working class. Yet the reaction of feeling in this country to-day is still conventional, indifferent, in terms of obsolete issues, utterly without relation to the present situation.

CAN it not be seen to-day at any rate that the German issue, and indeed the whole European issue, is a class issue? There is no "France" or "Germany," or exacting of reparations from the German "nation." Instead there is Stinnes and Degoutte meeting to arrange how to impose a ten-hour day on the German workers; and the German Government timidly trying to take part in the negotiations and being contemptuously relegated to the rôle of a policeman. What is Stinnes? What is Degoutte? The one is slave-driver, the other is bully, of the same Central European plantation on which both live: and their quarrels and contracts and agreements are only the haggling of slave-driver and

bully over their respective shares of the proceeds. They are the prototypes of post-war European culture: able to meet together as civilised bourgeois representatives and upholders of all political, moral, and æsthetic values (slave-driver and bully) against the rising tide of the proletarian revolution.

YET at this moment in British Labour propaganda the issue is still presented as an issue of France and Germany: the fight is still presented as a fight over reparations; the solution as some kind of settlement over reparations and debts. Why this blindness to the existence of the German workers? Why this compassionate upholding of the cause of Stinnes? Why this heroic applause of Baldwin against Poincaré? Why this indifference to what the settlement preparing must actually mean to the working class? Why this deafness to the actual clash already sounding? Why this complacent acceptance of a dictatorship against the workers established by their own colleagues of the Second International? There is one answer to all this, and only one. Eyes and ears are there: and eyes and ears are daily assailed by the torrent of facts. But to admit the facts to-day is not merely to admit the immediate facts. It is to admit the world revolution.

TO admit the facts to-day is to admit the failure of every theory and assumption on which the present policy of the British Labour Movement has been built up. They preached democracy. Their own side has thrown it over. They preached international peace to be achieved on the sword of the Allies. The Allies have destroyed it. They preached the improvement of the workers' conditions by the "peaceful" progressive methods of German social democracy instead of the "violence" of the Russian workers. To-day the German workers are in the descending hell of misery: the Russian workers are on the rising path of health and strength. They preached capitalist reconstruction and increasing production and prosperity. The outcome has been wholesale unemployment, growing dislocation, and falling standards shattered by the capitalist offensive. Every shred and remnant of which the tattered banner of the Second International was made up after the war has been scorched and shrivelled in the blaze of events, and

the stark issue of the world struggle of capitalist reaction and the workers' revolution stands out clear and inescapable. The leaders of the British Labour Movement are not blind from ignorance. They are well posted through their international contacts in what is happening. They are blind, not from ignorance, but from knowledge. They are silent with too much understanding. Just as two years ago the chatter of the Centre dried up as the real issue became clear between the reaction of the Second International and the united fight of the Communist International, so to-day the Second International has become silent as the supreme battle has become clear between the black dictatorship of Stinnes-Poincaré and the proletarian dictatorship of the Communist International.

“**T**AKE care that for fear of a red dictatorship you do not come to accept a yellow or black dictatorship.” How soon have Fimmen's words to the British Trades Union Congress become realised. Military dictatorship against the workers has been established in Germany—by the Social Democrats. Without the will of the Social Democrats that dictatorship could never have been established. Without the vote of the Social Democrats the Chancellor would never have secured a quorum for his Emergency Powers Act, much less its passage. Without the presence of the Social Democrats in the Cabinet the appointment of notorious monarchists as the dictators could never have been imposed on the workers. In 1921 the establishment of military dictatorship against the working class failed because of the united opposition of the trade unions. In 1923 it succeeded because the Social Democrats helped to establish it. There has been no other purpose in the presence of the Social Democrats in the Stresemann Cabinet. There is nothing they can point to that they have achieved by it. There is not even the fig leaf of constitutionalism: for the Social Democratic President Ebert had declared already that he would proclaim the dictatorship in any case even if it did not pass the Reichstag. There is not a single right or protection for the workers they can claim to have preserved. Even the eight-hour day, on which they made their short-lived stand as (in their own words) “the last remnant of the victories of the revolution,” they abandoned with a formula that preserved it “in principle” while

agreeing to its destruction in practice. Hilferding's financial schemes were soon given up and himself sacrificed. For what then have they abandoned everything? In order to establish a dictatorship of militarists and industrialists, which is engaged in breaking up working-class organisation, smashing the working-class Press, shooting and sabring workers in the streets, and at the same time supporting and consolidating the illegal Fascist and nationalist armed anti-working-class organisations. All this the Social Democrat Ministers in the Cabinet are sanctioning and encouraging by their presence, until the time comes when the workers are finally stripped and helpless before their enemy and the Social Democratic puppets are flung aside as of no further value.

LET every worker who has ever listened to the beautiful phrases of a MacDonald or a Thomas or a Brailsford about the great democratic principle and the violence and cruelty of dictatorship consider this picture: for here are the facts that those phrases conceal. To believe in democracy can be an honest dream, and even a beautiful dream, even though it is the dream of a man blind to the cruel pyramid of existing society. But the Labour and Socialist International does not stand for democracy. Its prospectus may be democracy: but its policy is different. Its policy is dictatorship—but dictatorship of a different kind. Against the dictatorship of the working classes and the peasants, of the vast majority in the interests of the vast majority, it puts forward and supports a dictatorship of a handful of militarists and industrialists breaking down the workers to heavy exploitation with the armed assistance of the foreign bourgeoisie. And this policy is endorsed and supported by Henderson and Thomas and the other leaders of the British Labour Party who are united with the Social Democrats in the Labour and Socialist International. We do not blame them for supporting a dictatorship. We agree that in times of social crisis a dictatorship is inevitable. But we do blame them for supporting a dictatorship of the exploiters and militarists against the workers instead of a dictatorship of the workers against the exploiters and militarists. This, then, is the practical working out of democratic principles. The beginning of the avenue is fair enough—Weimar hurrahs and “the freest Parliament of the

freest State on earth"; the end is Von Kahr and the Emperor Stinnes, the machine guns in the streets and the women shot in the market places. And what is happening in Germany is only an advance working model of what must happen in every country of capitalism in Europe and America. As sure as democracy is democracy, as the Second International is the Second International, and the class war is the class war, so surely will the same scenes be enacted in England: the armoured cars will race through the streets, and the bombs will rain down from aeroplanes on the heads of strikers, and all this will be done under the seal and signature of MacDonald and Thomas.

BUT the dictatorship in Germany is something more than a phenomenon of social collapse. It is the spearhead of a European capitalist offensive against the workers. The nature of that offensive is already clear. It is an offensive for intensified exploitation as the only means of carrying on the broken-down capitalist economy. Its watchwords are the ten-hour day and the destruction of trade union protective standards. Its initial scene of operations is the principal centre of European production, the Ruhr. Its agents are the Ruhr industrialists: but behind them and working with them are the French Government on one side and the German on the other. The Stresemann Government came to power as the representative of a single policy, but with a two-fold aspect. The single policy was the policy of the big industrialists, from whose party Stresemann came. Its two-fold aspect was capitulation abroad and dictatorship at home. The day after the capitulation the dictatorship was set up. In the words of the *Times* correspondent "violent measures have been taken against disorders before those disorders have actually occurred." But what is the meaning of a policy of capitulation abroad and dictatorship at home? It means the united front of the bourgeoisie against the working class.

THE French and German Governments play into each other's hands through the mediation of Stinnes, while the British Government abstains from interference. The French Government, so adamant to German overtures, readily

negotiates with Stinnes. Stinnes, having thus made friends with the enemy behind the Government's back in so open a way as to provoke the cry of "Treason!" is endorsed and approved by the German Government. The industrialists, who were ready to sacrifice all in an heroic national passive resistance hand in hand with their workers, now raise no objection to being protected by French bayonets against those workers. The French troops are used to suppress Communist agitation and clear the streets of Dusseldorf with armoured cars. The British forces, it is announced, are ready to "restore order" if the German forces should be insufficient. The German Government orders the Ruhr workers to take the oath of allegiance to the Franco-Belgian *regie*. Is it not clear that what is being prepared behind the fantastic network of the reparations issue is something very much simpler—the subjection of the German working class to a gigantic industrial combine? And if that subjection succeeds, then it must lead the way to the subjection of the European working class.

IF a Franco-German reparations settlement is reached on the lines of the Stinnes negotiations, if the Ruhr and the Rhineland are made a separate economic domain, if the German workers are provoked into sporadic hunger struggles to be suppressed in blood by the weapons so elaborately prepared against them, and if such a suppression is followed by the consolidation of the dictatorship in some more permanent form, whether monarchic or otherwise, and the extirpation of all militant working-class organisation, then the European Counter-Revolution will have won its battle for the immediate period and set up in the face of economic forces its system of post-war capitalism on a basis of military dictatorship and vast trustified exploitation. In that hour it will be too late for the British working class to move: for their fate will be found to be as irretrievably bound up with that of the European working class as it has proved to be during the past three years. But to act is to act now: for every day that is lost, every day that leaves free and unchecked the military preparations of the German, the French, and the British bourgeoisie, is loading the dice against the working class.

R. P. D.

MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY POLITICS ALONE

By L. TROTZKY

WE have got to soak ourselves thoroughly in this simple idea—"man does not live by politics alone"—and never forget it in our propaganda, written or spoken. Formerly, things were different. The history of our Party before the revolution was one of revolutionary *politics*. Its literature, its organisation—the whole of the Party in fact—was political in the most direct, immediate, and narrow sense of the word. The years of revolutionary transition and of civil war made the political interests and the political tasks still more acute and urgent. During these years the Party succeeded in gathering into its ranks the most active elements in the working classes ; and also the fundamental political teachings of these years are quite clear now in the eyes of the working classes. Simply to repeat them adds nothing to them in the eyes of the workers, and is more likely to weaken their influence than to increase it. Now that we have conquered power and gripped it firmly by civil war, our fundamental duties are changed ; they are to be found within the boundaries of economic and cultural construction ; they have become complicated, fragmentary, and scattered, and, in some ways, more "prosaic." Yet at the same time all our former struggles, with all the efforts and sacrifices that they needed, can only be justified in so far as we succeed in rightly stating and solving these daily inconclusive problems, which can be classed as cultural.

Actually, what is it that the working class has gained by its previous struggles ?

- (1) *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (exercised by the Workers' and Peasants' State and directed by the Communist Party).
- (2) *The Red Army*, the material support of this dictatorship.
- (3) *Nationalisation* of the most important instruments of production, without which the dictatorship of the proletariat would be a meaningless formula.

(4) *Monopoly of Foreign Trade*, the necessary condition for Socialist construction in a country encircled by capitalist States.

These four factors, definitely secured, form the armour covering all our work. Thanks to this armour, each of our economic or cultural successes—if it is a real success and not merely an apparent one—necessarily becomes a constituent part of the Socialist structure.

What then is our present task? What ought we to learn first? What should our aims be?

We have got to learn to work well, punctually, neatly, economically. We need culture in work, culture in life, culture in our habits. The domination of the exploiters we have overthrown—after a long preparation—by armed insurrection. But there is no lever which can raise at one blow the level of culture. What is needed here is a long process of self-education by the working class and the peasantry.

Of this change in the orientation of our attention and our efforts Lenin has written in an article on "Co-operation."¹

We are compelled to recognise a radical change in our point of view with regard to Socialism. The radical change is this: formerly we laid emphasis—we were compelled to do so—on the political struggle, on revolution, and on the conquest of power; while now we must lay all our emphasis on peaceful organisation and on "cultural" work. Or rather, I would be prepared to say that we should lay all emphasis on cultural work if we were not compelled to fight for our international position. Putting that aside for the moment, and limiting ourselves to internal economic relations, we can truly say that we now emphasise mainly work that may be described as cultural.

Preoccupation with our international position, then, is the only thing that can distract us now from the work of culture—and that only to a certain extent, as we shall soon see. The most important factor in our international situation is the defence of our State: that is, above all, the Red Army. But here again nine-tenths of our task is cultural: we have to raise the culture of the army, assure its education, teach it to use notebooks, textbooks, and maps, and to develop the habits of cleanliness, punctuality, exactitude, attention, and vigilance. The attempt to create, at the end of the period of civil war, when we were passing to a new epoch of labour,

¹ Printed in *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* for September, 1923.

a "military creed of the proletariat" was a very striking sign of our appreciation of the new tasks before us. It was exactly analogous to the presumptuous attempt to create, in literary laboratories, a "proletarian culture." In this search for the philosopher's stone, despair at our backward position is mingled with a belief in miracles—which is itself a proof of undeveloped mentality. But we have no reason at all for despair, and it is really time for us to give up believing in miracles such as an immediately discoverable "proletarian culture" or "military creed." Covered by the armour of proletarian dictatorship, we have got to extend our daily work of culture, which alone can secure a Socialist fulfilment of the essential conquests of the revolution. Whoever does not see this plays a reactionary part in the thought and activity of the Party.

When Lenin says that our present tasks lie more in the region of culture than in that of politics, it is necessary, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, to pause a moment and consider these terms. In a certain sense politics dominate everything. Even Lenin's advice—to transfer our attention from politics to culture—is *political* advice. When a Workers' Party decides, in one country or another, that it is necessary to put forward in the forefront of its programme demands which are economic and not political, even this decision is political in character. It is quite obvious that the word "politics" is used here in two different senses: first in the wide sense of dialectical materialism, embracing the totality of all the ideas, methods, and dominant systems that give direction to the activities of a community in all the spheres of social life; and then in a narrow and special sense, as applied to one definite side of the activities of a society, closely bound up with the fight for power and contrasting with economic and cultural work, &c. When Lenin wrote that *politics are concentrated economics* he was speaking of politics in general, in the philosophic sense of the word. When Lenin says, "A little less politics, a little more economics," he was taking "politics" in the narrow specialised sense. Both ways of using the word are legitimate in so far as they are customary. The important thing is only that we should understand clearly, each time the word is used, what it is that is meant by it.

The Communist organisation is a political party in the historical or philosophical sense of the word. The other parties are above

all political in that they concern themselves with the (lesser) "politics." The fact that our Party is henceforward concentrating the greater part of its attention on cultural work does not, therefore, mean that its political rôle is diminished. Its historical rôle of (political) leadership is precisely to be found in this calculated switching of attention towards cultural work. It is only after long years of socialist work, crowned by success, within Russia, and of complete security in foreign affairs, that a Party like ours will be able, little by little, to divest itself of its shape as a party, to dissolve itself in the Socialist society. We are still so far from this that it is not worth thinking about it as yet. For the period ahead of us, the Party must keep in their entirety its essential characteristics : unity of thought, centralisation, discipline, and the combative vigour which results from these. But these very qualities of the Communist Party, which are so invaluable, can only be preserved and developed, under present conditions, by the satisfaction of economic and cultural needs and aspirations in the widest, most intelligent, just, and meticulous way possible.

The proletariat is a powerful social unity which, in periods of hard revolutionary fighting for aims which are those of the whole class, comes completely into line. But in this unity we can see an extreme diversity and even a good few incompatibilities—from the illiterate shepherd to the highly skilled mechanic. Without this diversity the Communist task of unification and education would be the simplest thing in the world. One might say that the greater the history of a country, the greater is that of its working class, the richer it is in memories, traditions, habits, old groupings of forces—and the more difficult it is to form from it a revolutionary unity.

Our Russian proletariat has little history or tradition behind it and this certainly facilitated its preparation for revolution in the Red October. But the same fact has since hindered its work of economic construction. Most of our workers lack the simplest habits and abilities of culture (the power to read, to write, to keep healthy, to be punctual). The European worker has had a long time in which to acquire these habits in bourgeois society ; that is why the higher grades of European Labour hold so tightly

to the bourgeois order, to democracy, to the capitalist free Press, and other benefits of this sort. Our backward Russian bourgeoisie has scarcely given anything of this sort to the workers ; that is why the Russian proletariat has more easily broken with the bourgeoisie and overthrown it. But for the same reason it is forced for the most part to win and accumulate only now (*i.e.*, on the basis of the workers' Socialist State) the simplest habits of culture.

The revolutionary armour covering our new society—the dictatorship, the Red Army, nationalisation, and the foreign trade monopoly—gives an objectively Socialist character to all deliberate and conscientious efforts in economics or culture. In bourgeois society the worker was always enriching the bourgeoisie without intending to and without thinking of it—enriching the more as he worked harder. In the Soviet State, the good, conscientious worker, even without thinking of it (if he is non-party or non-political), is doing Socialist work as he increases the resources of the working class. That is the achievement of the October Revolution, and the New Economic Policy has not changed it.

There are a large number of workers, not belonging to any party, who are keen on production and on technical skill and loyal to their factory ; one cannot speak of them as “politically indifferent” except in a purely conventional sense. At the gravest and most difficult hours of the revolution they were with us. The vast majority of them were undismayed by the revolution ; they were not deserters, they were not traitors.

During the civil war many of them fought, while others worked their utmost on munitions. From this they passed straightaway to the labours of peace. One has, however, some reason for calling them “non-political,” because the interest of corporate production or of the family comprises for them, at least in normal times, their whole “political interest.”

Each one among them wishes to be a good workman, to perfect himself in his trade, to reach a higher degree of accomplishment, as much from a desire to better the conditions of his own home as from a legitimate professional pride. And let us repeat that in so doing each one among them does Socialist work even without knowing it. But we, the Communist Party, are concerned that these

producers should consciously direct their daily, minor, industrial efforts towards the objectives of Socialism.

How can this be achieved ? It is difficult to get in touch with this type of workman along the lines of pure politics. He has heard all we have to say. He is not interested. He thinks in terms of his work-place and he is not too pleased with all that is happening at present at his work-place in the shop, in the factory, in the Trust. These workers want to think things out for themselves, they often have a reserved, "shut-up" attitude ; it is from this class of workers that self-taught inventors come.

We cannot approach them on the political side, or at least we cannot in that way touch them very profoundly, but we can and we must reach them *through production itself and through technical skill.*

Comrade Koltsov (of the group connected with the *Krasnaia-Presnia*, Moscow), a Communist agitator in contact with the masses, has pointed out the lack of Soviet handbooks of instruction and of textbooks intended to be studied without a teacher, dealing with special technical subjects and separate trades. The old stocks of these books are exhausted ; many works are out of date from a political point of view ; they are very often impregnated with the most pernicious spirit of capitalism. The new handbooks are too few in number ; they are difficult to get hold of as they have been published at different times by different publishers, or by different departments, acting without any concerted plan.

Technically, their use is often small as they are too theoretical, too academic ; politically, they are invariably incoherent, as they are usually abbreviated translations. We need new pocket handbooks for the Soviet locksmith, the Soviet turner, the electrical fitter, and for many others. These manuals must be adapted to our actual economic and political conditions ; they must take into account our poverty and our enormous potentialities ; and they should instil into our productive system the most common-sense habits and new methods. They ought to allow, to a certain extent, the Socialist vista to be seen beyond the needs and interests of industrial policy (the standardisation of labour, electrification, the single economic plan).

Socialist ideas and conclusions ought to be an integral part of the practical theory in these books and should never

assume the guise of agitation dissociated from the subject matter. The demand for such books is enormous. It is caused by the need for skilled manual labour and the desire of the workers themselves to become more skilful. It is accentuated by the interruption, during the imperialist and civil wars, of all high-grade industrial training. The task before us is the most fruitful and the most important possible.

Let us not deceive ourselves by supposing that it is easy to create a series of manuals of this kind. The experienced workman, even if highly skilled, does not know how to write books. Technical writers often lack practical experience ; moreover, the number among them with a Socialist view-point is very small.

Nevertheless, this task can be accomplished, not by routine methods, but on the contrary with new methods, by combining. In order to write a handbook it is necessary to form a group, of three for example, consisting of a professional writer, with technical knowledge of the subject and acquainted as much as possible with the state of our industry or able to study it ; of a highly skilled workman interested in production and with an inventive turn of mind ; and of a Marxist writer with some technical industrial knowledge. Proceeding thus, or on similar lines, we must create a model library of industrial technique ; of course, well produced, of a convenient size, at a moderate price. This library would have a double rôle : it would contribute to the perfecting of skilled labour and in consequence of the Socialist edifice, and it would help us to get in touch with a valuable group of producers in the Socialist economy in its wider sense, and, therefore, valuable to the Communist Party.

It is evident that the task is not limited to a series of manuals. We have lingered over this example because we think it is a striking example of a new method of working, corresponding to the new objectives of the present time. A diversity of methods can and should be employed to win the non-political producers. We need scientific and technical periodicals, and special ones for each industry, issued weekly or monthly ; we need scientific and technical societies designed to attract the worker of whom we are speaking. A good half of our trade union press ought to be intended for him. But the most convincing political argument in the eyes

of the class of worker we are trying to get hold of will be furnished by *every practical success in production, by every real improvement in the conditions of the factory and workshop, and by every deliberate effort made by the Party in this direction.*

The political philosophy of this productive worker may be expressed—although it is only rarely that he himself gives it expression—in formulæ of this sort :—

“The revolution, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, that is all clear and definite : we do not need the bourgeoisie or their agents the Mensheviks. The liberty of the Press is not of much importance. All this is not the point. *But how are we going to get on with production?* You, the Communists, have set yourselves out to direct it. Your aims, your projects, are good, excellent, we know ; it is not worth while repeating all this to us. We have heard you before on this ; we agree, we support you—but how are you going to get there in practice ? We put up with the crimes of the bourgeoisie and we can well be patient with the mistakes of the revolution. But not patient for ever, all the same . . . ”

The man who speaks in this way may be an old turner, a scrupulous worker, or a locksmith, or a foundryman—attentive to what he is doing, not an enthusiast in politics, but rather passive, yet reflective and critical. He is often a little sceptical, but always faithful to his class. This is a real work—and one of the best. Our Party in its present work has got to think of him.

This orientation towards the sound workman does not clash with another of the foremost tasks of our Party : to win over the younger generation of workers. For the younger generation is growing up on the basis that our solution of the main problems gives to it. *The younger generation ought before all to be a generation of sound workers, highly skilled and keen on their work.* It ought to grow up in the knowledge that its productive labour is also a work of Socialism. For this reason the orientation of our efforts towards the sound, skilful, and conscientious worker is also the direction we must take in educating the youth of the working class. Without it the advance towards Socialism will be impossible.

ZERO HOUR IN GERMANY

By C. M. ROEBUCK

§ 1.—*The Treachery of the Social-Democracy*

AT the time of writing (October 15) it is not yet clear whether, as reported, a dozen members of the German Social Democratic Reichstag group actually refused to vote for the Emergency Powers Bill, in spite of the threat of expulsion from the Party. If it is true, their names will one day be written in letters of gold on the walls of the palace which houses the German Workers' Government—side by side with the names, if not of Ruhle, who first voted against the war credits in 1914, at least of Haase and Ledebour, the first who broke party discipline the next year.

For the crisis with which the German workers are faced is one as pregnant with meaning for the whole of world history as the crisis at the outbreak of the late imperialist war. The granting of practically unlimited power, for an indefinite period, to the bourgeois government of the Reich to-day is as important an act as the conferring of plenipotentiary power to wage war, by the voting of the war credits, was in the days when the German mark still bore a terrestrial and not an astronomical value. Then, as now, the fate of the whole bourgeois machinery of government was trembling in the balance; now, as then, the proletariat is in an active, fighting mood, prepared to strike heavy blows in defence of its vital interests. And for the Social Democratic Party, a party which claims to voice the demands of the workers, obediently to lead the workers up to the altar, that they may literally immolate themselves and their families, by the sacrifice of their blood infusing new life into the worn-out and corrupted system of capitalist society, is as gross and cowardly an act of treachery in 1923 as it was in 1914.

Of course, treachery, as in 1914, is fast bound up with hypocrisy. Just as then the Social Democracy made the "sacrifice" of its "principles" only for the sake of the sacred cause of national unity, so to-day it sold its honour "only" when another sacred

cause—that of parliamentary democracy—was in dire peril. Incidentally, it is worth noting that this proletarian vestal parts with her chastity only for the sake of principles consecrated in the *bourgeois* revolutions of the nineteenth century—the principles of nationality and of “representative government.” And, like all her bourgeois sisters, she is ready for the sake of these principles to sell her country to the French at the best price her (somewhat depreciated) charms can buy, and accept a lord and master at the hands of the militarist clique, for whom democracy is a term of abuse and parliament a subject for laughter.

This is not an isolated act, or a sudden lapse from virtue, of the German Social Democratic Party. On the contrary, it is the last of a long series of similar betrayals, differing only in the circumstances in which they took place. Consequently it is the most likely to fail of its purpose. For a long time past the German workers have been losing faith in the S.D.P., and have been showing it by leaving its ranks, literally in hundreds of thousands (the paying membership has fallen from 1,800,000 to 700,000 in a year), by transferring their allegiance within the trade union movement to the Communist Party of Germany (K.P.D.), and by rallying, in ever larger and larger masses, to every call of the workshop and factory councils, in spite of the prohibitions and denunciations of the Social-Democratic leaders. During the last few months the gigantic, forty-year-old organisation of the S.D.P. has been literally decaying and falling to pieces: at Hamburg, in Saxony and Thuringia, in Berlin the district organisations have been swept away in the flame of mass revolt, denounced their executives, and have thrown in their lot with the Communists. And to-day, now that the propaganda of the old Party leaders has ceased to be of avail, now that their sole weapon is expulsion, or threat of expulsion, their task will become infinitely more difficult when the workers see that the defence of the interests of the Republic has been entrusted to—Stresemann, the nominee of the Prussian junkers!

The Social Democratic Party, the creation of Liebknecht and Bebel, the pupil of Marx and Engels, has made the last and greatest of its “great refusals”—those refusals to shoulder the burden of historical necessity which determine that those who have evaded their duty shall be blotted out for ever from the history of

human achievement. Henceforth the S.D.P., which at the hour of decisive struggle between the exploiters and the proletariat has taken the side of the exploiters, will itself seek for no better lot than self-extinction and oblivion.

§ 2.—*The Collapse of the Capitalist Economy*

"It is the ultimate money form of the world of commodities that actually conceals, instead of disclosing, the social character of private labour and the social relations between the individual producers."

Ever since the Great War the bourgeoisie in all countries has had bitter cause to reflect on the truth of this maxim of *Capital*, and on the destructive results when the social relations between the individual producers are forced out, naked and reluctant, into the light by the refusal of the "money form" established by scores of years of usage and custom to act any longer in its true capacity. And in Germany the collapse of the mark has been the first and most violent index (not cause) of capitalist collapse.

Here are the figures for the exchange rate (marks against sterling):—

Par	20.40	July 2, 1923 ..	730,000
January 1, 1922	789	July 16, 1923 ..	900,000
July 1, 1922 ..	1,768	July 30, 1923 ..	5,000,000
January 1, 1923	33,500	August 31, 1923..	47,000,000
February 2, 1923	193,000	September 12, 1923	440,000,000
March 2, 1923	107,250	October 1, 1923..	1,100,000,000
April 3, 1923 ..	98,250	October 5, 1923 ..	2,730,000,000
May 2, 1923 ..	146,750	October 9, 1923 ..	25,000,000,000
June 1, 1923 ..	344,500	October 19, 1923	80,000,000,000

Working backwards from this table, and inquiring the causes of this depreciation, we find that they are threefold: (a) the general impoverishment (absolute wastage) caused by the war; (b) the impoverishment caused by losses under the Versailles Treaty and by Reparations, including the occupation of the Ruhr; (c) the inflation of the currency, to cover expenses of government, and to provide credits for the great manufacturers, enabling them to buy coal, iron, and raw materials abroad, without taxing them in return.

It is not of immediate interest to consider losses during the war: they cannot be compared with the disasters suffered by Germany as a consequence of the peace. Out of a possible maximum

output (1913 figures) of 191,500,000 tons of coal, an output of 60,800,000 tons was lost when Alsace-Lorraine, the Saar, and Upper Silesia were torn from Germany by the Versailles Treaty; while, of the remaining 130,700,000 tons, over 114,000,000 tons were produced in the Ruhr and Rhineland, which the French seized in 1923. There remains, therefore, to Germany less than 9 per cent. of the coal she possessed before the war. Before the war, Germany possessed estimated reserves of iron ore amounting to 3,600,000,000 tons: after the war, according to the editor of the *Iron Trade Review*, she possesses no more than 1,374,000,000 tons. Out of a total 1913 production of 19.3 million tons of cast iron, about seventeen million tons were accounted for by territories lost to Germany by 1923; in the same way she has lost 17.2 million tons of steel, out of an annual production of 18.9 millions tons. Finally, while every other great power had materially increased the tonnage of its commercial fleet by January, 1923, as compared with 1914, Germany's tonnage fell from 5,098,000 tons to 2,496,000 tons.

Coal, iron, steel, ships—these are the life-blood of the modern industrial community, without which it becomes, first enfeebled, and ultimately a mere parasite in world-economy, only consuming and not producing. This is most clearly shown by the recent statistics of foreign trade, in which imports remain at a comparatively high level, owing to the huge quantities of coal and iron purchased abroad (in July, 1923, coal accounted for over 50 per cent. of imports, as against 25 per cent. in 1922), while exports fell to a miserably shrunken level, which shows only too clearly the complete economic decay of Germany—notwithstanding that very fall in the value of the mark which has enabled the German capitalists to undersell all the other nations in the world market:—

			Imports	Exports
			(In thousands of double centners)	
Average month, 1913	..		60,693	61,430
Average month, 1922	..		38,230	17,964
January, 1923	..	..	47,289	13,093
February, 1923	..	..	31,661	10,961
March, 1923	..	..	52,201	9,382
April, 1923	..	..	63,961	10,288
May, 1923	..	..	40,131	9,299
June, 1923	..	..	48,066	8,897
July, 1923	..	..	41,596	10,540

As previously mentioned, it is precisely the burden of maintaining imports at this relatively high level that has caused the inflation of the German currency. While the low value of the mark was a factor that favoured exports, it worked unfavourably in the case of imports, and the printing press was forced to come to the rescue of industry to a greater and greater degree. But the inflation before the present year loses all significance when we see the figures brought into the fiscal calculations by the necessity of providing *Ruhrhilfe*, i.e., the monetary subsidy granted by the German Government to the employers and workers of the Ruhr, the first in order that they might buy coal, iron, and raw materials abroad, and the second in order to maintain unbroken the policy of passive resistance and sabotage. Just as we saw the *Ruhrhilfe* producing the sharp breaks in the value of the mark in January and July of this year, so we see it introducing the arithmetic of astronomy into the statistics of State income and expenditure:—

	Expenditure		Income
	(In millions of marks)		
Average decade (ten days), 1913	70.5	..	57.7
" " " " 1918	1,223	..	205
" " " " 1920	1,268	..	966
Second decade, November, 1922	117,443	..	15,619
" " December, 1922	188,955	..	33,166
" " January, 1923..	268,863	..	58,295
" " February, 1923	607,611	..	93,424
" " March, 1923 ..	1,559,398	..	103,823
" " April, 1923 ..	885,328	..	145,080
" " May, 1923 ..	935,498	..	570,763
" " June, 1923 ..	2,794,900	..	280,700
" " July, 1923 ..	12,506,600	..	512,373
" " August, 1923..	246,000,000	..	4,000,000
" " September, 1923	5,455,794,000	..	84,660,000

Thus the second decade of September showed a deficit of 5,360 million marks. During the week ending September 26, the deficit amounted to 8,500 million millions! In this week, the *Ruhrhilfe* alone was costing forty million gold marks per day—or nearly 2,000 million millions in paper.

How has the worker felt the pressure of all these factors, to which must be added that of unfettered and shameless speculation in foodstuffs and articles of primary necessity? The first indication

is to be found in the cost-of-living index. Beginning in January, 1923, at 1,120 (the 1913 level being reckoned as 100), it climbed comparatively slowly to 3,816 in May, and then doubled itself (7,650) by the beginning of June. From this time, at the insistent demand of the trade unions, the index was calculated weekly instead of monthly, and increased as follows:—

June 20	..	9,272	August 6	..	149,531
" 27	..	11,785	" 13	..	436,935
July 4	..	16,180	" 20	..	753,733
" 11	..	25,511	" 27	..	1,183,434
" 16	..	28,842	September 3	..	1,845,261
" 23	..	39,336	" 10	..	5,051,046
" 30	..	71,476			

Detailed wages scales are not available, but the employers until a few months ago steadily refused to permit wages adjustments by collective bargaining on a weekly basis. The wage tariffs were adjusted monthly, but by the second week of the month turned to the heavy disadvantage of the worker, owing to the increase in the cost-of-living index. In January, 1923, the skilled worker in the principal industries (builders, woodworkers, textiles, metal trades) was receiving on an average a weekly wage equivalent to 63.2 per cent. of his pre-war wage; by May the percentage had risen to 74.9; while for unskilled workers the rate had risen from 83.7 per cent. to 98.1 per cent. In June, however, the index rapidly began to outrun wage increases, in spite of the weekly adjustments: and by the end of August a metalworker was receiving on the average 56.65 per cent. of his pre-war wages, while a compositor, the best paid trade, was receiving 65 per cent. From the middle of September onwards the daily degeneration of the mark has proceeded so rapidly that the average wages of skilled workers are not estimated to exceed 30-40 per cent. of their pre-war earnings.

What these figures mean in practice could be easily left to the imagination were there not abundant evidence in the despatches of British newspaper correspondents. A few slices of bread, occasionally a little lard and a few potatoes, with acorn coffee or some even worse substitute, as dietary: no money left for buying clothes or other necessities, not to speak of recreation or education: gaunt, pallid faces, bearing the universal stamp of nervous exhaustion to

the last degree; listless, transparent, unsmiling children—these are the impressions anyone carries away from a working-class quarter in Germany of what goes to make up life for the proletariat to-day.

To all these sufferings have lately been added those of unemployment and short time. Until the last two months, these were more prevalent than in any previous year except 1920, the year following demobilisation; but nevertheless, as before noted, the stimulus provided to industry by the possibilities of export abroad, together with the low cost of the wages item in the expenses of production, combined to maintain industry in an abnormal condition of activity. This, however, ceased to be the case when it became absolutely impossible to *buy* raw materials abroad owing to the collapse of the mark, or to turn manufactured goods into stable currency sufficiently quickly to meet the costs of production. Unemployment and short time both began to increase rapidly in September: between September 9 and 15 the percentage of metal workers unemployed rose from 7 per cent. to 7.7 per cent., and working short time from 25.3 per cent. to 28.4 per cent.: while during the second week in October it was reported that the total number of unemployed in all trade unions had risen to not less than 10 per cent. of the membership.

	1913	1921	1922	1923
	Percentage of trade union membership unemployed			
January ..	3.2	4.5	3.3	4.4
February ..	2.9	4.7	2.7	5.5
March ..	2.3	3.7	1.1	5.7
April	—	—	—	7.0
May	—	—	—	6.2
June	2.7	—	0.6	4.0
July	2.9	2.6	0.6	3.7
Percentage of trade unionists on short time		Percentage of trade unionists on short time		
December, 1921 ..	1.3	March, 1923 ..	23.6	
March, 1922 ..	0.6	April, 1923 ..	28.5	
June, 1922 ..	0.6	May, 1923 ..	21.7	
September, 1922 ..	2.6	June, 1923 ..	15.3	
December, 1922 ..	8.7	July, 1923 ..	14.5	
January, 1923 ..	13.0	August, 1923..	26.0	
February, 1923 ..	15.9			

It will be noticed that the summer months helped partly to redress the adverse balance created by the occupation of the Ruhr, in respect both of unemployment and of short time: but the effect, of course, was only temporary. Food riots are now a daily occurrence in the industrial areas.

§ 3.—*The Fascist Dictatorship*

Capitalism in Germany has lost nearly all semblance of a system of production, distribution, and exchange. Realisation of this is being forced upon the workers by the every-day facts of their lives. The Social Democratic Party has thrown in its lot openly and irrevocably with the ruling class. It is therefore practically useless henceforth as a means of stupefying or hoodwinking the working class. Some other way of keeping the workers attentive to their functions in the process of production has to be devised. The only way open lies through force, and its name is Fascism. At the present moment, with a full civil and military dictatorship "constitutionally" installed, with a programme in which the main items are the cessation of passive resistance in the Ruhr (*i.e.*, of resistance by the workers to exploitation by French and German capitalists combined) and the extension of the eight-hour day to ten hours, Germany is not very far off a complete Fascist regime.

The approach made to this state of things is curious and instructive. It has not been a secret that, ever since the suppression of the workers' revolts in 1919 and 1920, Germany has been under the ill-concealed control of the militarists—a control which has been particularly undisguised and brutal during the last twelve months. For well over a year the condition of Bavaria, in particular, has been fully comparable to that of Italy: workers' organisations dissolved or their activity restricted, Communists treated as outlaws, Labour meetings broken up and Labour halls pillaged and burned, the Labour Press muzzled, and the Fascisti—the young bourgeois nationalists, monarchists, strike-breaking associations, &c.—given full freedom of action against the workers and of arming themselves almost without concealment. The principal war and post-war criminals—Ludendorff and the ex-Prince Rupprecht, Ehrhardt, Rossbach, and the murderers of Rathenau—

are permitted to come and go freely, and are even treated with distinction. Elsewhere in Germany the conditions are the same: and if the Reichswehr " militia " and the Security Police have interfered at all in the activities of political organisations and in the formation of " unconstitutional " military units, it has not been against the Fascisti and their kidney, who have been free to preach murder and to practise it without hindrance. But there are large districts of Germany where for years the Communists have not been able openly to participate even in Parliamentary elections; while the formation of " proletarian centuries " in sheer self-defence has evoked the most savage repressions on the part of local and central authorities alike.

From the economic point of view, no less, Germany is ripe for Fascist rule, since she is in the grip of those capitalist groups, principally the Stinnes combine, who have throughout financed the Fascist organisations and military units. Not only are the premier industries, the largest and most productive factories, works, mines, printing establishments, shipyards and docks, shipping lines, &c., in the hands of the Stinnes combine, largely thanks to the fact that the bulk of its capital is invested abroad, but even the financial necessities of the Republic have been exploited to add to the wealth banked abroad. The *Ruhrhilfe* was paid direct to the manufacturers, the bulk, however, being destined to be paid as wages. But it proved a comparatively easy matter to buy stable foreign currency with the money instead, and to force upon the workers as wages " temporary currency " (*Notgeld*), issued by the municipalities and even private companies controlled or owned by the combine, and worthless outside the immediate vicinity. If, in August, the workers' demonstrations were not sufficient to oust Havenstein from the Reichsbank, in spite of the fact that this was the moment when workshop deputations to the Reichstag and a twelve-hour general strike had brought down the Cuno ministry and established a Coalition, it was due to the intervention of Stinnes. And if, in October, passive resistance by the Government has come to an end, it was under pressure from Stinnes, and after Stinnes had already come to terms with the French industrial interests with whom he hopes, later, to negotiate an " All-German " industrial bloc.

Why, if militarily and economically the elements behind the Fascisti are so strong, do they not openly take power? The answer lies in an analysis of the classes represented, although a hint of it is to be found in the declaration of von Kahr, the civil "Republican" dictator of Bavaria: "I am too good a monarchist to proclaim a monarchy just now." Broadly speaking, the forces behind the Fascisti are twofold: the great industrial and financial magnates, whose aim is to establish a continental economic hegemony on the basis of a system of industrial slavery in Germany; and the great land-owning militarist clique, whose aim is the restoration of an All-German monarchy, even more centralised than that which existed before. Thus their coalition represents much the same forces (from the class, not the individual, point of view) as constituted the class basis of the Hohenzollerns. The formal seizure of power by the Fascisti, on behalf of the monarchy, would (1) bring the whole working class out in a united front of resistance, such as met and defeated the Kapp "putsch," with the difference that resort would certainly be had to civil war; (2) give the French a pretext for erecting a Rhineland Republic, undesirable for both the industrialists and for the Junkers; (3) encourage those sections of the Fascisti, principally from the lower middle class, who have little but extreme nationalist or monarchist ideals for their political stock-in-trade to proclaim local monarchies on the old plan, first and foremost in Bavaria and to make attacks on France; (4) it would make the Fascisti group themselves—the national "heroes," Ludendorff, Rupprecht, Hindenburg, the Hohenzollerns, &c.—openly responsible for the disgraceful deal with the French on the Ruhr, thereby shattering their prestige amongst just those middle-class and lower middle-class "idealist" nationalists who constitute the rank and file of Fascism, and who would then become more accessible to direct Communist agitation.

The Junker-Stinnes groups are content to wield power through their puppets, conscious of being able to wait until some more suitable moment has arrived, and particularly until it has been possible to crush the working class once and for all—preferably by a "blood-bath" (as it was definitely decided to provoke on the Ruhr, and from which only the superhuman efforts of the Communist Party saved the workers).

§ 4.—*The Workers' Outlook*

It is zero hour in Germany. The battlefield of civil war has been prepared, as no other country in the world has yet seen it prepared, and the opposing armies—the workers and the bourgeoisie—are each waiting for a move from the other before throwing their forces into the conflict. At such a moment two main factors decide the day—which side has the strongest nerves (discipline), and which side utilises every moment of respite for the maximum effort to organise and consolidate its forces (generalship).

In this respect the proletariat is moving forward and developing with inconceivable rapidity. Not only is allegiance being transferred from Social Democrats to Communists, from trade union leaders to leaders of the factory councils (now being more and more widely transformed into Soviets—*i.e.*, councils of delegates from *factories*); not only are proletarian centuries, in spite of all the violence of the Fascisti and the prohibitions of the Government, being hastily organised wherever there are factories to teach the lesson of the class struggle: but in two of the greatest industrial areas of Germany—Saxony and Thuringia—the working masses have united, irrespective of party, to vindicate their rights and to defend Republican institutions, and have forced a similar coalition upon the Social Democratic organisation. Heckert and Boettcher, two of the best-known members of the Central Committee of the K.P.D., are now Cabinet Ministers in Saxony, in a Government relying as much upon the Factory Councils' Congress as upon the Diet. In Berlin it is generally expected that the Social Democratic district executive will be entirely replaced in the next week or two, and the editorial staff of *Vorwaerts* also, by definitely Left Wing representatives. A sign of the times is the rapid increase in membership of the Communist Party, which now has probably not less than 400,000 members, because it is above all the programme, the watchwords, and the tactics of the K.P.D. which have found abundant justification in the eyes of the German workers during the last few months.

Most striking and significant is the fact that, just as happened in Russia in 1917, the ferment amongst the masses has reached such dimensions as to seize the imagination, as it were in spite of themselves, of all the bourgeois journalists who take the trouble to

ponder over the meaning of present events, with the result that they write more clearly revolutionary and Marxist accounts of what they see than many a Marxist would—or could!

If the Fascist army strikes, or even if it succeeds in provoking hunger disorders (its present tactics), which may inevitably involve the whole of the workers in the defence and support of the section attacked, the proletarian army will be ready for it. On the other hand, if, owing to the "indiscretion" of some local Fascisti (as, for example, the seizure of Kustrin at the beginning of October), a local situation arises which requires prompt action, the working class has learned its lesson of revolutionary discipline and tactics so well that it will not be needlessly provoked into a general engagement.

But a general engagement, when it comes, will involve consideration of more factors than those at present involved in the internal politics of Germany. Suppose, for example, that a civil war is in progress, and a Workers' Government fully established in a considerable area of Germany, with a chance of military success; and that suddenly one of Germany's eastern neighbours—particularly Poland—thinks fit to take the field against her, allured by the bait of East Prussia. A grave responsibility will fall upon the British workers, who proved able to exert considerable pressure upon Poland in the years 1920-1922 in order to restrain the martial ardour of her reactionary landowners: but a much greater responsibility will fall upon the Russian workers, who, besides being the nearest, are also directly interested in seeing that Germany is not made fit for autocracy once more.

The other and more pressing danger is that Great Britain may be involved as the result of the machinations of the British Government. One possible alternative is that, on some pretext or other, the French troops will be ordered to advance, and that then, as in 1914, in spite of all the assurances of ministerial liars, there will turn out to be some unwritten "honourable understanding" that the British Navy occupies the North Sea and Baltic ports and lands expeditionary forces. The other, and still more probable, eventuality is that the British forces now on the Rhine may be sent (as even the *Daily Express* points out) at any moment to shoot down or bayonet German unemployed or factory workers, whether in a hunger riot

or in a violent and unlawful effort to protect themselves against Fascist violence. And in this case experience in Russia has shown us how easily the simple restoration of "order" develops into the Restoration—without any order, but with the capital letter.

Such a possibility cannot be a matter of indifference, or anything but a matter of the most vital urgency, for British Labour. Apart from the natural instinct of working-class solidarity, which will respond to the appeal of a Workers' and Peasants' Government in Germany no less warmly and enthusiastically than it did to that of Soviet Russia, the economic facts of Germany to-day have told in the concrete form of the lower wages and worse working conditions of the British worker. If the German workers are forced down for a generation into the position of slaves of the Iron Heel of Fascist-Stinnesism, a deadly blow will be struck at the economic, and almost immediately at the political, position of the British worker. A year after the crushing of the German workers we should expect to find, not only a grand concerted attack upon Socialist Soviet Russia, but also a Government of unchecked and bigoted Die-Hards at Downing Street. Against that consummation the British worker would be glad of an opportunity to strike a blow in good time. The only opportunity he will have will be when he strikes it on behalf of his German comrades.

It is this problem—the problem of mobilising Labour resistance to any support of German Fascism, of securing the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Germany, of organising material support of the German workers—that demands the immediate and undivided attention of the political and industrial organisations of the British working class.

The TRADES COUNCILS CONFERENCE

By HARRY POLLITT

THE Second Annual Conference of the National Federation of Trades Councils, which is being held in Birmingham on November 17, is an event of great importance and significance. Coming so soon after the debacle at the Plymouth Trades Congress, its proceedings will be watched by millions of workers who are waiting for a lead on the many problems now confronting them.

The present failure and weakness, of which the whole movement is conscious after the Plymouth Trades Union Congress, makes it of vital importance that the earliest opportunity should be taken to retrieve the position. What is wanted is a rallying centre to face up to the mistakes that have been made and show the way to a move forward in order to reverse the present position and give a new lead to the movement.

This is what the Birmingham Trades Council Conference must attempt to do.

The Trades Councils are peculiarly well fitted at the present juncture for this task. Face to face with the local experience of every problem and struggle, they see in direct contact the working out of every mistake and weakness of the movement. Forced to deal with the domestic problems of the movement in every locality, they alone are in the best position to see what the present sectionalism and disunity and lack of policy mean in living practice. They are in a very much stronger position to voice the direct needs and demands of the workers than harassed officials amid the routine of a head office, unable to look outside the blinkers of their particular union. The opportunity is in the hands of the trades councils if they can see the position clearly and show the path ahead.

For this reason the calling of the First National Conference of Trades Councils a year ago was a very important step in the development of the movement. At this conference, called through the initiative of the Birmingham Trades Council, there were present 126 delegates from 67 trades councils, representing a total affiliated

membership of over one million and a-quarter. In addition, sixty other trades councils wrote expressing agreement with the object of the conference and regretting their inability to send delegates owing to financial reasons.

The conference was very definitely given the cold shoulder both by the General Council and the Executive Committee of the Labour Party, because they saw in this conference the nucleus of an organisation that could, if it would, definitely challenge their leadership and be responsible for a big drive forward towards the greater unity and fighting power of the whole Trade Union Movement—something that the “big men” always call for, but never work for. The general criticism levelled against this attempt of the Trades Councils, the Cinderellas of the working-class movement, was that there was no need for them to take this action, as everything was satisfactorily looked after by the General Council and the Labour Party Executive.

Since then a year has passed, every event of which has gone to confirm the correctness of the need which the Trades Councils Conference was trying to fulfil. The confusion and stagnation of the movement has become patent to all, and the crowning exhibition of the Trades Union Congress has revealed the helplessness of the existing official leadership even to attempt to tackle the problem. The Back to the Unions campaign has shown that any attempt to carry out a common campaign depends for its execution on the Trades Councils. When it comes to organising a national campaign, the General Council has no machinery: everything has to be put on the Trades Councils, which are at present not organised or co-ordinated for their task. The General Council has, in fact, to act through the Trades Councils which are not represented either on the General Council or at the Trades Union Congress. In the same way when the threat of war arises, and the Joint Council of Congress and the Labour Party calls for Councils of Action to be formed, it is the Trades Councils that constitute the rallying centre around which such councils are formed. The General Council, in fact, at present is a head without a body. Only the Trades Councils can supply the body and the life-blood.

But the task which falls on the Trades Councils at the present moment is even heavier than this. At the present moment the

central organs are failing to lead. This failure throws additional burdens and problems on the local organs. Not only does it become the rôle of the Trades Councils to voice the immediate feelings and demands of the workers and to afford the means of carrying through the common campaigns: they are also compelled to take the initiative in endeavouring to force a lead upon the central organs.

This is the special task of the Trades Councils Conference. That conference has the opportunity to supply what is the greatest need of the movement, a rallying centre to gather up a common movement that will so increase in volume and strength as to compel a new leadership in the central organs of the movement, a facing of the problems of the working class and unification of the working-class army.

The first conference already made a start with its task. The resolution which it drew up contemplated and outlined a complete reorganisation of the trade union forces on the lines of a single industrially departmentalised trade union organisation. But the first conference did not yet succeed in getting beyond the details of a scheme of organisation to the full scope of its task in facing the immediate needs and problems of the working-class movement to-day, and in making clear its own rôle in relation to those problems. It will be the task of the second conference to work out this wider programme.

The issues that are facing the working class to-day are manifest and need no elaboration.

Unemployment is still the most urgent fighting issue of the working class in this country. On unemployment we have still no plan of action. The adoption even of the unemployed demands is not yet definite, still less any serious attempt to secure them. The recent controversy on the one day general strike in support of the unemployed demands, and the rapid dropping of the proposal by most sections, shows how far we are yet from any campaign that means business. A united programme and united action on unemployment is the first essential to retrieve the working-class position.

Bound up with unemployment is the whole question of common policy on wages and hours issues. At present the confusion of the whole field is at an extreme point. While some sections of the

Labour army are still retreating before new reductions, others are already putting in for increases. There is no co-operation in this; and the federated employers are able to play with the situation in the same way as they did in the initial stages of their offensive. It must be obvious to all that it is no longer any good to attempt to fight on sectional lines. If we are not to continue to be beaten we must have a concerted policy on wages and hours under a common direction. A national minimum wage would undoubtedly now be a rallying cry for the whole movement.

The same applies to other issues. In particular, housing urgently needs a definite campaign and action. The Rents Campaign last year was worked out and carried through on local initiative. But a national lead is essential to secure continuous, effective, and united action.

All these are issues that concern equally and unite the whole of the working-class movement without distinction of sections. A national programme must be of such a character as to rally the whole movement, and to bring into play all the forces of the movement equally on the political and the trade union side. It is a mistake to relegate certain dominant issues so purely the concern of the Labour Party or the Trades Congress respectively: for this means to sterilise the full effectiveness of our forces. Our aim must be to bring the whole of the working-class movement into play on the issues most urgently affecting the working class. And this brings us to what must be the second part of any programme in the reorganisation of the Labour forces to meet the new demands.

On all the issues that confront the working class the central need is united action which can bring the whole power of the movement into play. For this reason any programme that is to rally the working-class movement at the present point must deal with the biggest weakness of the movement—the lack of any central direction or authority. A real General Council must be established with power to direct the whole movement, and not only with power, but under responsibility to Congress to use that power and direct the movement on the lines laid down each year by Congress.

To effect this will mean not only the extension of the powers of the General Council, but the reorganisation of the present trade

unions to establish unity on the only basis on which it can be established—the industrial basis—and to prevent the present overlapping and sectionalism that bar the way to united action.

If a clear and simple programme could be drawn up at the Birmingham Conference to cover these issues, there is no question that it would awaken the support of almost every active element in trade unionism to-day; and what is more, would be the means of reviving the interest and enthusiasm of many who have let themselves fall into indifference and apathy. In addition the campaign for such a programme, going beyond sectional issues and temporary or local agitations, would in itself be the first step to unite the movement.

But to carry out such a campaign the first need is to make the Trades Councils themselves stronger, more representative, and better organised to meet the demands of local leadership responding adequately to national issues.

At present in most cases the Councils are made up of representatives from local trade union branches. This is perhaps inevitable in small places where district committees of unions are non-existent, or in very large towns where in addition to the main Trades Council, say, the London Trades Council, each separate borough has its own Trades Council. Such a position is true of most large places, and practically no means of intercommunication exist between these many Councils, so that all is left to the activity and initiative of the active members, and each locality goes ahead without regard to the lack of support they receive or otherwise from the rest of the Trades Councils.

The conference can tackle this problem of tightening up the local and district machinery of the Councils. When this is done they are in a strong position to force their demands upon the Trades Union Congress.

For example, the various boroughs round London can continue to have their Councils made up of representatives from the trade union branches and the local unemployed committee; from this local council delegates can be elected to serve on the London Trades Council, together with representatives from all the trade union district committees, as well as from the district council of the unemployed. I am aware that something like this is supposed

to exist, but owing to the number of important abstentions it does not function, and in any case the weakness of most large Trades Councils, such as Manchester, London, Glasgow, &c., is that few district committees of unions take an interest in the Trades Council activity.

Yet it is obvious that month by month the Councils are forced to play an increasingly important part in the movement. If from the conference an executive is elected that can meet, say, monthly, it is then in a position to see exactly what activities are being pursued by the Councils. It would be possible for it to work out the details of a programme such as I have indicated, and how best to get for it the fullest support, first through the district Trades Councils, secondly through the local Trades Councils, and finally right through the trade union branches. Such a body, working hand in hand with a leading General Council (on which the Trades Councils should be represented), could revitalise the movement.

If it is an amalgamation campaign, how much easier it becomes to make this possible; if instead of it being left to a few officials of the unions concerned, it has in addition the services of the people on the Trades Councils who are already working and fighting together, and who by their common experience see the value and need for amalgamation, and by pursuing active local amalgamation campaigns are able to make the campaign a success nationally. If, for example, last year when the General Council organised a few amalgamation conferences, which, because they were confined to a few full-time trade union officials, were an absolute failure, the local Trades Councils had been asked to co-operate, it would have meant that a real agitation would have been possible in the union branches, thus creating the will to amalgamation, the spirit that is necessary to overthrow the artificial barriers that exist towards amalgamation that are thrown up by the officials.

It is evident that the trend of the movement generally is towards creating a General Council with greatly increased powers. Some of the things aimed at are foreign to the average conceptions of many trade unionists. It will more and more devolve upon the Trades Council machinery to carry out the plans and campaigns of a centrally directed trade union movement, and it is because of these

facts that the need for a reorganisation of the present Trades Council machinery is so necessary.

The Birmingham Trades Councils Conference can make a new page in the history of the movement if it will. By taking the lead and forcing the pace it can force the General Council itself forward. The opportunity in its hands is a great one, but the need of the moment is also great. This is no time for delay in moving forward: for the condition of the working class is too serious to be dallied with any longer.

LIFE OF A COAL-MINER

By J. T.

(Member of the Yorkshire Miners' Association,
and ex-Deputy)

AT the age of twelve the son of a coal-miner must, owing to the economic side of the home, make preparations for beginning work. The lad will be told to approach the under-manager with a view to being signed on. If he is successful, that is, if he looks intelligent, healthy, and well-made, the under-manager will sign him on or instruct him to go to another official for the purpose. He will require a certificate from the school authorities and his birth certificate.

Having satisfied them with his credentials, he signs the time book. He is now another victim to be exploited, and joins the rest of the wage-slave class—and on returning home he is greeted as a man and appears to himself to have soared into a different atmosphere. The mother will bestow many blessings upon her son and give him every encouragement, especially when Johnny gets six days in. He will be promised many of the good things he never could partake of before because of the tight hand which was put on the few coppers to spare (if any) from week to week ; whilst father will sit at the fireside watching the rehearsal he himself and the rest of the colliers have gone through.

Being told when to commence he will probably turn out next morning with his father, who will put him up to how to carry on. Upon receiving the lamp and lamp check number which registers him as another wage-slave, he will go from the lamp station to the pit-head, where the miners descend and ascend ; he will be told to stay at the deputies' station (General Rule 4), where the lamps are tried, where "market men," and men and boys who have been signed on, receive their instructions : who to work with and where the direction lies. The under-manager will have previously mentioned to the deputy about the lad signing on. The work may be lamp carrying (that is, getting lamps relighted that have been put out), or it may be greasing tubs, or opening and shutting doors for traffic to pass through, or he may be assisting a pony driver with a view to doing the same work himself when he becomes

efficient. After finishing for the day he will be greeted with cheery words and a smile upon reaching home, with the usual question : "How do you like working down the pit?" After about three months to six months, if he shows signs of being useful, he will find, instead of keeping his first job, that he has jumped into a job that a much older lad was doing at five shillings per day (while he will be receiving about three and sixpence to four shillings per day). If a vacancy occurs he may be, after sixteen years old, transferred to a "corporal," or put in charge of an engine, driven by compressed air or electricity, or he may be clipping tubs on an endless rope, and taking the clips off, if clips are used, or doing the same with lashing chains, or at the bottom of an incline getting the full run coupled on and putting the drag on behind the run, taking the rope off the empty run when it lands, to put the rope on the full run, giving the signal to start off when all is in order, &c.

Most young lads have ambitions. To find out the most suitable lads who show signs of being valuable with further encouragement, someone will approach him in the interest of the company to know how he occupies his time away from the colliery and encourage him to attend the evening continuation classes run in the winter months for mining students to improve them in the knowledge of mining. The subjects taken are arithmetic, mining geology, methods of working and winning coal, methods of timbering and ventilation, gases (how to detect the presence of any of the four general gases found and what to do with them to remove them and make them harmless), air measurement, and hearing. Also the lads are taught to estimate the percentage of gas present by the size of the gas-cap upon one-tenth of an inch flame. The whole course of education given is for the benefit of the boss, to make the student fully efficient to handle and control men in his interest.

When it is known that he has become a student the official who first approached him may be his tutor at the night school (with suitable remuneration for his services). A few minutes now and again will be taken up, either before the end of the shift or at a slack time during the shift, making the student soar into a life of ease and comfort in imagination. But further advance and more opportunities for study are not gained by merit or intelligence or hours of hard serious study, but by some influential friend who

puts your case forward, who moves warily in the circle of the mining educational department.

The lot of the student will have changed for the better. No one will be allowed to tread on his preserves now for some time to come ; every one who works in the same district will fear him, because everybody will soon know or hear of his abilities. He may be as dense as a Robot (machine made), but, in the interest of the boss, exaggerations are a wise policy, because it helps to have a few boss men in each district, since, if the usual official is detained, he knows that when he arrives he will get first-hand information—such as a break-down in the traffic arrangements, ventilation impeded by a fall of roof, accidents and how they happened and what has been done, with notes and why it happened. Each student must attend ambulance classes. As he must not stay at being a deputy he must aim at nothing short of becoming a manager. After a year at the continuation classes success ought to be obtained, providing a smattering has been kept up from school, but this does not finish the mining education career. Courses are taken every winter upon different subjects, steam, electricity, compressed air, walling shafts, tubbing shafts, surveying by miners' dial, levelling by dumpy level or theodolite, &c. Studies range from elementary to advanced mining, and county scholarships are given which entitle the student to go to the University for two years free, giving him a better chance to gain a second class (under manager), first class (manager).

During the time his studies have been improving the relations between himself and the boss have been more amicable; they will have grown into an atmosphere of affinity for one another.

Some stages of experience may be overlooked, such as a deputy's position being offered and accepted without the various stages to go through ; these stages could be worked in by going to the coal-face as a filler or trimmer, picking what stall and who he would like to work with. Then he would be set down later on as a stall-man, or moving with datallers, (stone-worker), erecting doors, timbering roadways, ventilation man, or following coal-cutting machines along the coal-face.

Experience having been gained by theory and practice, the first objective has been achieved by being placed on the official list, to the envy of some of the old staff and with not too much delight

among the younger members. For there will now be a bigger competition for any higher vacancy that may occur, if death or promotion to another mine intervenes. There are possibilities of things being told out of school with a new-comer which it had been agreed to keep dark amongst the old staff. With the new-comer a certain period of careful watching and waiting now would be entailed, or some particular meeting place arranged away from the old ground ; this would mean a split up, and some may break away and make brotherly intercourse with the new-comer ; when this occurs the whole of the staff are not expected to stay very long.

A deputy on arrival at the mine should look and ascertain the height of the barometer and thermometer and record the same ; he must visit the fan-house and estimate the fan speed and the height of the water-gauge. On receiving his safety lamp he will ascertain whether it is put together correctly and see if the wick is cut straight and no corrosion surrounds the tube. He will then descend the mine and look over the last reports made previous to his shift commencing and sign them, after consulting the deputy leaving the mine about how things have been left. If he is satisfied the men and lads are set off when their lamps have been tried ; if things are not in order, the men and lads are sent home now. Since the Datum Line and the " best agreement ever made in mining history " came into being, only a few men are kept to make the place ready ; sometimes it means only an hour's delay and those who shift the debris and get the district ready for work get paid for it.

The deputy visits the men at work once during the shift before snap and once after ; every road is examined leading to and out of his district ; he must see to the safety of the men and lads under his charge, order timber where to be set if extra is required for roof support or sprags for the coal, see that packing is kept up (stone walls at gate sides) and bank packs, and arrange for cloths and doors to direct the air current in the proper directions. He must be able to detect gob-fires in the early stages, be acquainted with the various gases, and measure the air-current, also have good hearing ; he must see that a good supply of timber is kept at each working place, and that bandages and ambulance requisites are always at hand. Before leaving the mine he is supposed to give a " true report of the two examinations made during the shift."

No official must have any political leanings to any other school of thought except the same that his boss accepts. To become a deputy was quite easy previous to the 1911 rules and legislation ; it now requires a certificate to satisfy the management that the applicant has passed through an authorised school, and passed the tests set out therein. Previous to 1911 favouritism was the dominant feature—the runners or place seekers would frequent the beershop the boss puts up at, taking the wife in respectable attire, and in some cases the poor lass was left to find her own way home unless some arrangement was made previous. This she accepts or rejects. Even to-day this kind of morals is carried on. It does not take long to find out the views of a local branch or lodge committee, because recently, owing to the 1921 sell-out by the M.F.G.B., and also the decay of capitalism which brings bankruptcy, poverty, and misery for the miners, their wives, and children, the line of thought must be switched off the master class on to the interests of the working class. If new officials begin with a reformist outlook, they are met with such cases of compensation, victimisation, abnormal conditions, minimum wage disputes, &c., that shake the very life out of the reformist, and he becomes a rebel by mouthing (but as for acting he will back out, or will plan some excuse before the boss at some critical deputation). The mine workers are now beginning to realise that they cannot expect anything from so-called leaders, but that they must learn from mistakes of the past.

The M.F.G.B. is not a fighting organisation, but a friendly benefit society. It has become a talking shop, doing nothing except doing the miners out of their bob a week. Compensation cases get shuffled about from one month to another, so that it drives men back to work unfit. Then they have to go back on the compensation again, and prove to the pit compensation doctor that they are not shamming. How long this will prevail time alone will tell ; the only way to end it is to end the capitalist system of exploitation.

The greatest tyrant who ever drew breath cannot commit a worse crime than to take the bread out of the mouth of another ; he cannot do more than kill his captive ; but in civilised Christian England it is counted far better to starve slowly out of existence any one who dares to speak out and voice a grievance, whether it be his own or his mates'.

Being a victim of circumstances, and putting his views into practice, a man is lucky if, before he reaches home the same night, the under manager hasn't been informed of what he has said, word for word, at the branch meeting by one of the bosom friends of the boss. And this same individual may be the branch secretary or one of that kidney, who is out for his own ends and the betrayal of his class.

Suppose the victim has a good stall, he soon finds out that the deputy has a bone to pick with him. The deputy will make an extra special examination of the working-place, and before he goes something is bound to crop up. Then he is stopped from working in his own place, to be moved into a "making-up" stall or a minimum stall. The victim may weigh up form; he knows that the branch officials are no friends of his; he will in all probability keep quiet and not give further offence. In some cases success can be met, but generally failure lures him on. After serving punishment in an abnormal stall, then in a minimum wage stall, the market claims him as the last hope of a job; he finds mates who once held him in high esteem when he stood on his hind legs to fight for their rights now spurn him, giving him the cold shoulder, keeping aloof for good. Then comes seven days' notice from the boss; the case, after being shuffled over with the branch officials, is sent on to the council, the decision generally being thirteen weeks' victimisation pay; when the term is up a deputation is formed to get re-instatement for the victim. If this fails, he can go to hell for all either the employer or the trade union officials care. At the present time there are more victimisation cases in the M.F.G.B. than ever there were in any previous period. And still the game goes on!

That is how mining conditions are to-day in this "wait and catch the trade revival" period.

POLIKUSHKA

(A Review by E. R.)

SOVIET Russia has struggled long and vainly for recognition as a State. Because she proved herself too strong to be overthrown, it was necessary to suffer her existence, but no more. The States of Europe and America, from the great Powers to the tiniest neutralised zone, adopted a policy of neglect and oblivion, such as in good bourgeois families meets the undesired presence of an illegitimate child.

Diplomatic relations being withheld, the young State turned next towards trade and commerce. This was the Philosopher's Stone, to touch the hearts of the western nations to gold. The illegitimate child of Europe is gradually and grudgingly being admitted within the bankers' halls and the trading marts of the capitalist powers, whose salons and courts are still closed.

But there is still another avenue to public approbation and esteem, and that is by the royal road of Art. Till now, this has been closed to the Government of Workers and Peasants, for reasons both internal and external. A nation fighting civil war, invasion, blockades, and famine has little chance to cultivate the fine arts, much less to disseminate them in the outer world. And the hundreds of thousands of Russian refugees who inundated Europe after the November revolution of 1917 contained a goodly number of intellectuals and artists who have been devoting all their talents to earn a living in exile and, incidentally, to decrying all that exists and struggles to exist in the Russia of to-day. Russian literature, Russian music, painting, and the Russian ballet—all are by-words of this latter-day European culture, whose appetite for novelties has been whetted by the post-war decadence. All the greatest artistic contributions of Russian culture have been poured forth unstintedly at the feet of the European, English, and American speculator, who alone has money to pay for these exotic luxuries. It was always tacitly recognised, however, that this wholesale reception to Russian art vouchsafed by a war-weary Europe was to the Russia of the Tsars transplanted on to friendly soil—it was

the gorgeous, colourful, barbaric culture of the counter-revolution which appropriated to itself the right to speak in the sacred name of Russian art.

Meanwhile, in the Russia of the Soviets, a little band of faithful believers remained to carry through the revolution in the field of art as well as in politics and social life. The struggle of these true artists is written in blood and tears, for they, too, were soldiers of the New Order. Here is not the time to chronicle their triumphs and defeats, their enormous faith and sacrifices, which enabled Revolutionary Russia of the Soviets to maintain and to create a literature, drama, and the opera for the relaxation and heartening of the fighting workers and peasants, while Denikin, Kolchak, and Yudenitch were hammering at the very gates of Petrograd and Moscow. Those who have seen the flaming beauty of Russian opera, which is Russian history embodied and ensouled, and heard the haunting and melancholy magnificence of Russian music in those dark days—who have sat in momentary forgetfulness before the delicate dramas where Russian life was unfolded and interpreted with delicate and consummate genius—they alone can speak of the part which Russian art and culture played in the winning of the five-year battle fronts.

And now comes *Polikushka*, the Russian peasant of time immemorial, depicted by the pen of Tolstoy and for the first time moving in life before us through the six-act tragedy of his simple life in the film version sent out from the revolutionary heart of Moscow. Those who have not read the story of Tolstoy have only to conjure up a mental image of all they ever heard or read of the Russian peasant to visualise *Polikushka*, the oppressed and downtrodden of the earth, yet living and loving and laughing his simple life through to its tragic end, unmindful of its utter wretchedness, and of the revolutionary rôle it was destined to play, when accumulated suffering could bear no longer the burden of life as it was. Greater perhaps than the book is the film, for the stark beauty of its interpretation and the symbolic message it bears to the outer world. The revolutionary peasants of the Workers' Republic send greeting through *Polikushka* to their brothers in other lands—a mute and eloquent gesture through the

medium of art of what horror has been in the Russia of the Tsars and of what heritage of woe they are struggling to free themselves. The privations of the revolution are self-imposed—it is the willing price paid for freedom from the bond-slavery of the past ; and lest those who decry the New Order should succeed in stifling the voice of history, *Polikushka* steps before us, out of his background of dirt and filth, and lives his little life once more, the life that sixty millions of Russian peasants lived through centuries of oppression. In that life there is a grim sadness too deep for words, and scarcely a written word is needed to explain the action of the film. There is a tragedy too deep for tears, though the tears of the audience fall freely—but the sense of tragedy remains like a wound, long after the tears are dried. *Polikushka* is the embodiment, not alone of the suffering of his own people, but of the evils of an entire system that has flourished and still flourishes throughout the world and against which the Republic of Workers and Peasants is the only effective negation.

Call it propaganda if you like. It has not yet been so-called by the thousands of fashionable Berliners who thrice nightly wend their way to the shrine of *Polikushka*, to pay their tribute to the art of revolutionary Russia. Because *Polikushka* is simple and true and beautiful, it is sheer art, and the first barriers have been broken down on that royal road that leads to the intercourse of nations, apart from king's courts and counting-houses. *Polikushka*, produced in sacrifice and suffering, by an unnamed artist who has given the best of himself to the revolutionary ideal, was sent as a frail and humble messenger from the land of famine to carry the message of the hungering peasants to the capitalist world. And *Polikushka*, by the truth that is in him, has succeeded. *Polikushka* is the mode, the craze, the fashion of idle Berliners, and will be handed by this jovial company to their class in other lands. Money is being garnered to buy food for the famine-stricken, but a richer harvest is still to be reaped. The jaded appetites of the rich will soon turn from the beautiful tragedy of *Polikushka* to seek new and more cheerful pleasures, but there awaits him a vaster audience than ever dreamed of in the days of Tolstoy. Throughout the world the workers and peasants, brothers and sisters of *Polikushka*, will flock to live for an hour the tragedy of his life, and a new and deeper

understanding of the great revolution will be borne in upon them as a gigantic protest against the system that made such tragedies a commonplace. Propaganda, perhaps, but propaganda elevated to the heights of art. Such is Polikushka, the messenger from revolutionary Russia to the outer world.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

The Reformist Internationals and the German Situation

LAST month we reproduced for the benefit of our readers two important documents relating to the attitude of the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions towards the German situation.¹ This month we quote some extracts from the resolution adopted at a joint meeting held on October 3 and 4 of the Bureau of the Labour and Socialist International and the Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions. A comparison of the two statements is instructive.

The attitude of the Labour and Socialist International and the I.F.T.U. follows along the lines made familiar by Mr. Keynes. The policy of these two Internationals is symbolised by their recent dispatch of a memorandum to the League of Nations. They concentrate their attention on the means of finding "a just and effective settlement of the problem of Reparations."

The value of the proposals (put forward by the Internationals for the settlement of Reparations) is shown by the fact that experts and men of good faith are becoming increasingly unanimous in favour of them. Particularly are the following proposals finding support in all circles and all countries.

- (a) The obligation on the part of Germany to restore the devastated regions to the full extent of her capacity, this capacity to be determined by an impartial authority.
- (b) The annulment of the charges imposed on Germany for military pensions contrary to the Fourteen Points of President Wilson which were reciprocally accepted as the basis of the Armistice.
- (c) The annulment of inter-allied war debts.
- (d) The adoption of the system of reparations in kind and in labour as far as its application is possible.
- (e) The flotation of loans for the prompt fulfilment of reparation obligations, and the transformation of the German debts to the Allies into an ordinary debt of a non-political character.

¹THE LABOUR MONTHLY, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 237-240.

The Internationals reprove in strong terms the Ruhr adventure of M. Poincaré, but chiefly, it appears, because :—

. . . . This wrong action is also bad business The policy of M. Poincaré, with which the Belgian Government has associated itself, has not produced reparations. The "productive pledges" have proved sterile German distress has retarded the possibility of settlement and is increasing economic difficulties all over the world.

The actual situation in Germany is mentioned in the following words :—

The political crisis in Germany and the chaos which menaces her threatens all Europe. Never before have we been confronted by a crisis of such gravity. The whole of Western civilisation will be imperilled if care be not taken If violence be permitted against the German workers all workers risk being the victims in their turn of war abroad and the brutal dictatorship of Fascism at home.

But what policy do the Internationals put forward to combat this twin danger of war and Fascism ? To quote their own words :—

They demand a redoubling of propaganda for peace and International understanding. They address an urgent appeal to the United States to take their full part in securing the peace and financial and economic reconstruction of the world.

SPAIN

The Military Directory and the Working Class

EXCEPT for certain regions, such as Catalonia (of which Barcelona is the centre) and the mines of Biscaya and the Asturias, Spain is not an industrial country. Peasant agriculture, undeveloped and primitive, is the basis of the Spanish economic system. The peasants are exploited in a true feudal manner by the large landowners.

In the mining industry the capital is chiefly foreign and the genuine Spanish bourgeoisie is practically confined to Catalonia. The class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the feudal landowners clearly manifests itself in the Catalan separatist movement.

The campaign in Morocco (which has been intermittently waged since 1909) is another point of divergence between the agrarians and the industrialists, and the disastrous and continued failure of this campaign, coupled with an enormous and ever-growing deficit, has resulted in an acute crisis for Spanish capitalism, relatively weak and undeveloped as it is. The counterpart of the failure of the Moroccan campaign, and the expression of the crisis of Spanish capitalism, has been the violent suppression of the working class. And when the Spanish bourgeoisie cast about it for a Mussolini it naturally supported a man who had already, as Captain-General of Barcelona, become notorious for his savage strike-breaking activities in connection with the recent Barcelona transport strike.

The military dictatorship showed its hand the moment it seized power by declaring that all strike "violence," and all "unofficial" strike movements, would be treated with the utmost rigour of martial law. Within a few days an Exchange message reported that the prisons in Catalonia were crowded with arrested Communists. Further, the loudly trumpeted action against

Catalonian separatism turned out to be simply directed against the revolutionary Syndicalists of Barcelona. The *Daily Telegraph* correspondent wrote that :—

The Catalans nearly all belong to the bourgeoisie, and above all and before all their desire is to give battle to anarchy, preferring a Government opposed to their political ideals, if favourable to their economic interests.

The Directory appealed to the working class to “work more and better,” and issued a manifesto in which the following sentences occurred :—

In work is the salvation of the country, without any thought of Imperialist aims, which can only be pursued by those who are mad. . . . We want trade unions for protection and co-operation, and not for social resistance or to diminish production.

On top of this denial of Imperialism came preparations for an intensive continuation of the Morocco campaign. Further, the Directory took steps to see that it got the trade unions that it—and its supporters the Catalonian bourgeoisie—wanted. In addition to the usual repressive measures, an order was made that in future all trade unions should submit statements of their accounts to the Government.

In face of this grave menace to the whole working class of Spain, the organised working-class movement has been able to offer no effective resistance. The Socialist Party and its offspring, the General Union of Workers (*Union General de Trabajadores*), have been cultivating an “expectant” attitude with regard to the Directory. Manuel Llana, a leading official of the Asturias Miners’ Union and a member of the Socialist Party, has, with the approval of the Party and of the U.G.T., visited General Primo de Rivera and held conversations with him. The ulterior motives of these conversations have not yet transpired, but it seems clear that Llana, on behalf of the U.G.T., is coquetting with Spanish Fascism as D’Aragona and the Italian Confederation of Labour have been coquetting with its Italian counterpart.

The Syndicalist organisation, the National Confederation of Labour (*Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo*), under anarchist domination, has equally failed to give a lead to the working class in the present crisis. Shattered by the Governmental White Terror, and torn by futile pseudo-philosophical anarchist controversies, the C.N.T. has been unable to offer other than a halting and unorganised resistance. The anti-political attitude of anarcho-syndicalism has reacted fatally on itself. A year ago the Spanish Communist Party appealed to the C.N.T. for the formation of a United Front and received the answer that :—

The invitation of the Communist Party to form a united working-class front is not acceptable from the point of view of our Confederation. The reason is clear : the Communist Party should not, and indeed cannot, represent the Spanish working class on the field of the economic struggle.

Between this impossible “no politics” attitude on the one hand, and the bankrupt reformism of the Socialist Party on the other, the Spanish Communist Party has a difficult part to play. Directly the *coup d’état* took place, it proposed a united front to the Socialist Party and the U.G.T., which these bodies refused, and have since done their best to sabotage. It has, however, succeeded in establishing a united front with some anarchist groups in Madrid. Through its organ, *La Antorcha*, it is striving—hampered by a severe Press

censorship—to propagate amongst the Spanish workers the idea of a united front against reaction. The Socialist organ, *El Socialista*, is contenting itself with articles by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald on pacifism.

The situation in Spain which pre-disposed the seizure of power by the militarists has been effectively summed up as follows :—

A monarchy devoid of all prestige ; two political parties, Conservative and Liberal, both representing agrarian interests, pursuing practically the same policies, and only differing in personal antagonisms ; a great clerical power among the rural and petty bourgeois masses ; heavy pressure of taxation ; a proletariat vanquished by White Terror, betrayed by the Reformists, and split up by the Anarchists who will not learn anything from the Russian Revolution ; a young and courageous, but still inexperienced Communist Party ; a well-organised and numerous officers' caste possessing simultaneous connections with the reactionary landowners, with the industrialists, and with the middle class influenced by the Fascist example ; and the continuation of the Moroccan war.

ROUMANIA

Trade Union Congress

AN Extraordinary Congress of the Roumanian Trade Unions was held, on September 16-18, at Cluj (Klausenburg) in Transylvania. The number of trade unionists represented is variously given as 52,000 or 65,000.

The Roumanian Trade Union Movement is practically a post-war growth, due to the incorporation in Roumania, under the Peace Treaties, of large tracts of Transylvania and Hungary in which industrial capitalism is relatively well developed. In Old Roumania before the war there were only 7,000 trade unionists : directly after the war the number rose to 200,000. This increase in membership was accompanied by an increase in militant activity. Under Communist leadership, the unions engaged in an energetic struggle with the employers, culminating in a general strike. The Government was quick to perceive the danger, and embarked on a campaign of ruthless repression—arresting thousands of revolutionary workers, closing union offices, and confiscating funds. The union membership slumped to 26,000 in 1921. Having broken the back of revolutionary trade unionism, the Government proceeded to enact a law compelling all trade unions to obtain special licences from the authorities, and virtually submitting them to the control of the police. The law also laid it down categorically that no trade union should have any sort of connection with the Communist Party.

Seizing their opportunity, the Social Democrats undertook the task of organising "legal" unions. Those Communists who had survived the Government persecution proceeded to join these new unions, in order to agitate for a united working class front and a fighting policy against the capitalist offensive. This Communist activity is amiably described by the I.F.T.U. as "Moscow's work for the destruction of the trade unions," and the contrary Social Democratic policy of drift and defeatism is called "regular trade union work on normal lines."

The Social Democratic trade union bureaucracy found that the left-wing opposition in the unions was acquiring considerable influence. They therefore

determined to bring matters to a head. Against the general feeling of the membership—who wished to discuss immediate questions of the day-to-day struggle—the agenda of the Trade Union Congress was confined, apart from the Secretary's report, to the question of affiliation to the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions. The town of Cluj was chosen—deliberately it is said—for the meeting of the Congress because it happened to be under martial law. It is reported that two days before the Congress opened two trade union leaders had a meeting with the Prefect of Cluj. This official undertook, in virtue of the summary powers vested in him by martial law, to deal with any left-wingers who might have the temerity to oppose the official elements in the Congress. He was, it appears, as good as his word : and several Communists were arbitrarily arrested during the Congress sessions.

During the first session of the Congress a stormy scene occurred over the reception of fraternal greetings from the Union of Youth. While the tumult was at its height the vote was taken (or so it was alleged later) for the Mandates (credentials) Commission. It so happened that the commission thus elected was solely composed of Social Democrats and members of the Trade Union General Council. The rest of the story we extract from the official *Press Service* of the I.F.T.U. :—

The Commission which verified the mandates proposed to cancel sixty of the 292 mandates which were held by 217 delegates on the ground that they were invalid. This proposal was rejected. [By 26,456 to 25,710.] Thereupon, the President, acting on instructions received from the Trade Union Council, declared the session closed, and called a new session to which only those were admitted who declared themselves to be in favour of affiliation with Amsterdam.

This procedure may at first sight appear to be violent and undemocratic, and under normal circumstances it would certainly be so termed. But there was a universal opinion that it was necessary to act in this way in order to do real trade union work, especially as it was generally known that the Communists would act in obedience to secret instructions, directing them to remain within the trade unions, whatever happened, and to continue their destructive work there.

While the discussions were very stormy before the expulsion of the Communists, the later meetings were a model of orderly and business-like procedure, despite the language difficulties. After the division, it was ascertained that the majority of the delegates, representing 28,423 members, were taking part in the late proceedings of the Congress, and that these counted among them the representatives of the large unions, with the exception of the clothing workers, the woodworkers, and the leatherworkers. Individual delegates were present even from these unions . . . Affiliation with Amsterdam was now unanimously resolved upon.

This amazing statement calls for no comment. But in view of the eagerness with which reformist Socialists and trade union leaders of every stamp have striven to fix the responsibility for splitting the working-class movement upon the Communists, it is interesting to have on record such a frank official confession of a splitting policy on the part of the Amsterdam International.

It is noteworthy that the "majority" vote of 28,423 is, if the figure of 65,000 members represented be accepted, not a majority at all. Even if the official figure of 52,000 is taken, it is only a very bare majority.

The official report concludes :—

In order to do practical work, the seat of the Trade Union Council was removed from the capital, Bucharest, which is not an industrial town, to Klausenburg, an industrial centre, which is already the headquarters of most of the trade union federations. Moreover, in this town there is a widespread knowledge of both the German and the Hungarian languages, which means that the trade unions of Central Europe will be able to exert a greater moral influence.

It may be remarked here that the trade union bureaucrats had already had occasion to demand the dissolution of the Bucharest Trade Union Commission on the grounds of its Communist affiliations. Also Klausenburg (Cluj) happens, as pointed out above, to be under martial law, and the administrators of martial law have been favourably disposed towards the reformist trade union officialdom.

GERMANY

The Crisis in the Social Democratic Party

THE "United" Social Democratic Party of Germany is, at the present moment of acute crisis in Germany, torn with internal dissensions. Masses of Social Democratic workers have left the Party and are streaming into the Communist Party. Those that remain in the Party moreover, are moving steadily to the Left, and the opposition to the Right Wing leaders, with their policy of coalition with the big industrialists, is daily growing in intensity.

The oppositional movement has spread to certain leaders of the Social Democratic Party, among whom it appears as a more or less faint reflex of the leftward evolution of the Social Democratic masses. The Weimar Conference of Social Democratic Deputies of the Left Wing on July 29 was an illustration of this movement. The conference demanded an end to the policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie, co-operation with the Communist Party, and united action against the Fascist danger. Dr. Paul Levi (an ex-Communist), one of the leaders of the Social Democratic Left, some time later expressed the view of himself and his colleagues in a speech at Leipzig. He said :—

Behind the mask of the "Great Coalition," Capital sharpens its sword for the attack on Labour. Inevitably the German Social Democracy must face the question : dictatorship of the proletariat or dictatorship of the bourgeoisie ? Under the semblance of a Coalition Government the Social Democrats have consented to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. . . . The dictatorship of the proletariat is a necessity. Political power does not consist in the possession of seats and votes in Parliament, but much rather in the activity of the working masses. The Communists are one of the most active elements among the working masses. We therefore stand for collaboration with the Communists.

The attitude of the Social Democratic workers who are tending to the Left found expression in a resolution of the workers at the State printing works in Berlin. This resolution demanded :—

- (1) The resignation of the Social Democratic Ministers from the Great Coalition.
- (2) The final abandonment of the policy of coalition, and the dismissal of all the leaders occupying official Party positions who support the Great Coalition.
- (3) The formation of a new editorial staff for *Vorwaerts*.

(4) The formation by the Party and the trade unions of a Socialist Government with the following programme :—

- (a) Liquidation of the Ruhr struggle by the opening of immediate negotiations with France and Belgium.
- (b) Seizure of real values.
- (c) Dissolution of the Reichswehr.

The Communist Party has been quick to criticise the defeatist Ruhr policy such as that advocated in the above resolution, and to stress the point that any liquidation of the Ruhr struggle, or of reparations generally, must take place at the expense of the bourgeoisie. It is to this end that the demand for the seizure of real values is put forward.

Most striking as an instance of the move to the Left of the Social Democratic masses was the Berlin District Conference of the Party on October 7. A motion in favour of the Great Coalition failed to find sufficient support even to be put to the conference. By 219 to 215 votes the election of a new District Executive and the dismissal of the present editorial staff of *Vorwaerts* was demanded. As a result of the activities of the conference executive, a decision on these points was, however, deferred till the next meeting, to be held on October 21. (This meeting confirmed the previous decision.) Such was the temper of the conference that many leaders, such as Hilferding, found difficulty in securing a hearing. Appeals for confidence in the leaders of the Parliamentary Party met with derision. A liberal observer, the correspondent of the *New Statesman* (Robert Dell, who in his wavering reflects very closely the ups and downs of the revolutionary wars, sneering at the Communists when weak and applauding them when strong), was moved by this conference to remark that, in spite of all the efforts of the Right Wing leaders, now thoroughly discredited, there could be no sort of doubt that the Social Democratic rank and file were rapidly moving forward to the formation of a united front with the Communist Party. The *Observer's* correspondent estimated that 80 per cent. of the Social Democratic membership had passed away from the old leaders.

The Workers' Governments

The chief weapon of the German working class in the present struggle against White dictatorship is the Workers' Government. In its preliminary stage this consists of a Social Democratic Government which depends for its parliamentary majority on the votes of Communist deputies: as a result, the Communist Party is enabled to secure the acceptance of certain demands, such as the establishment of a Workers' Defence Force and of Workers' Control Committees to check food speculation. In its later stage the Workers' Government becomes a true Workers' Government by the entry of Communists into the Cabinet and the drawing up of a common Communist-Socialist Governmental programme.

The preliminary stage occurred in Saxony in March of this year: it was described fully in these notes in the May LABOUR MONTHLY.¹ In Thuringia it was reached early in September. With the Ruhr surrender, the setting up of the dictatorship throughout the Reich, and the attack on the eight-hour day, together with the ever-growing Fascist menace in Bavaria, negotiations for the entry of Communists into the Saxon and Thuringian Cabinets were set on

¹ Vol. 4, No. 5, pp. 313-314.

foot. These negotiations were successfully concluded, for Saxony on October 10 and for Thuringia on October 17. In Saxony the Communist Ministers were Paul Böttcher (Finance) and Fritz Heckert (Economic Affairs), with Heinrich Brandler as State Secretary; in Thuringia Dr. Korsch (Justice) and Tenner (Economic Affairs).

The programme of the Saxon Government included the following points:—

- (1) All important official posts to be filled by tried Republicans, in place of reactionary elements.
- (2) Arming of the Workers' "Centuries" for resistance to Fascist attacks.
- (3) The passing of a law forbidding the closing down of factories and workshops by the employer.
- (4) The formation of a working committee of the Social Democratic and the Communist parliamentary fractions for the common consideration of Bills and the organisation of common parliamentary action.
- (5) The Control Committees to have police powers to deal with profiteers and speculators.
- (6) Organised relations with other Workers' Governments in Germany.

The attitude of the Communist Party towards the new Saxon Government was expressed in an important manifesto which was issued immediately on the formation of the new Government. It runs as follows:—

The Central Committee of the German Communist Party entirely approves of the entry of three of its members, Comrades Böttcher, Heckert, and Brandler, into the Saxon Government. We are on the eve of an offensive on the part of the big capitalists, the landowners, and the monarchist generals, against the working masses. A military dictatorship, destined to drown the working class in its own blood, is at hand. The Communist members of the Saxon Government are instructed by the Party to organise and to direct, with the Left Wing Social Democratic members of the same Government, the defensive front of the working class. The Communist Ministers are placed under the direct control and supervision of the Party.

The entry of our comrades into the Saxon Government is not the result of parliamentary bargaining: it expresses the determined will of the working masses to oppose the United Front of the working-class struggle to the capitalist offensive. For the Party, this event must act as a stimulus towards the realisation of the United Working-class Front throughout Germany.

The Government of Workers' Defence in Saxony must be a real signal for the whole German working class. But this Government needs the support of the working class throughout the Reich. The attempt has been made in Saxony, at the moment of greatest danger, to form a united Government of Workers' Defence with the Left Wing Social Democrats. It will only succeed if the Party can mobilise the working class of the whole Reich in the formation of a United Front against its class enemy.

From the programme of the Thuringian Government the following extracts have been taken:—

The new Government will be a Government of Workers' Defence. Its policy will be such that it will serve the interests of the working masses only.

The Thuringian Workers' Government will fight in every possible way against Fascism, against a war of revenge, against reaction and military dictatorship.

To this end, and for defence against Bavarian reaction, the Communist-Socialist Government of Thuringia will remain in close relations with the Communist-Socialist Government of Saxony.

The two States will form together a "red bloc" and will take common defensive measures against reaction and military dictatorship.

The "red bloc" of Workers' Governments is likely to be augmented in the near future. Latest information indicates that the masses of the workers in Brunswick, Anhalt, and the Free City of Hamburg are demanding the formation of Workers' Governments in their respective States. Over one hundred Works Councils in the biggest factories in Brunswick have voiced this demand. We reproduce a typical resolution :—

- (1) The Social Democratic Party should enter into relations with the Communist Party with the view of forming a Workers' Government modelled on those of Saxony and Thuringia.
- (2) The Workers' Parties should send a delegation to Dresden to greet the new Saxon Government and to discuss with the Saxon Workers' Parties the possibility of forming a similar Government in Brunswick.

The solidarity of the Workers' Governments of Central Germany with the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is about to find practical expression in an agreement which is now being negotiated. By this agreement Russia will supply Saxony with grain and other food produce.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE COLLAPSE OF THE WORLD OF WEBB

The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation. By Sidney and Beatrice Webb. (Allen and Unwin. 2nd edition. 4s. 6d. cloth, 2s. 6d. paper.)

[SECOND REVIEW]

THE world revolution, having shaken many other things, has also disturbed the peace of the Webbs. With their usual quickness for the perception of facts once these are well above the surface, they have discovered in 1923 that capitalism is collapsing, that the class war which they denied is increasing in intensity, and that the reforms and programmes which they have advocated and laboured for during thirty years are being thrown aside as so much lumber by the bourgeoisie in the moment of struggle. This collapse of the whole edifice of pseudo-socialism to which they have given their life's work has shaken them so severely as to lead them to write a new kind of book.

After writing for thirty years about the "Parish and the County," "The Manor and the Borough," "Statutory Authorities for Special Purposes," "The Story of the King's Highway," "English Prisons under Local Government," "The Relief of the Poor and the Repression of Vagrancy," "The History of Liquor Licensing in England," "The Consumers' Co-operative Movement," "The History of Trade Unionism," "Industrial Democracy," "Problems of Modern History," "The Works Manager To-day," "Grants in Aid," "English Poor Law Policy," "The State and the Doctor," "The Break-Up of the Poor Law," "The Public Organisation of the Labour Market," "Men's and Women's Wages," and "The Prevention of Destitution"—they have now for the first time discovered and written a book about—Capitalism.

This fact is itself a revolution in the minds of the Webbs. For the first time they have tried to express their general outlook. The result is invaluable. Without this crowning book the array of their books would be incomplete. With it the ironic last chapter added by history to their work in 1914 finds expression. This book is the confession of their failure.

"For over thirty years," they write, "our time and energy have been devoted to municipal administration, to research into the facts of social organisation, and to devising and advocating measures by which the existing profit-making system may be replaced, with the least political friction and the most considerate treatment of 'established expectations,' by a scientific reorganisation of industry as a democratically controlled public service . . . Before the Great War there seemed to be a substantial measure of consent that the social order had to be gradually changed in the direction of a greater equality in material income and personal freedom. . . . We thought, perhaps wrongly, that this characteristic British acquiescence on the part of a limited governing class in

the rising claims of those who had found themselves excluded both from enjoyment and control would continue to be extended, willingly or reluctantly, still further from the political into the industrial sphere ; and that while progress might be slow, there would at least be no reaction." And they go on to describe the violent reaction and even "counter-revolution" they have experienced in England since the war.

Perhaps wrongly! What the revolutionary socialists demonstrated at the outset, it has taken the slaughter of the best part of a human generation, the destruction and chaos of half of the world, and the smashing and crushing of the working class in all the leading countries to awaken the Webbs to the possibility of their error. The price of their education is too expensive.

And at the end of it all what have they to say? Nine-tenths of this book is taken up with the repetition of the familiar arguments that capitalism is inefficient, wasteful, and productive of vicious results. This is, no doubt, the section which led the simple-minded British Marxist, to whom all criticisms of capitalism are more or less the same, to acclaim this production of the Webbs in a "Marxist" magazine as "a good book—one which Plebs will do well to buy and enjoy." The actual argument is contained in the remaining tenth, and is a simple exposition of the bankruptcy of the last stage of reformism. The old artillery of reformism—the denial of classes, the theory of increasing happiness and progress, the belief in the super-class character of the State—are all thrown overboard under the shattering stress of facts. Only the impotent reformist conclusion remains in all its bareness, stripped of the premises that gave it support, and lingering on only as a touching, half-despairing confession of faith in the magic formula of political democracy and evolution to socialism by consent of the bourgeoisie.

They admit the division of classes—not simply as an economic classification, but as the essential living truth of capitalist society.

"The division of the community into two permanent and largely hereditary castes" (p. 21). "By capitalism we mean the particular stage in the development of industry and legal institutions in which the bulk of the workers find themselves divorced from the ownership of the instruments of production, in such a way as to pass into the position of wage-earners, whose subsistence, security, and personal freedom seem (*sic*) dependent on the will of a relatively small proportion of the nation; namely, those who own, and through this legal ownership control, the organisation of the land, the machinery, and the labour force of the community, and do so with the object of making for themselves individual and private gains" (p. xi).

They admit the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—

"the peculiar kind of tyranny now exercised even in the most advanced political democracies by a relatively small class of rich men over a mass of poor men" (p. xv). "Seeing that no individual owner recognises himself as a dictator, let it be at once added that the dictatorship is a class dictatorship" (p. xiii).

They admit the nullification of political democracy by this dictatorship.

"The typical phenomenon of twentieth-century democracy, in which private wealth, concentrated as to direction in relatively few hands, is seen very largely to control, by its dominion over the newspaper Press, the mental

environment of the whole population ; and by its power in this and in various other ways even to nullify universal suffrage " (p. 184).

They admit the failure of the hopes of gradual progress and reform.

" We thought, perhaps wrongly, &c." (p. 233).

" Worse things than any citizen thought possible ten years ago have happened and are still happening daily " (p. 222).

They admit the increasing intensity of the class war.

" The twentieth century found the feeling of a class-war—of an irreconcilable cleavage of interest between the ' Two Nations ' in each land—rapidly spreading to nearly every section of the wage-earners, in practically all countries in which the capitalist system had become dominant " (p. 212). " To stave off this extremity of social disaster the Italian bourgeoisie are arming themselves to subjugate the proletariat by open violence. For some years past the capitalists of the United States have been waging quite extensive wars against the labourers' unions " (p. 223). " The class-war, if and when battle is joined in earnest, will be one of the wars of religion, and may be waged on a scale, and with a ferocity, a self-sacrifice, and a persistence which will make the religious wars of the seventeenth century seem mere riots by comparison " (p. 225).

And what is the conclusion from all this ? In the face of the dictatorship of the capitalists, of the nullification of political democracy, of the collapse of hopes of progress, of the growing intensity of the class struggle and the growing violence of the capitalists, what is the proletariat to do ? Is there any alternative but to fight or to submit ? The reformist, driven into a corner by the hard stress of facts, compelled to admit the facts now visible in the eyes of all, has only one alternative to offer. To those who are accustomed to treat the Webbs as serious political writers, the conclusion may seem incredible ; yet it is the correct and logical last position of reformism. The sole solution of the Webbs is—to appeal to the better nature of the capitalists !

" We therefore solemnly warn our capitalists . . ." So set out the Webbs in their final verdict, speaking in terrible judgment and awaiting the bourgeoisie to hear and tremble.

The thunder of the revolution is turned into stage thunder for the benefit of the reformist to enable him to show the bourgeoisie why they should give him power.

And then, with a pitiful last failing of confidence, in the final sentence of all, this study of the tremendous forces of world capitalism and revolution after the war by the intellectual leaders of British Socialism concludes with a pathetic, half-hopeless appeal for—better relations between employers and employed . . .

" recognition that there is a better way for both. In an attempt, possibly vain, to make the parties understand their problem and each other better—in the hope that it is not always inevitable that Nature should harden the hearts of those whom she intends to destroy—we offer this little work."

This, then, is the final outcome of the whole Webbs' philosophy. This pitiful product, this little parson's offering—"possibly vain"—is the final outcome of that vast and elaborate edifice of reformism which Webb set

himself out to build thirty years ago when he rejected the despised Marxism that he did not understand and set out from the precincts of the Colonial Office and the Temple to show a new path to the working class.

R. P. D.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE OPPORTUNISTS

Guilds and Co-operatives in Italy. By Odon Por. With a Preface by "Æ" and an Appendix by G. D. H. Cole. Translated by Mrs. Emily Townshend. (The Labour Publishing Company. 5s.)

Fascism. By Odon Por. Translated by Mrs. Emily Townshend. (The Labour Publishing Company. 7s. 6d.)

THE village that voted the earth was flat did not need facts or figures to support its thesis; it was democratically expressing the people's will. The author of these books, who seems to have aimed mainly at expressing his own inner sociological consciousness, is just as free from the need for detailed accuracy. It is scarcely possible to find a date, a fact, and a figure on the same page in *Fascism* and there are no significant economic facts and figures whatever. *Guilds and Co-operatives* is only a little better in this respect.

Yet Signor Por, criticising the narrowness of orthodox revolutionaries (and of "plutocrats"), points out sagely that "the processes of history do not develop according to theoretical formulæ . . . ; they proceed along the track which is laid down for them by economic factors."

This sentence occurs on page 6. The unreality that it represents for Signor Por is shown at the beginning of chapter 6, where he says, "Before writing this book, and in order to detach myself spiritually from history in the making, I have re-read Machiavelli's *The Prince* and 'Æ's' *The National Being*. One might have thought that the economic factors which brought about the historical process known as the Fascist Revolution could be more easily found elsewhere.

But while it is impossible to discover from *Fascism* exactly what Fascism represents in Italy's economic development (or collapse), or what are the big forces behind it, it is possible to disentangle one thread from the jumble of narrative, philosophy, and declamation. And once that thread is picked out the book becomes as exciting as a detective story. Clues can be discovered on almost every page. It even becomes possible to understand the appreciation with which Signor Por quotes this sentence from a Fascist writer :—

The Fascist State, although following a rigid course peculiarly its own, is, in view of its origin, most complex, Catholic, Reactionary, Democratic, Liberal, Reformist, and Trade Unionist; for it eliminates all these parties and takes their place.

The Fascist State is in fact a synthesis, a little obscure still in some respects. . . .

The clue that gives this book a meaning—that even makes it a delight to read—comes in the analysis of Fascism by Clara Zetkin :—

Large numbers of the petty bourgeoisie, including even the middle classes, had discarded their wartime psychology for a certain sympathy with reformist Socialism, hoping that the latter would bring about a reformation of society. They were disappointed in their hopes. . . . These masses are joined by large circles of the proletariat, who have given up their faith not only in socialism, but also in their own class. *Fascism has become a sort of refuge for the politically shelterless.*

It is this element in Fascism which we need most to consider ; those who think of Mussolini as simply a White Guard leader like Horthy have to confine both their analysis and their propaganda to execration; we have got to realise that the Fascist Revolution was made possible only by working-class support—and that this working-class, Socialist support was given, not because Fascism is a “development of Socialism” or even a rather hazy synthesis of Socialism with most of the other isms, but because of a big flaw within Socialism itself, the flaw which is best named Opportunism.

Fascism was born from Opportunism : Nationalist Socialist during the war, the Fascisti joined in the Fiume adventure, and then deserted D’Annunzio; “neutral” during the seizure of the factories by the metal-workers, they later spent much of their energies in smashing the workers’ organisations; republicans, they became monarchists. Their promises of workers’ control and no exploitation in industry seem to have got lost in the “synthesis” already mentioned (which reminds one of the synthesis achieved by Gilbert and Sullivan’s seaman, who announced that “Oh, I am the cook and the captain too and the mate of the Nancy brig,” having devoured those individuals).

Fascism is itself, then, opportunist to begin with; it attracted to it opportunists of all shades. It took with it the masses of the workers and of the bourgeoisie that the political opportunists represented and had been leading. It held these masses and drew strength from them, while, at the bidding of the industrialists and financiers, trade unions, guilds, co-operatives, socialised municipalities, and all the organisations and achievements of the workers were brutally destroyed.

And the thing that is so fascinating in Odon Por’s book is that he is one of the most perfect types of opportunist possible, and that he relates with placid candour (though without direct intention) the reasons why, as a “Guildsman,” he rallied to Fascism !

One feels somehow that this “exclusive revelation” ought to have appeared in the Sunday Press. Here is this eminently respectable gentleman—an idealist of a particularly fanciful type—describing how he was led into “a life of crime.”

But actually it has an importance, a seriousness, this intimate and detailed document, that deserves more exact study. For the position from which Signor Por begins—outlined in *Guilds and Co-operatives*—is so reminiscent of the position of many British Socialists that it is impossible to dismiss Signor Por as an eccentric product of Italian conditions.

He represents an international tendency; and the fact that he belongs to the Guildsman sect of the opportunists makes him all the more interesting. State Socialists and their use and abuse as agents of capitalism were already well known to us; until Fascism appeared it was only theoretically clear that guildsmen would be no less malleable.

It is difficult to find short phrases to show the limits of Signor Por's spiritual detachment before the Fascist Revolution. From *Guilds and Co-operatives* these sentences stand out :—

A Socialist Government in Italy would not need to experiment. There would be no need to destroy, nor to impose institutions on the masses. . . . Socialism would follow up tendencies already existing and already producing results.

In exercising the novel functions of partnership in industrial and commercial undertakings, the State will acquire the technical and financial knowledge which will enable it to supervise the whole industry of the country.

We have come to the conclusion that social transformations can become effective only when the struggle between classes or political parties give rise to such a mentality, to such capacities, to such institutions and functions as anticipate materially and spiritually the Utopia for which the struggle is waged.

A class struggling for social ends must cease to be a class before it can attain those ends.

The "Dictation of the Proletariat" is not practicable in Italy, and, what is of more importance (*sic*), it is not indispensable to the revolution.

These particular echoes of all the Opportunists of all the world were put in print before the Fascist Revolution. In *Fascism* we find a defence of the new "dictatorship of the opportunists," qualified of course by the admission that, although it is unfashionable, "we instinctively refuse to believe that violence, bloody and destructive, is inevitable." Dictatorship without violence has surely already been patented by Herr Kautsky.

Later in the book it is described how Socialism failed in Italy. The failure was due to lack of "statesmanship"; the Socialists were "anti-national" and did not support the Fiume adventure. . . .

We could go on to almost any length tracing the thread of Opportunism. Obvious reasons forbid this; but one thing needs emphasising again—this is a book which ought to be read and studied. We may laugh at the theories of Reformism when we only have to do with publicists or lay preachers; but when they lead to the last dictatorship to shelter the bourgeoisie, they want careful analysis.

We need a book on Fascism that will answer the obvious questions. There was an industrial-financial crisis in Italy, in the spring of 1922, so severe that the issues of new capital fell steadily from 250 millions lire in February (a normal figure) to less than a million and a half in May. Has this crisis any connection with the gamble on which the bourgeoisie of Italy embarked when they decided to give Fascism a slack rein? And there are many similar questions to be answered. But when this book is written, the author should turn to Odon Por for a glimpse of the psychological machinery by which the politically shelterless became a shelter, under which alone capitalism could be continued, the workers crushed, wages cut down, hours lengthened, and profits increased.

T. H. W.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Land Reform in Czechoslovakia.* By Lucy Elizabeth Textor, Ph.D. (Allen and Unwin. 5s.)
- Oil and the Germs of War.* By Scott Nearing. (Nellie Seeds Nearing, Ridgewood, New Jersey, U.S.A. Cloth 60 cents; paper 10 cents.)
- Struggle of the Trade Unions Against Fascism.* By Andreas Nin. With an Introduction by Earl R. Browder. (Trade Union Educational League, Chicago, Ill. 15 cents.)
- America The Peacemaker.* By Jaime C. Gil. (Veritas Publicity Bureau, New York. \$1.00.)
- Christianity or Materialism : The Church and the Worker.* By Alf. Wilson. (Australian Labor News Publishing Bureau, Melbourne. 3d.)
- New Standards.* No. 1, October, 1923. Edited by G. D. H. and Margaret Cole. (Lake View, Vale of Health, London. 3d.)
- Since Leaving Rome.* By Albert Wehde. (The Tremonia Publishing Company, Chicago, Ill.)

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Tempering the Wind

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Danger—Election Programme—A Real
Programme Wanted*

THE present General Election is a signal that Britain is entering on a period of recurrent political crises. The Baldwin Government would not have plunged into a General Election unless it were compelled. No one likes General Elections, least of all a Government newly entered on power with a secure majority and years of life before it. Nor did that compulsion come from their followers, who were as much disconcerted and annoyed as any. It did not come from any powerful wave of feeling or sudden discontent in the country. Therefore the compulsion came solely from events, and nothing else. It was the bare force of events that drove the Government and their supporters and opponents, all equally against their will, into a sudden dissolution. The Baldwin Government was helpless before events and did not know what to do. It had tried its hand with France and had only made public its impotence. It looked at home and saw only the menace of the fourth winter of unemployment refusing to be exorcised. A miserable still-born infant of a proposal to spend a doubtful fifty millions on unemployment was brought forward and met with universal derision. The Baldwin Government gave up the insoluble puzzle and seized on the first pretext to dissolve.

SURRENDER in so few months is a very striking symptom of the helplessness of post-war British capitalism. It is impossible to treat the tariff issue as the serious occasion of the dissolution. The tariff issue was taken up with such complete confusion, vagueness, and halfheartedness, and only so slowly elaborated into any kind of form at all, as to suggest strongly that it came second in the order of thought and was left to be worked out later. Had the only object been import duties on manufactured

articles, the Safeguarding of Industries Act was available and could easily have been adapted. Indeed it has been justly said that Britain was already Protectionist in practice and Free Trade in theory, and the only change proposed is that she should become Protectionist in theory and in practice as before. Hardly was the tariff proposal made than its own sponsors began to whittle it down and step away from the issues raised. Thus every indication reveals that what was being sought was not so much a tariff as a change—some change, any change. And here comes the most striking fact of all. For when all the forces of British capitalism are pushing towards a change in one form or another, the only actual forms of that change presented are, on the one hand, the resurrection of an antique fetish in a mangled condition and, on the other, the hoary form of Asquith rising from the sleep of the dead. These, then, are all the changes that capitalism has left to ring. Back to the old statesmen under whom the present crisis took shape and who have no remedies to cure it. Feverishly the dice-box is shaken again and again at ever shorter intervals for a fresh throw. In vain: from the dice-box of capitalism there are no more dice to fall.

BUT while the decay of capitalist energy and resource should be an occasion for rejoicing to the working class and the opportunity for pressing forward a successful attack, the actual situation is not so satisfactory. For if the hour of the capitalist has long since struck and they can only cumber the scene, the hour of the workers is here at hand and the workers are not ready. This is, indeed, the kernel of the whole situation, both in Britain and abroad, and the explanation of the present slow and long-drawn-out decline. The fact is that the present election was forced *on* the Labour Movement, instead of being forced *by* it. The experience of last year's election has been repeated. What was the position last year? Here was capitalism at a deadlock, its Government discredited and on the point of downfall, and an ever-growing sweep of opinion rallying to the Labour Party. And in the face of this, instead of the Labour Party taking the offensive and launching a vigorous attack to overthrow the Government, it failed so completely in this task that it was actually possible for a section of the existing discredited Government to step into the vacant place, first detaching itself for

the purpose and then winning the credit of holding the Government up to obloquy and bringing it down. Thus capitalism was able to save itself; in place of the move to working-class politics, for which all was ready, power passed into the hands of a small extreme reactionary clique within capitalism.

ONCE again the same process has been repeated. The Baldwin Government was discredited and helpless and completely vulnerable to attack. But was the Labour Party pursuing this attack? On the contrary, it was supporting the Baldwin Government three months ago, declaring its enthusiastic approval of Baldwin and readiness to back him, because it actually imagined that he was pursuing in relation to France a policy which was in accordance with its own. Was the Labour Party doing anything to voice and arouse the anger of the unemployed and of the wage-cut workers against this Tory Prime Minister? On the contrary, the Labour Party was declaring through its official organ that Baldwin "has the British nation behind him." There was almost a universal sigh went up from the Labour leaders when it was discovered that their idol was giving himself over to the heresy of the tariff. Here at last their years of Liberal training compelled them to take up a position on the principle of Free Trade. Working-class principles might count for nothing. Troops in Germany to suppress the German workers counted for nothing. The starvation of the unemployed on the "gap" counted for nothing. Imperialist junketings and rhetoric and militarism won their applause. All this went with support of Baldwin. But the sound Liberal principle of Free Trade at last compelled their opposition. When was the vote of censure moved on the Baldwin Government? Only after the issue was over, after the Dissolution was fixed, after Baldwin had summoned MacDonald to him to arrange that a suitable Vote of Censure should be moved in order to give him the occasion for a Dissolution. Then the docile Parliamentary Group moved its Vote of Censure and found it was too late. The issue was already fixed. Once again the extreme reactionaries had taken the offensive first and made the issue. The discredited Baldwin Government was able to come forward as the challenging Party and not the Labour Party.

WHAT is the result of this historic failure? The result is a complete throwback in the political situation. At a time when every institution and policy of capitalism is impotent and bankrupt, when all the cards are in the Labour Party's hands, it is unable to play them, and the initiative remains with the bourgeoisie. At once, on this failure of the Labour Party to take the lead, comes the restoration of bourgeois politics and the old Liberal Party is revived to carry on its twenty-year-old controversy with the Conservative Party at the point where they last left off, and the Labour Party is to be relegated again to the third position. Every preparation is made for the re-establishment of a Liberal Government, which would have at any rate the tacit support of a considerable section of the Labour Party. The old bourgeois political issues dominate the situation afresh. The principal opponent, declares Birkenhead for the Tories, is no longer Socialism, but reunited Liberalism. Back to 1910 becomes actually the hope of capitalism in the political situation, when in every other direction the attempt to restore the pre-war position has failed. Such an attempt cannot succeed in view of the total situation: but it means that once again a hard and costly path has to be travelled by the working class to recover the lost ground.

WHAT is the reason of this weakness which has thus thrown back the position and held up the advance of the Labour Party? Partly it is actual shrinking from power and responsibility in the present situation, on the part of the leaders, which has led them to refrain from attacking the Government too vigorously. Partly it is actual personal implication in bourgeois politics and society, which has prevented them from standing clear, and in effect shut their mouths. Partly it is fear of the working-class forces behind them, if these should be roused to real attack. But all these may be summed up into one essential point—confusion of leadership. Confusion of leadership, inability to mark out a clear working-class policy and stick to it, inability to distinguish between a working-class and a bourgeois policy, running after every gust of bourgeois politics in turn, uncritical association with a hundred forms of bourgeois political and social activity (the recent occasion on which the Labour organ officially castigated the criminal

tomfoolery of a banquet attended by Henderson and Thomas was only a striking example of the daily confusion)—all these have taken the edge off Labour's fight and prevented the effective rousing of the workers to a clear issue.

THE confusion of thought and policy runs right through the movement. It is hardly possible to name a single policy or a single issue which has not at some time been advocated by the Labour Movement or is not now being advocated in some way or by some particular leader—or indeed by the same individual leader on successive days. On November 11 Mr. MacDonald declared at Dewsbury: "I put foreign policy right in the forefront of my programme." On November 12 Mr. MacDonald declared at the Caledonian Road Baths: "The Labour Party was going to fight on the ground that the purchasing power of our own people was the dominating factor in the producing capacity of the country." In the same way in a single day's issue of the *Daily Herald* the following "solutions" for the industrial crisis were to be found on successive pages: (1) High wages on the American model—Mr. Hodges, the front page and the Editorial; (2) Foreign policy "first and foremost"—Mr. MacDonald, Leader of the Labour Party; (3) International financial unification "the most urgent step to end the world chaos"—the I.L.P., Mr. MacDonald's Party and the dominating force in the Labour Party; (4) Socialism—Mr. Brockway, the Secretary of the I.L.P. This is a single day's issue. If all the thrice-weekly programmes of the I.L.P., &c, to cure every ill in the world in a thousand different ways each day were brought together into a book, it would be only necessary to compile an index for sufficient comment. Is it surprising that in such a situation the Labour Party is unable to lead and is always in practice at the mercy of every stream of bourgeois politics—running after now Wilson, now Harding, now Baldwin, now Sir Allan Smith and the F.B.I., but never a working-class policy.

NOW this position means a very great danger for the Labour Party, not only immediately for the election, but in the issues approaching. It means that wherever there is a big hole or bog in capitalist politics at hand, the Labour Party is

going to be the first to fall in. And there are some very big holes in front. One is an old familiar one: the question of coalition with the Liberal Party. The election is probably going to produce a very unstable parliamentary situation. Is the Labour Party proof against bourgeois coalition? Not only against open coalition, but against the more insidious forms of private understanding with a Liberal Government or abstention from opposition as in the 1910-14 Parliament? Recent utterances of MacDonald, the *New Statesman*, and others suggest the opposite. The membership of the Party will have to see to this by their vigilance, because Conference pledges count for little once the excitement of a Ministerial crisis begins.

THE second hole is a new one and more serious, and it may be most briefly described as Capitalist Reconstruction by Inflation. The signs are plentiful that powerful forces of Big Industry are pressing for a programme of capitalist reconstruction for British industry on modern lines as already largely carried through in France, Germany, and America. Such a tendency is foreshadowed in the speeches and statements of the National Liberals, of McCurdy, of Lloyd George, of the Federation of British Industries, of Sir Allan Smith, of McKenna, of Sir Eric Geddes. Such a programme would only be based on a policy of Inflation, however concealed. It would offer the bribe of absorbing the unemployed and higher wages. And it would mean in practice high profits for the big manufacturers, but for the workers rising prices and the path on which the German workers have been driven. Now every tendency in the Labour Movement plays into the hands of this. The Restoration of the Home Market is the ideal catchword. We have already seen the *Daily Herald* and the leaders of the Labour Party applauding enthusiastically the statements of Sir Allan Smith and McKenna. We have already seen the City Editor of *The Times* (in answer to a letter of Colonel Wedgwood asking for his approval of the Capital Levy as a measure of deflation) twitting the I.L.P. with its support of the Federation of British Industries programme of inflation. Not only does the reactionary Right Wing, represented by Hodges, come out with enthusiasm in support of Alliance with Capitalism and Higher Wages. The Left, represented by the

Glasgow M.P.s, is also caught; because in so far as they have only spoken of restoration of the purchasing power of the working class, without putting forward a positive programme, their propaganda has only gone to serve the Big Business Campaign for Higher Wages. Thus the dangers in front are very real, until the working-class movement can develop a definite working-class policy.

IN this position what is to be done? It is no good looking to the existing leadership to produce a working-class programme: they are too far gone in confusion and capitulation already. The Election Programme of the Labour Party is a tired programme, assembling stale demands without rallying power or clear direction, and covering the whole with spiritual glue in place of Socialism. The fighting programme of the working class will have to come from the workers themselves. In this election now the situation will have to be taken as it is. The workers will have to fight, as they will fight, on the simplest instinctive working-class issues. All that can be done at present is to keep clear of all the intricacies of bourgeois politics, foreign policy, economic theory, restoration of markets, empire trade, tariffs, free trade, inflation, deflation, &c., &c., and concentrate on the plainest immediate issues. It is no good discussing rival theories for the cure of unemployment. What matters is that the two million unemployed are there now, that Protection is unable to meet the most elementary needs of the workers, and that it is the business of the State to take charge now of the production of the country (including its credit and trade) so as to employ the unemployed and supply the needs of the workers, and that if to do this means trenching on wealth and property, whether by capital levy or otherwise, we should do it without fear—and to get it done we should set up a Labour Government which shall be made to do it. That is the plain, direct agitation of the election.

BUT the question of a real working-class programme and a united programme still remains. Unless that is achieved the whole movement will break up. From where is that programme to come? The impulse towards it has got to come from the local bodies of the workers themselves. And that is the

tremendous significance of the Trades Councils Conference which held its second annual meeting at Birmingham last month. For it is the Trades Councils Conference which will have to hammer out the common programme of the workers if any body is to do it. The tremendous response to the invitation to the conference, in spite of small publicity or possibility of organisation, revealed the latent feeling that is struggling to find expression. But that expression will not be found simply in resolutions on the machinery of trade union organisation. The chairman's address to the conference, which well deserves to rank as a real document of the movement, for the first time gave a lead that expressed the new spirit. His lead was applauded, but it was not yet followed. The conference was still too uncertain of itself, too overloaded in the agenda, to be ready for all that lies upon it. There are still the remains of the old outlook, existing in the Left no less than in the official movement and essentially similar in both, that thinks in terms of Trades Councils, of the General Council, of the Labour Party, of industries, and all the rest, but cannot think in terms of the working class and the elementary immediate issues that have to be faced to-day. But more and more rapidly on every side the understanding is developing that the supreme need is a definite agreed programme of concrete aims on which all the forces of the working class that mean to fight can concentrate on occasion, and once this is achieved then the way is open.

R. P. D.

THE GENERAL ELECTION— WHY ?

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

THE General Election which is now upon us has been occasioned, as all such events are, not by the exigencies of the parliamentary situation or by any mere political antagonisms such as reveal themselves upon the surface of affairs, but as a reaction to deep-seated causes at work in the economic and social life of the modern world and, more especially, of Europe.

This political *dénouement* of an election became certain as an event of the near, of the very near, future from the time that it became evident that Mr. Baldwin's negotiations in Paris with M. Poincaré had not resulted in a manner satisfactory to those particular interests with which the Premier is connected. So certain was I myself of the early approach of a political crisis, of the character of the one which is now upon us, that I sent an urgent communication to my agent six weeks ago to prepare for an immediate General Election. The development of the position has been exceedingly rapid, but not more rapid than it was necessary for the Premier that it should be in order that he might maintain a position as favourable to himself as that which, by the hazard of economic circumstance, has, for the time being, developed.

The question of the Ruhr and its reaction upon the relations of Britain, France, and Germany has, during a quarter of a century, passed through a series of stages, one cycle of which produced the "First World War" and the second of which now seems exceedingly likely to bring about the "Second World War" at no very remote date.

Since the period, approximately, 1896-1898, when the French began to develop and the Germans to draw upon the prodigious iron-ore reserves of French Lorraine, the marriage of French ore and German coke has had a profoundly disturbing effect upon British capitalist politics. It was the expansion of the German steel industry consequent upon this and the resultant growing

independence of the Ruhr of ore imports from British properties overseas that occasioned the Tariff Reform outburst of Joseph Chamberlain in 1903. His method was a tariff against German steel. He failed, but, when his method was rejected, the alternative method of fighting the German steel menace (which resulted from the growing productivity of Germany relying on French ore) became the ever-closer knitting together in *entente* and alliance of Britain and France and, in the end, war with Germany.

At the end of that war, Lloyd George wrote into the Treaty of Versailles an ingenious settlement, which, of course, was no settlement, whereby the French obtained even more iron-ore than hitherto, *i.e.*, by the recovery of Lorraine from Germany, the Germans retained the indispensable complementary of these ore-reserves, the coking coal of the Ruhr, while the British shipowners, whom economic development has made shipbuilders, steelmasters, and coke-oven operators, retained the ships in which to carry alternative Newfoundland iron-ore to Rotterdam *en route* to the Ruhr and alternative Durham coke to France *en route* to Lorraine.

For some three years this settlement attained its object: the economic divorce of French iron and German coke. About a year ago, however, France resolved to go into the Ruhr and to possess herself of the coke. The French and the German capitalists were upon the eve of arriving at a friendly arrangement when a gentleman, himself previously in business as a merchant in the Newfoundland iron-ore trade, the late Mr. Bonar Law, intervened in such a way as to strengthen Germany's negotiating will and power and to bring about a quarrel which had the effect of disorganising the Ruhr and at the same time embarrassing the steelmasters of Lorraine. As an immediate consequence came a revival in the British steel industry and an improvement in the trade prospects of Mr. Baldwin's own firm of Baldwins, Ltd.

When, however, the French pressure reduced the Ruhr capitalists to the very edge of submission (a submission made all the more attractive by reason of the threat of a social revolution in Germany from which, as from a worthless currency, they might escape by getting themselves into the borders of a State in actual association with France), the British Premier, this time Mr. Baldwin, endeavoured to arrive at a new understanding with M. Poincaré.

This should have been the more easy having regard to the interests behind and around each of them. Mr. Baldwin was formerly a director of Lloyds Bank, Ltd., and is still the second largest shareholder in Baldwins, Ltd., coke-exporters and steelmasters, a firm which, with its associates, shares three directors with Lloyds Bank, Ltd. Also connected with Lloyds Bank, Ltd., is the Royal Dutch "Shell" oil combine. This latter is working in Paris with the Banque de l'Union Parisienne which, in its turn, heads the financial group behind M. Poincaré. Lloyds Bank, Ltd., has heavy commitments in France and is said to have been making liberal advances to Stinnes to buy coal and iron-ore.

Mr. Baldwin's plan, according to the usually well-informed paper, the *Outlook*, was to include a big loan to be advanced by the London banks to the French Government. Such a loan would have helped to stabilise the French franc, to strengthen the finances of the Poincaré Government, to keep France going with ready money until she receives something on account of reparations from the Ruhr, and would have been secured, no doubt, upon these very reparation payments, probably in the form of blocks of shares in the properties of the Ruhr. In such a way might Baldwins, Ltd., and Lloyds Bank, Ltd., have secured admission, together with Schneider, St. Chamond and Wendel, into the great corporation to exploit the Ruhr.

However, such a project would have raised higher the rate of interest on that ample credit which the industrialists cannot get, at terms that will suit them, from the bankers of London.

Just at this time, Mr. Lloyd George was touring on the grand scale through Canada and the United States, proclaiming the new evangel, preaching the crusade of Anglo-American co-operation to restore Europe to stability. Sir Eric Geddes, his old lieutenant, was denouncing the credit-restriction policy of Mr. Baldwin at home.

What was really happening in America was that Mr. Lloyd George, ever the "man Friday" of British industrialism, was searching for and succeeded in securing the aid of American-Canadian high finance, which was quite willing to come to the assistance of British industrialism writhing in the strangle-hold of Mr. Baldwin's banking friends.

Mr. Lloyd George, bankrupted politically by the economic bankruptcy of the British industrialists, has come back from obscurity via Wall Street with the approbation of American finance. He came back in the expectation of forcing Mr. Baldwin to go to the country in the New Year. Mr. Baldwin has anticipated him by an immediate appeal to the country relying on the sentiment of the electorate to prevent a second appeal in Mr. Lloyd George's own time.

Mr. Baldwin wants a tariff "for purposes . . . of tariff negotiation." He has been very careful to stress that he wants a tariff for bargaining purposes. Thus far, also, he can carry Lord Derby. He cannot carry Lord Birkenhead, newly returned from a head-turning tour in America, nor can he carry Mr. McKenna.

Mr. Baldwin does not himself want a tariff except for the purpose of bargaining his way into M. Poincaré's Franco-Belgian Syndicate for the exploitation of the Ruhr.

Mr. Lloyd George, let us mark well this fact, has to accept the leadership of Mr. Asquith. Not only have we here an example of magnificent and justifiable caution on the part of a man who knows how humiliating may be the experience of a British Premier in these days of eclipse, but we have an evidence of the force behind the stubborn pride of the Right Hon. the member for Paisley—a cotton spinning purgatory—namely, the desperate *putsch* made by cotton and woollen and worsted capitalism to check Baldwin and at the same time not to deliver themselves over to Lloyd George.

Textile capitalism wants the "scrapping" of the Treaty of Versailles. Textile capitalism does not, however, desire to capitulate to American finance capital—especially does Lancashire desire independence of the American cotton growers' monopoly. In the same way, Lord Cowdray, the associate of the Royal Dutch "Shell" oil group, has every inducement to support his "man Friday," Mr. Asquith. Lord Cowdray does not want to have to yield ground at Vera Cruz and elsewhere in Mexico to the United States capitalists.

The British capitalists, the dominant section of the British capitalists, would, as an alternative to Mr. Baldwin, select not Mr. Lloyd George but Mr. Asquith.

Then there is another aspect of the situation, but, except for the possibilities of German revolution, not so pressing as to explain an immediate General Election. That is the desire of the capitalists to blur the issue of the class conflict which, on the political stage, becomes more clearly marked every day. The workers will not accept another series of wage cuts with docility and there is danger—at least so the capitalists believe—of an increase in the political strength of the Labour Party. Not only so, but under an industrial pressure that would give greater influence to the left-wing elements in its ranks. Consequently, the capitalists desire to start a false scent and to commence a sham fight.

The Liberals have no policy or programme and, therefore, accept with the utmost enthusiasm a campaign in which they will be waging a war of negation against, on the one hand, the tariff and, on the other, the capital levy.

Moreover, both are agreed upon the desirability of distracting the attention of the advanced section of the Labour Party from the situation in Germany, and the dangers of counter-revolution and of a new war in Western Europe. The capitalists wish to relegate the Labour Party to the third position in the State so as to prevent it, now that it moves more towards the Left, choosing the topics of discussion and waging the political conflict over issues that are of any importance to the world's workers.

Finally, the capitalists know how depleted are the funds of the unions and the resources of individual socialists and labourists. They intend to eliminate the Labour Party, in a perfectly legal and constitutional manner, by the mere process of repeated elections which will exhaust the funds and so, automatically, cancel out the Labour Party.

GERMANY IN THE THROES OF REVOLUTION

By J. B. ASKEW

WHAT the last few months of life in Germany have been like will be perhaps harder for anyone to describe who has passed through it than for one who has read of it, say, in the columns of a well-informed English newspaper.

Events have succeeded each other with such rapidity that hardly had the observer recovered his breath before a new blow or series of blows had knocked him once more out of time. I have never experienced an earthquake, but often enough during the past few months I imagine most people in Berlin must have had a similar sensation as if the very ground under their feet was giving way and the whole edifice of society crashing down.

Hardly was one crisis over than we were in the midst of another. No one knew what was coming next—the hope that was eternally arising that things had at least touched bottom was dashed almost before it was out of the mouth. How often has the mark been stabilised for a couple of days, just long enough to allow a few articles to be written heralding that Dr. Hilferding or some other genius had found the philosopher's stone or a magic wand for transforming worthless paper money into solid cash—and that without infringing on property rights—when the whole building thus elaborately set up crashed down like Humpty Dumpty. The mark had touched a new record in its downward course.

Dr. Hilferding, the pupil of my old master Kautsky, sums up the bankruptcy of Menshevist Marxism. Dr. Rudolph Hilferding wrote a very able book on financial capitalism before the war, but his practice since the war has been the exact contrary of the principles laid down in that book. More striking, however, was the fact that when the great expert on finance was called upon in August to save the desperate German financial situation, he put forward a programme, or, rather, said that he would apply the programme put forward by his predecessors ruthlessly; only, after a few weeks

in office, to find himself put on the doormat before almost an attempt had been made to carry out that programme.

The day after this had occurred Rudolph Hilferding was announced as among the speakers at the Berlin Divisional Conference of the Social Democratic Party, and it was confidently expected that he would seize the occasion to explain what had caused his failure or who, if anybody, had crossed his intentions. Dr. Hilferding spoke, but on the one subject where he could have given useful information he was strangely silent, and up to now he has said, as far as I am aware, not a word on the point. The truth is in all probability that he knew perfectly well that the cause of his failure was that the measures which he had to take would have to be forced on the banks and the propertied classes and he had neither the strength nor the moral courage to say that. On the contrary, he did his best to damp down the fighting spirit of the workers by dwelling on the strength of the counter-revolutionary forces, insinuating that they had better be on their best behaviour or the German Mussolinis would teach them manners—advice which all experience in similar situations shows is the surest method of bringing on the very dangers against which it is an attempt to guard. To put it in other words—whatever line you take with a bully, don't show him that you are afraid of him. Above all must this advice be given to the workers, who only require to realise their own power to smash their opponents.

Rudolph Hilferding and Kautsky it was who, when capitalism was on its last legs as it would seem in 1918, when it had hopelessly broken down and Socialism was obviously the only way out, said: "No. We cannot socialise bankruptcy—let the capitalists clear up the mess and hand over the concern to us." The plan was very clever, but too clever by half. If capitalism had been really set up again does anyone in his senses think that we would then have the power to dispossess them?

It is idle, however, to speculate. Capitalist reconstruction is a dead failure. After nearly five years' effort, after promise after promise has proved to be Dead Sea fruit, we are farther off than ever.

Soviet Russia—which was the bogey for German Social Democrats in 1919, which was always being held up as a terrible

warning for all misguided enthusiasts who believed in revolutionary action, and which Fritz Adler and other pundits of the Austro-Marxist school assured us could not hold its own for a year—Soviet Russia is now making steady progress and is infinitely better off than the Germany which spurned her help in 1918.

The German Social Democrats were offered in 1918 the alliance of the Soviet Republic as well as Russian wheat. They refused both, relying on the Western democracy whom they feared to offend. The Western democracy replied by allowing every single promise, on the strength of which the Germans had laid down their arms, to be violated. German Menshevism preferred capitalist culture to Communist barbarism—and capitalist culture in the person of Poincaré has replied.

Germany is the classic land of Menshevism, where the boast of the Social Democrats was that by sticking to legality they had broken Bismarck's power. That no doubt is true. Bismarck could only have smashed the Social Democrats in 1890—when as is well known he proposed to declare the whole party as well as the parliamentary group outlaw—by smashing German industry. That, or something very like it, the German capitalists obviously were afraid of when the Kaiser decided to drop the pilot—and there can be little doubt that in so acting the Kaiser reflected the wishes of the German capitalist world, who were also opposed to Bismarck in the question of imperialist world politics, on which Bismarck always remained the statesman with a purely continental outlook.

The maintenance of the *status quo* against attacks from the reaction was the strong point of the old Social Democracy—it was to get breathing time for the movement to organise and develop in the respective countries. To a certain extent it may be said to have fulfilled its function, but to a far greater degree the contradiction between the revolutionary phrases and the timid policy pursued demoralised the entire movement, and when the final test came in 1914 Menshevism—or the Second International—broke down utterly.

In one of the letters, quoted by Mehring, written by Marx on the Turco-Russian war in 1878, he says that a great part of the responsibility for the Turkish defeat lay in the fact that they had neglected to get rid of the old Serail rulers who were the best

defenders of the Tsar. A people that in such moments cannot make a clean revolutionary sweep is lost. That applies, it would seem to me, to Germany. Germany owed her defeat not least of all to the fact that they supported the military authorities till disaster had already overtaken them—and even then they did not abolish the old system, rather it was the old system that fell automatically to pieces and William who disappeared.

From that date instead of radical revolutionary changes, such as were obviously required in the system of administration, the old administrative system was practically maintained, but Social Democrats were placed in charge to do the dirty work of restoring order, so-called, till the reactionaries were once more powerful enough to kick them out.

That, all the same, in many respects great and revolutionary changes have been made in Germany it would be idle to deny. The Workers' Councils, the Eight Hours Law, the Tenants' Councils in the houses, to mention only a few, are great achievements of the revolution which it is the aim of the reactionaries to get undone. The workers have a tremendous power in Germany and they know it.

For that reason I am not inclined to think that we shall see a direct Fascist dictatorship in Germany now except in so far as it has already been achieved by the present Government by a side wind. The reactionaries know very well that even to-day they cannot rule against the Labour Movement as a whole—above all, all their bullets and poison gases will not enable them to feed a single man, woman, or child—and, as Radek pointed out some time ago, the problem of government in Germany is who can enable the people to get bread.

Despite the many failures and disastrous incidents that have occurred, the united front of the workers in Germany is on the way. It is for the British and other comrades to see that they are allowed fair play; above all, to absolutely prohibit the transformation of Germany into a colony or protectorate of any Power as Egypt was transformed in the 'eighties by the joint efforts, be it remembered, of England and France, who afterwards nearly came to blows in the matter. *Absit omen.*

THE COUNTER- REVOLUTION IN EUROPE

By G. A. HUTT

WITH the collapse of capitalist economy after the imperialist war, it seemed that the forces of the working-class revolution would sweep Europe. But the working class as a whole was unready and imperialism had bitten too deeply into the ideological fabric of the old Labour and Social Democratic Parties. They sabotaged the struggle for power, and turned to coalition with the bourgeoisie in order to achieve "reconstruction" —of capitalism.

The White Terror triumphed early in Finland and Hungary. In Germany the Social Democrats took the lead in the suppression of the revolting workers. Fascism has risen to power in Italy, in Bulgaria, in Spain. The Fascist National Democrats are now the most influential political group in Poland and dominate the Government. In Austria the forces of reactionary clericalism are in power. The rising workers' revolution in Germany has led to a close military alliance between the Poincaré Government and Czechoslovakia.

As the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution in Germany reaches its moment of extremest tension the counter-revolution in Europe has either won, or is in process of winning, all the strategic positions surrounding Germany. German Fascism, centred in Bavaria, is in relations with its brethren in Austria, in Poland, in Hungary. French, British, and American imperialisms are in varying degrees lending their moral and financial support to the growing counter-revolution throughout Europe.

The progress and fortunes of the proletarian revolution in Europe are relatively well known. But the other side of the barricade is shrouded in darkness and not a little mystery. However, it is possible to construct, from occasional hints and references in the bourgeois Press, something of a picture of the actual state of the European counter-revolution to-day. This article will attempt

briefly the task of constructing this picture, of drawing together, from the tangled web of revolution and counter-revolution in Europe to-day, the threads of counter-revolution.

In the first place there is the question of the associations between the Bavarian reactionaries and their political confrères in Austria, Hungary, and Poland. The *Manchester Guardian* published at the end of October certain details of secret negotiations between Bavarian and Polish reactionaries. These negotiations were directed to securing Polish support for Bavarian separatism. In return for this support, Poland would receive East Prussia. The scheme thus broached received, from its association with agrarian reaction, the name of the "Great Green Plan." Its inspiration, too, was largely clerical: and it is therefore not surprising that the "Christian Socialist" (*i.e.*, reactionary clerical) Government of Austria has also become involved. In fact, a union between reactionary Austria and reactionary Bavaria—seceding from the German Reich—has now become an integral part of the scheme.

It is interesting to note that one of the chief Polish promoters of the "Great Green Plan" appears to be none other than the notorious Monsignor Cieplak (though this is not finally certain), over whose "persecution" some time ago by the Soviet Government certain leaders of the British Labour Party waxed indignant. The *Manchester Guardian* further reports that the scheme is receiving financial assistance from influential American sources: while it is evident that such a scheme would win the active countenance and support of French reaction.

There has been close contact all through between the Bavarian Fascists under Hitler and the Austrian "Haken Kreuzler," and also between Hitler's forces and the Hungarian Nationalists under Gömbös. The intimate nature of the Hitler-Gömbös alliance received spectacular illustration a few days ago in the proposed Hungarian Fascist *coup d'état*, which was to be undertaken at the end of November with Bavarian aid. A secret military agreement, signed by plenipotentiaries on behalf of the Bavarian and Hungarian Fascist organisations, has been discovered. The aim of the alliance is clear. As the Balkans correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote:—

The Gömbös Government, which was to have been set up with Bavarian help, would have joined Bavarian reaction to defeat "Marxism" in Central Europe.

In Poland, the move to the Right in the last few months has been notable. It has evoked comment from *The Times*, which observed recently:—

This swing to the Right has been very self-conscious. It was made to the accompaniment of loud applause from the rank and file and the Government Press, which interpreted it as part of a great wave of reaction against Socialism which was sweeping over Europe.

Czecho-Slovakia, too, has its Fascists. Under the leadership of Dr. Kramarcz they were already reported as strong enough to be planning for a *coup d'état* in July last. Kramarcz, in the words of the *Daily Herald*:—

claims to have the support of 85 per cent. of the officers of the army, of a majority of the State officials, of the big Zivnostenska Bank, of the landowners, of a great part of the "Sokols" (the athletic clubs, which have played such a big part in Czech politics).

It was further reported that Kramarcz was very hopeful of British support—including financial support. The reason for this is clear. The Czecho-Slovakian Fascists are anti-French, and therefore useful pawns for the British imperialist bourgeoisie in its struggle with French imperialism.

At present Czecho-Slovakia is making the best of both worlds by signing treaties with both Powers. With a large army and a budget deficit, Czecho-Slovakia has just signed a military and political treaty of alliance with France. The outward and formal sign of the alliance was the visit of President Masaryk, full of years and learning, to Paris. Significantly enough, the Paris Press compared his visit with that of the Tsar Nicholas II years ago. The political calibre of Dr. Masaryk may be best judged from his oracular remark:—

Now that Germany is surrendering unconditionally to France . . . the course of European reconstruction has advanced a further step.

This military alliance, as *The Times* points out, is quite incompatible with the hitherto pacific policy of Czecho-Slovakia. It is, in short, more than a defensive alliance. Against whom, then, is it directed? The answer is supplied in a report from the Prague correspondent of the *Daily Herald*. After pointing out that the officially proclaimed

policy of Czecho-Slovakia towards civil war in Germany is one of complete neutrality—except that Czecho-Slovakia would take the necessary steps to “protect her frontier”—he says:—

I gain a definite impression that Czecho-Slovakia would not abide by such a passive policy were France to demand the active intervention of Prague. It would not be the first occasion on which “incidents on the frontier” have been artificially evoked with a view to justifying interference. Czecho-Slovakia’s intervention would be far more probable in case of a proletarian dictatorship in Germany than in the event of a dictatorship of the Right.

The counter-revolutionary ring is completed by Finland, since 1918 a classic country of the White Terror. To Finland may now be added Sweden, where lately Hederstierna, Foreign Minister in the Conservative Government, openly advocated a military alliance of the two countries. This alliance was to be frankly counter-revolutionary, in that it was directed against Russia.

On the outskirts of the counter-revolution come Fascist Bulgaria, Rumania, where Fascism is increasing in strength, and Yugo-Slavia, where fierce repression of all working-class activity has long been the order of the day.

So far as the relation of Entente imperialism to the European counter-revolution is concerned, the outstanding rôle of French imperialism has long been a matter of common knowledge. Poland and the Little Entente—Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia, and Rumania—are notoriously French protégés. In the course of the present year credits to the tune of some 800 million francs have been granted by France to Poland, Rumania, and Yugo-Slavia. *The Times* says:—

It is understood that these credits have not taken the form of cash payments, but that they are being used for the purchase of war material belonging to the French Government or manufactured in France.

Reports are now current that the new French budget will contain an item of one and a-half milliard francs, for a loan to the Little Entente. Other large sums are mentioned as intended for Austria and Hungary. The Paris correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* wrote:—

The loan to Hungary will enable that country to improve and enlarge the mammoth Skoda ammunition works . . . making the plant bigger than Krupps during the war.

He points out that Schneider-Creusot secured control of Skoda after the war, and continues:—

Consummation of the scheme will give France control over all the munitions industries among its little allies.

The recent Franco-Polish oil convention, with its "extravagant privileges" for French capitalists, has been one further illustration of the dominating power possessed by French imperialism in Eastern and Central Europe.

However, it is totally false to omit any consideration of the relations of British or American imperialism with European reaction, as liberal and pacifist writers on foreign affairs in this country are so accustomed to do.

British imperialism was mainly responsible, acting through the League of Nations, for the capitalist "reconstruction" of Austria, which has proved such an enormous boon for the Austrian reactionaries. It is also angling for the lead in a similar "reconstruction" of White Hungary. It has floated loans to Czecho-Slovakia. It is credited with a far from unimportant part in the Bulgarian Fascist coup. It has, as pointed out earlier in this article, relations with Czecho-Slovakian Fascism. Vickers control the Rsista armament works in Rumania. Great interest has lately been manifested in Poland, not only by financial experts like Mr. Hilton Young, but by certain big industrialists of the calibre of Mr. W. L. Hichens, of Cammell Laird.

Finally, that certain forces in American imperialism have their fingers in the pie of European counter-revolution may be seen from the recent Finnish loan, which was eagerly taken up by Wall Street. It should not be forgotten, either, that Hitler is commonly reputed to receive considerable financial assistance from American sources.

This, then, is the picture. Throughout Europe the counter-revolution is either the wielder of State power or has a large and increasing voice in the control of that power. Further, through its associations with the great imperialist groups, the counter-revolution in Europe appears as part of a world-historical process, the process of capitalist decline. As night falls on capitalism, the gathering forces of the world revolution are faced by the world counter-revolution.

AMERICAN LABOUR'S CHAMBER OF COM- MERCE

By Wm. F. DUNNE

(Wm. F. Dunne, one of the leaders of left-wing trade unionism in America, was expelled at the Portland Convention of the American Federation of Labour. This ominous sign of the repetition of continental tactics of expulsion and division, already practised with ruinous results by the right wing in France, Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, and other countries, and attempted unsuccessfully by the British Labour Party Executive against the Communists, is a revelation of the growing crisis within the American Movement.)

IF the convention of the American Federation of Labour was a working-class gathering the result of its deliberations at Portland could arouse nothing but black despair on the part of the left-wing elements in the American Labour Movement. It was not a convention of workers, however, but a gathering of professional Labour leaders whose interest in the Labour Movement is exactly the same as the heads of any other well-paying business.

For weeks before the convention it was evident that the red menace of Communism was to be made the issue at the Portland meet. The series of articles sponsored by the officials of the United Mine Workers containing an invitation to the employers to join hands with the Labour leaders in stamping out radicalism sounded the key-note of the convention and outlined the policy of the Gompers machine.

The Portland Convention spent its time in hunting heretics and in unseating the writer, who acknowledged without equivocation his disbelief in the divine character of the officialdom of the American Labour Movement. This proceeding took up almost a whole day of the convention and was the feature of its sessions.

It was no spontaneous outburst of indignation on the part of the delegates, but a carefully prepared climax to an official scheme, which had for its object the defeat of all resolutions dealing with

amalgamation, a Labour Party, and the recognition of Soviet Russia. I was unseated on the second Monday of the convention, but as early as the preceding Tuesday the reporters of the capitalist Press had been told by the A.F. of L. publicity agents that I would be unseated ; the information was not given, however, to the correspondent of the Federated Press.

Two days before the proceedings against me were started John J. O'Leary, personal Press agent for Gompers and " Labour expert " of the *New York Herald*, in a special article in the *Portland Oregonian* predicted my unseating.

Never at any convention of the Federation has there been such close co-operation between the capitalist Press and the officialdom of the A.F. of L. Unlimited space was at the disposal of the reactionaries, and in not a single instance did a word of criticism of A.F. of L. officials or policies creep into the four employer-owned Portland sheets. The convention responded to this, and from beginning to end everything of a working-class character was carefully eliminated from the proceedings. So strong was this complex that two working men, who were one day watching Gompers get into his limousine after adjournment, were seized, searched, and manhandled by the police lieutenant in plain clothes who drove his car ; they were suspicious characters, you understand, because they did not fit into the picture.

There can be no doubt that the machine was frightened at the resolutions for amalgamation, the Labour Party, and recognition of Russia that cropped up from unexpected places. The convention of the Moulders' Union, whose president, Joseph Valentine, is a member of the Executive Council of the A.F. of L., had endorsed the Labour Party and Russian recognition just as the A.F. of L. went into session. Something like thirteen big international unions had expressed themselves in favour of one or all of the three propositions at conventions, to say nothing of the State federations and city central bodies who had taken similar action. The situation was full of dynamite for an officialdom which is trying to prove that it loves the wage-system more ardently than the employers themselves.

The high-salaried business men who speak for Labour did not give one moment's consideration to the idea that fighting against

progress is the job of the employers. They hold the same views as do the capitalists who employ the dues-paying workers in the unions, and acted accordingly as one knew they would do. Employers are more inclined to deal with organisations that have the viewpoint of the masters, so every effort was made to convince the employers that Labour hates anyone who advances the idea that the present system is not all it should be and that Labour organisations can never achieve power by catering to the employers' love of the capitalist system.

This was the strategy of the convention—to outdo chambers of commerce, commercial clubs, advertising associations, Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, and the Bar Association in denunciation of anything that could be interpreted as un-American, and into this category were placed recognition of Soviet Russia, amalgamation, and the Labour Party.

To attain this objective the full strength of the Gompers machine was mobilised. The first days of the session were taken up with religious and patriotic speeches in which the radicals were flayed. Frank Hodges, whose name will be mentioned with a curse by the British workers for many a long day to come in connection with Black Friday, warned the convention against the "borers from within"; Mayor Baker, elected by the Klan, and various ministers and relief workers, all sounded the same note; the local Press played up every such denunciation, and the not too courageous delegates were duly impressed.

Thus the stage was all set by Monday, October 8. In the report of the educational committee, the Federated Press was scored as an agency for the dissemination of Communist propaganda. Matthew Woll, heir apparent to the throne, speaking for the committee recommendation, urged the convention to unseat me. Bill Green, Secretary of the United Mine Workers, was recognised and opened the case for the prosecution without any motion being made, the report of the educational committee on the Federated Press being forgotten in the excitement. The evidence of the inquisitors consisted of articles, headlines, and editorials in one issue of the *Butte Bulletin* in which the charges of bribery made by Lewis and Farrington against each other were published. In an editorial I had referred to Lewis in connection with his Herrin

publicity as trying "to turn members of his union over to the hangman after they had been acquitted by a jury," and while these excerpts were being read I heard more than one grunt of approval from the delegates in my vicinity, nor were there any expressions of disapproval or anger such as the reactionaries expected; on the contrary, the convention was extremely silent and attentive.

Green ended his indictment by stating that a precedent for the proceedings could be found in the Scriptures as Lucifer had been expelled from heaven. I could not keep from laughing as I thought of the tremendous wing-surface that would be required for some of these Poland-China-swine-built Labour leaders to play the part of angels. Green also read letters seized by the Department of Justice raid on the office of Fred Merrick in Pittsburgh which showed that I was in that district during the 1922 strike of the coal miners. Phillip Murray, Vice-president of the U.M.W.A., made the motion for my expulsion after Green had finished his exhortation, and it was only then that it was remembered that the report of the educational committee had not yet been put before the convention. That matter was hurriedly disposed of and real business resumed.

Murray denounced me as a Communist and a bitter opponent of the officialdom of the United Mine Workers and of the A.F. of L. Green had read extracts from a speech I made at an open meeting the night before, in which I referred to the officialdom as "fat boys," and had stated that "I did not know it would be necessary to throw anyone out to prove their respectability," and, further, "that these people were more conservative than the employers." These statements were supposed to prove that I was not a good trade unionist and should be cast into outer darkness.

I secured the floor and spoke for about forty minutes. I think in justice to myself it is fair to say that never before at an A.F. of L. Convention have the bureaucrats of the Labour Movement heard the truth about themselves worded in so clear a manner. I mentioned the fact that Labour is only about one-seventh organised in the United States, "and yet," I said, "you strut around as though you had capitalism by the throat." I told them that I had heard much boasting of the revocation of charters, but nothing about

the spread of organisation. I told them that the Scriptural precedent discovered by Green "gave the proceedings a religious atmosphere that was quite in keeping with the heresy-hunting proclivities of the A.F. of L. officials." I mentioned the fear for their good jobs that was expressed in their hostility to amalgamation and the Labour Party, and told them that I did not consider them workers ; that they were as far removed from the struggles of the rank and file as were the employers they sought to placate. I told them that it was not the first time I had faced a white-collared mob bent upon my destruction and that I had no intention of defending anything I had said or done ; in a capitalist court I would defend myself, but not before the lackeys of the capitalist class ; any statement I might make would be for the purpose of making my position clear and not to apologise for it.

Adjournment was had before the discussion was finished, and upon convening in the afternoon there occurred what was, to me, the most pitiful spectacle of the whole convention. Fred Mooney, of West Virginia, one of the U.M.W.A. delegates, was forced by the Lewis machine to support Murray's motion and attack me. He was placed in the position of doing the bidding of the machine or of being deprived of all financial assistance in his coming trial, arising out of the march of the miners three years ago. He based his attack upon my speech and said that, only for that, he would have opposed the motion ; he stated that I was being "framed" in Michigan just as he was in West Virginia, but that I had no place in the convention because of my beliefs ; he became hysterical and incoherent many times during his speech, his voice rising to a scream in which no words could be discerned. I felt genuinely sorry for him, but he is only another fighter in the ranks of Labour who has been ruined to serve the ambitions of cowardly and dishonest officialdom.

Tracy, of the Brick and Clay Workers, took umbrage at my blue shirt, and used most of his time in denouncing Foster. Greenstein, of the Jewellery Workers, resurrected the exploded canard about my alleged Ku Klux Klan affiliation, but I was given no opportunity to reply. I trust that Greenstein has been repaid for his services and is now in good standing with the Gompers machine after having been out of the A.F. of L. for two years.

The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of unseating me, but it was not unanimous although every effort was made to have it so. The few who braved the machine will undoubtedly suffer for their temerity. Among them were Sillinsky and Soderberg of the Tailors' International, Ed. Launer of the Paper and Sulphite Workers, Ohls of the Wisconsin Federation of Labor, Burns of the Tacoma Central Labor Council, Duncan of Seattle, and Stevens of Minneapolis.

Following my unseating, the work of railroading amalgamation, the Labour Party, and recognition of Soviet Russia began. The amalgamation resolutions were lumped together, the report of the committee denounced them as communistic, no discussion was permitted, and no roll-call obtained.

The Labour Party resolutions met almost the same fate, although a number of delegates supported them ; they too were denounced as un-American and against the interests of the Labour movement, but a roll-call was secured nevertheless, and a surprising sentiment in their behalf was disclosed in spite of the intimidation of the machine. One vote out of every thirteen was cast for the Labour Party.

Recognition of Russia also commanded support that surprised the administration after the anti-red offensive was supposed to have terrorised every delegate. Gompers and Woll were the only ones who took the floor against the resolution. Hays of the Typographical, Healy of the Stationary Engineers, Smart of the Switchmen, and Johnston of the Machinists all spoke for it.

It can be safely said, I think, that the offensive against the left wing reached its height in Portland. Another period of industrial depression is just around the corner and the A.F. of L. now has less than 3,000,000 members ; the militants have brought their programme on the convention floor and it was necessary to expel one of them to prevent the machine being challenged on all fronts. Nothing was done that could possibly strengthen Labour, except perhaps to endorse the Workers' Educational Bureau and that is now safely under the patronage of the bureaucracy. Trying times are ahead of American Labour and in throttling proposals advocated by the militants the A.F. of L. dynasty has done the one thing necessary to convince the intelligent trade unionists that the only

hope for American Labour lies in the programme of the Trade Union Educational League and in the rallying of the rank and file of the unions around that programme for a merciless fight against any and all officials who oppose it.

THE CRITICISM OF PROLETARIAN ART

By A. BOGDANOV

ALL creative work, whether it is the creative work of Nature or of man, elemental or systematic, leads to organised, harmonised, enduring forms only by way of *regulation*. These are two closely combined and mutually indispensable sides of every organisational process. Thus, in the elemental development of life, the creative quality is "mutability," it is this that is constantly creating new combinations, new departures from the earlier forms; these are then regulated by "natural selection," which eliminates from their number all those that are not adapted to the environment, while it preserves and strengthens those that are well adapted. In production the creative quality is labour, for ever changing the combinations of things; the regulator is systematic control by the consciousness which, constantly watching the results of the effort, stops it when the direct aim has been achieved, or changes its direction when it departs from this aim.

In the work of the artist we have the same relations: new combinations of living images are always being created, and at the same time they are regulated by conscious, systematic selection, by the mechanism of "self-criticism," which eliminates all that is not harmonious and does not correspond to the task, and preserves all that is suitable. When self-criticism is insufficient, the result is contradiction, incoherence, an accumulation of images without art.

The development of art on a social scale is regulated by the whole social environment, which accepts or rejects the works introduced into it and supports or kills new currents in the arts. But there is also a systematic regulation, which is accomplished by *criticism*. Its real basis is of course also the social environment: the work of criticism is done from the standpoint of a certain collective—in a class society, from the standpoint of one class or the other.

We shall now examine the way, the directions, in which the proletarian criticism can and should regulate the development of proletarian art.

The first thing we have to do is to establish the limitations of proletarian art, to define clearly its scope, so that it shall not dissolve in the surrounding cultural environment or mix up with the art of the old world. This is not so simple a task as it might seem at first; so far, blunders have always been made and confusion caused in this respect.

In the first place, there is seldom a distinction made between proletarian art and peasant art. No doubt the working class, especially our Russian proletariat, has come from the peasantry, and there are many points of contact between these two classes. The peasantry, in its mass, is also a toiling and also an exploited element of society; it is owing to this that a prolonged political union can be created between the workers and peasants. But in co-operation and in ideology, in the fundamental methods of thought and action, there are deep distinctions between them *on points of principle*. The soul of the proletariat, its organisational basis, is collectivism, fellowship, co-operation; it becomes conscious of itself as a class in the degree that this basis develops in its life and penetrates it. Peasants and small freeholders are mostly inclined toward individualism, toward the spirit of personal interest and private ownership; they are "petty bourgeois"—an incorrect and mechanical name, because "bourgeois" really means an inhabitant of the city, but expressing correctly the real character of the vital strivings of the peasantry. Besides, the patriarchal order of the family household preserves among the peasants the spirit of authority and religion; the inevitable narrowness of horizon characteristic of the village and the dependence of backward agriculture on elemental forces (which to the peasant are mysterious) all tend to produce the same result.

Examine the whole of peasant poetry, not only the pre-revolutionary, but even the most modern, that of the Left Social - Revolutionaries: even the "Red Sound" and the "Almanach," by the talented poets Kluyev, Essenin, and others. Here you meet everywhere with the fetish of "our earth," and of the bases of "*our own household*"; here also is the whole Olympus

of the peasant gods—the Trinity, the Virgin Mary, George the Brave, and Nicholas the Benefactor; then note their constant gravitation towards the past, the honouring of leaders of the unorganised, elemental forces of the people, such as Stenka Rasin (the bandit hero). All this is quite alien to the consciousness of the socialist proletariat.

And yet such works are printed in workers' papers and magazines as proletarian, and are considered by critics also as such. It is true that many of the proletarian poets started out with peasant poetry—either because they recently had come from the village and still preserved their connection with it, or simply by way of imitation. The first periodicals of the workers' poets, *Our Songs*, which were published in Moscow in 1913 and then destroyed by the Tsarist censors, are full of purely peasant poems. A great part of the poetry is also of a transitional type.

Another source of confusion was the influence of the soldiers, to which the proletariat submitted in some degree during the years of war and revolution. For the most part, the soldiers are these same peasants, torn away from production and living in masses in conditions of communism in consumption, and trained for the business of destruction or largely engaged in that business. The struggle for peace, the hostility towards the rich, a hostility less conscious and less abstract than that of the proletariat, brought the soldiers temporarily into political alliance with the proletariat and caused a close communion between the two, although as social types they are not related to each other and are even opposed to each other by their rôle in life. The fellowship in the fight caused the ideology of the soldiers to find its way into some workers' papers and taint the mind of some of the more facile proletarian poets. Hence it happened that the fighting songs of the revolution were sometimes tinged by specifically soldiers' ideas, and thus the nobility of tone, which is obligatory and natural to a class bearing higher ideals, was impaired. In these verses the spirit of narrow personal hatred toward individual representatives of the bourgeoisie was introduced, a spirit which may have some justification in life, but is inadmissible in poetry because it degrades the ideal of the struggle of a great class. And even excesses were admitted, such as malignant jeerings over the beaten enemies, praise of lynching,

and sadistic exultations—we are sorry to say there were even instances of these. Of course these things have nothing to do with the ideology of the proletariat. For the ideology of the proletariat contains characteristic fighting motives, but not vulgar soldiers' motives; a firm hostility towards capital as a social force, but not a petty maliciousness towards individual representatives of that class, who are the inevitable product of their social environment. Of course the proletariat must resort to arms when this is demanded by the interests of its liberty, its development, its ideal; but it fights against that social primitiveness which is the cause of all armed struggle. The brutality which this struggle breeds in the human soul may for some time master the mind of the fighters, but it is strange and hostile to the proletarian culture, which admits severity only of necessity. The spirit of real power is nobility, and the labouring collectivity is a real power. It is destined to become the new aristocracy of culture—the last in the history of mankind, the first that really merits such a name.

Another line of separation should be drawn by our criticism between proletarian art and intellectual socialism. Here the confusion is very natural, because of the closeness of the ideals. But still there are deep and important divergences. The toiling intellectuals have come from the bourgeois culture; on that culture and for it they have worked, and on it they have been brought up. Their principle is individualism. And the very character of intellectual work is apt to maintain this tendency: in the work of the scholar, the artist, or author co-operation is not felt directly, the rôle of the community is not manifest, there is more external distinctness, an illusion of perfectly independent personal activity. And when co-operation is evident, then the intellectual occupies the authoritarian position of leader and organiser—as an engineer at the factory, a physician in a hospital, &c. Hence comes the element of authority which is inevitably preserved in the bourgeois world and its culture, as an organisational supplement to their anarchical basis of life.

Owing to all this it so happens for the most part that even when the toiling intellectual rises to a deep and sincere sympathy with the working class, to faith in the Socialist ideal, the past still preserves its influence on the manner of his thought, on his

perception of life, on his conception of the forces and the paths of its development.

An instance of this is Verhaeren's drama *The Dawn*, which is the first play mentioned whenever the question of plays for a Proletarian Theatre is raised, and is considered as meriting production in such a theatre, without any comments, as entirely "belonging" to us. This is a mistake. The play is excellent, and it is a valuable inheritance for us, but still it is an inheritance from the old world. In it the spirit of Socialism is clothed in an authoritarian individualistic shell, which must be understood but cannot be accepted at face-value. The whole piece is constructed around the heroic personality of the people's tribune, who leads the masses. This personality is the soul of the strife and victory; without him the masses are ignorant and blind, unable to find their own way. It is on the tragedy of this character that the author centres the interest of his drama. This is the way the old world looks upon the significance of personality. Collectivism has another way of constructing life and explaining it. Of course the community recognises heroes, it may even create a hero—but as a personification of the forces of the *collectivity*, as an expression of its collective will, an apostle of its ideals.

And as long as there is a different attitude towards heroes, this is only a proof that the collectivity has not yet matured to a clear conception of itself.

The great Belgian sculptor, Constantine Meunier, in his statues depicting the life of the workers, made an actual cult of Labour. But notwithstanding the deep love of the artist towards the things he depicts, notwithstanding all his sympathetic understanding—still it is not the cult of the *Collectivity*. His merit is great, despite this; but the proletarian artist should know that Meunier's work is not a perfect model for him: his tasks lie further on.

- x The artistic self-consciousness of the working class must be pure and clear, free from every foreign element. This is the first task of our criticism.

Our criticism of proletarian art should be directed in the first place to its content.

In the nascent culture of a class that is young and living under difficult conditions, a certain *narrowness* of content is quite natural, as a result of the lack of experience and the inevitable limitations in the field of observation. Thus fiction, at the beginning, takes its themes and material from the life of the workers themselves and the revolutionary intellectuals who are connected with them; only little by little, and so far to a very small degree, does it widen its field. Yet there can be no doubt but that proletarian art must enclose in the field of its experience the whole of society and Nature, the whole life of the universe.

What can be done by our criticism in this regard? Of course it is not in a position to give the nascent art what it wants. But it can and it should put before it constantly the problem of widening its field; it can and should note every success attained in this direction, and point out the new possibilities connected with this success. And, indirectly, it may render real assistance in the making of such successes by comparing, wherever opportunity offers, the works of proletarian art with the works of the old art which are similar in their "artistic idea," *i.e.*, in the organisational problem they try to solve. It will then be found that in the old art both the material and the point of view, and sometimes even the very principle of solution, are quite different.

Especially this will be found in relation to the favourite problems of classical literature—the organisation of the family, the struggle between "lower" and "higher" motives in the human soul, the passions which master men, the education of character, &c.

Some of these and similar problems have already been put and solved in one way or another by science or philosophy. Our criticism should point out and compare these solutions with the artistic solutions of the same problems: the great collectivism of the universal experience of man, which is stored beneath the shell of the scientific world, will in many cases prove a precious guide for young, searching, and hesitating creative effort.

The narrowness of artistic content may consist not only in the limited field of organised experience, but also in narrow one-sided perception, in the limited nature of the primary attitude towards the material of experience. The most typical case is an excessive concentration on the social struggle, the limitation of art to an

organising and fighting rôle. This is very natural for a youthful and fighting class, fighting moreover under the most difficult conditions. It is even a necessary phase, during the first stages of development of this class, while it is still discovering itself through its consciousness of opposition to another class in society and is working out the fighting aspect of its ideology. But afterwards this point of view inevitably becomes insufficient.

+ The working class advances towards its ideal through struggle, yet its ideal is not one of destruction, but of a new organisation of life. This organisation is, moreover, to be *all* new, immeasurably complex, and harmonious. Consequently the cult of the fighting consciousness in itself does not give us a solution of our main problem. It is necessary to work out an ideology of Socialist construction. This course has already been taken here in Russia by proletarian science, and proletarian art must develop in the same direction. It will do so faster, and with greater energy, as the working class comes nearer to the accomplishment of its ideal.

In our present-day proletarian poetry the agitational content predominates—thousands of poems calling to the class struggle and glorifying the victories in that struggle, hundreds of short stories exposing capital and its servants. This must be changed. The part should not be mistaken for the whole. To give oneself up to a universal study of life is of course much more difficult than to join in an attack on the hostile lines; but for Socialism it is more necessary, because only a universal understanding of life in all its concrete forces and forms will furnish the necessary support for all-embracing creative effort.

The narrowing down of poetry to social agitational themes has an unfavourable effect even on its artistic side, which is essentially its organising force. It becomes stereotyped, and it dulls the sympathetic perception which fuses the masses with the poet.

Then, even when the content unfolds further, it is still frequently viewed from this same angle as narrower than it really is. Thus in a book by A. Gastev, which has been recently published, the chief theme is machine production—its gigantic organising force, the way in which it unites the labouring collectivity, and the might and power over the elements which it gives to that collectivity.

This is one of the primary ideas of the *cultural-creative* proletarian consciousness; yet Gastev named his book the *Poetry of the Workers' Blow*, as though his task had not crossed the limits of the *fighting* consciousness of the proletariat. For it is evident that the words "Workers' Blow" (especially in an atmosphere of a stormy revolution) will be associated with the idea of the social struggle, but not with the idea of a blow by, let us say, a blacksmith's hammer. And even this is quite an insufficient symbol of machine technique.

The agitational narrowing down of artistic ideas is manifested also in the fact that the capitalists and bourgeois intellectuals are represented as though they are *personally* bad, cruel, dishonest people. Such a conception is naive and contradictory to the collective method of thinking. It is not a question of personal qualities at all, as between one bourgeois or another; it is not against individuals that revolutionary feeling and revolutionary effort should be directed. It is a question of the position of classes, and the struggle is waged against a social system, against the collectivities which are connected with that system and defend it. The capitalist may personally be even a very noble man; but in so far as he is a representative of his class his actions and thoughts will necessarily be determined by his social position. Even at the moment of battle he should be regarded by the conscious proletarian, not as a personal enemy, but as a blind link in the chain forged by history. In order to gain the victory over the old world it is more useful to understand it in its better representatives and its sublimer revelations than to imagine that there are only bad people and vicious motives in it. The collective thought and will of the working class should not be exchanged for pettiness.

In close relation with the agitational narrowing down of creative work is another theory, recently brought forward, according to which proletarian art must infallibly be "buoyant" and exulted. We are sorry to state that this theory is quite a favourite, especially with the younger and less experienced proletarian poets, although it is merely childish. The scale of collective class feeling could not and should not be so limited. No doubt it is natural for a labouring collectivity to have a lively and vivid sense of its power. But it should not be forgotten that this force is also liable to defeats.

Art must, first of all and always, be perfectly sincere and true, for the very reason that it is an organising factor of life—how can untrustworthy art, untrusted, organise anything?

It is true that despair is not worthy of fighters; but the deception of rosy glasses is still less worthy of them; it is a flight from reality, a deceiving mask for that very same despair. This theory would degrade poetry to the level of that which put for its slogan:—

Elevating deception is dearer to us,
than the mass of common truths.

No, not sweet glorification, but unshattered will and historic pride—these are the things necessary for the proletariat surrounded as it is by enemies on all sides :—

Si fractus illabatur orbis
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.¹

The ancient poets, individualists, knew what real courage is; all the more should it be known to the poet of the new community.

In its whole regulating work our criticism of proletarian art should constantly have this thing in view: *the spirit of Labour collectivism is in the first place objectivity.*

The criticism of proletarian art from the standpoint of its form should pursue one perfectly definite and clear object: harmony between form and content.

Of course the proletariat must learn artistic technique from its predecessors in the first place. Here necessarily the temptation rises to take as a model the very latest that has been worked out by the old art. And here it is easy to make blunders.

In art, form is inseparably connected with content, and this is the very reason why the latest is not always the most perfect. When a social class has accomplished its progressive rôle in the historical process and is going toward decadence the content of its art inevitably also becomes decadent; and after the content follows the form, which is made to suit it. The decadence of a social class takes place as it passes towards parasitism. In the wake of this follows satiety, the sense of life becomes dull. Life is deprived of the main source of new, developing content for art—social creative activity. Life becomes empty, it loses its “rationale,” *i.e.*, its social sense.

¹ Though the earth fall asunder he'll not know
Fear of its ruin.

In order to fill up this emptiness the members of the dying class search for new enjoyments and for novel sensations. Art organises these searchings: on the one hand it stimulates failing sensuality and passes into decadent perversions; on the other hand, refining æsthetic perceptions, it strives to complicate its forms and embellish them by various petty devices. All this has been observed in history more than once at the decay of different cultures—the Oriental, Antique, and Feudal; and it can be observed during the last decades in connection with the decay of bourgeois culture. The greater part of the new currents in art is included in the decadent “modernism” and “futurism.” Russian bourgeois art in 1917 was dragging along behind European art like our anæmic and flabby bourgeoisie itself, which tended to wither without having ever bloomed.

It is necessary to learn the technique of art, not from these organisers of the decadence of life, but from the great masters of the arts, who came at the period of the rise and flowering of the classes now decaying—the revolutionary romanticists and the classics of different times. From the “latest” one may learn some small details, in which they are frequently very skilful, but even in that one should be careful not to become contaminated by the germs of decay.

The simplicity and purity of the forms of our great masters, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Nekrassov, and Tolstoy, correspond best to the tasks of the new culture. Of course, the new contents will inevitably work out new forms; but it is necessary to start with the best of the past.

In its first steps our workers’ poetry manifested a tendency to regular rhythmic verse with simple rhymes. At present it manifests a tendency to free rhythms and complicated new and frequently unexpected rhymes. This is clearly the influence of the modern poetry of the intellectuals. It is doubtful whether it should be encouraged. The new forms are more difficult. The labour of mastering them implies an unnecessary expenditure of energy, which detracts from the more important task of working out and developing the artistic contents.

Let there even be a certain amount of monotony in regularity. It has its justification in life. The worker at the factory lives in a

kingdom of regular rhythm—simple elementary rhyme. In the “steel chaos” of machines and motors, the waves of varying, but on the whole mechanically regular, rhythms are intermingled with each other; further, the continuity of the smaller repetitions is crossed by rarer and heavier repetitions (as by cæsura or rhyme in verse). These sounds with their constant repetitions forge out the measured word-images, in which the worker with an artistic nature strives to clothe his emotions.

Later on, when the worker has an opportunity to absorb the rhythms of living Nature, where there is less repetition and regularity, this monotony will disappear naturally. But to overcome it by imitating the poets of a strange environment and atmosphere is an unnecessary task, which only increases difficulties that are already numerous.

The most difficult form for the new poetry is the prose-poem. While dispensing with rhyme and any obvious rhythm, it demands a stricter rhythm of images, and at the same time a sufficient harmony of sound combination. These demands are not fulfilled to a sufficient degree in the work of A. Gastev, *The Poetry of the Workers' Blow*, where most are prose poems. In this is manifested the inexperience of young creative work, which follows the most difficult ways, perhaps for the simple reason that it is not quite aware of the actual difficulties. Our criticism may assist in saving artistic efforts by explaining the hidden difficulties of different forms—a question which is not dealt with in the old theory of art.

Step by step our criticism will create a new theory of art which will include also all the variety of the experience of the old criticism, but revised and systematised anew on the basis of the higher universally organisational viewpoint.

It should be noted that in some cases the criticism of form cannot be separated from the criticism of the content; as a matter of fact they become fused with each other. This is so especially in the question of artistic symbols. Such a symbol is a living image which serves as a kind of designation for a whole series of other images connected with it; it is a means of introducing them to the mind simultaneously and in an organised manner. Thus the Ghost of Hamlet's father is the symbol of the vague echoes of the

criminal deed, which gradually spread through the society concerned and disclosed the secret. The "Great City" in Verhaeren's *Dawn* is the symbol of the whole organisation of capitalist society. But being a living image, and not only a naked designation, such symbols have their own contents, which are, moreover, depicted in the first place. The Ghost is a spirit, the Great City some capital town. These contents are themselves subjected to all the rules of art and the corresponding criticisms. If, for instance, the Ghost of Hamlet's father behaved in a fashion unlike that in which ghosts are supposed to conduct themselves in the fancy of the people, then it would be grossly inartistic. The *Blue Bird*, of Maeterlinck, notwithstanding its deep idea, would not have become a great work of art if the symbols in themselves had not formed a beautiful, harmonious fairy tale, appealing immediately to children.

Of course our criticism should consider the symbols from this side, beginning with the very selection of the symbols.

Our cruel and coarse times—the epoch of militarism in action—sometimes prompt our artists to use cruel and coarse symbols. A worker fiction writer, in order to give strong and acute expression to the idea of renouncing everything personal in the name of the great collective cause, will symbolise this by having the hero murder the woman he loves. Our criticism points out that this kind of symbol is inadmissible; it contradicts the very idea of collectivism; for the collectivist, a woman is not merely a source of personal happiness, but a real or potential member of that same collectivity. Or, for instance, one enthusiastic poet, in his desire to express readiness to struggle against the old world to the end, without stopping even before the greatest and most fearful sacrifices, threatens:—

In the name of our To-morrow we will burn Raphael,
Destroy the museums, tread down the flowers of art.

In connection with this, one reviewer remarked quite correctly but too mildly that "this is not ideology, but psychology," *i.e.*, that the poet, while submitting to the impetus of his own feeling, has forgotten the social organising rôle of art. This is a symbol which might appeal to a soldier, but never to a worker. A soldier

may and should shell Rheims Cathedral if there is or if there is supposed to be an observation point of the enemy in one of its towers. But what makes a poet select this Hindenburgian image? The poet can only be sorry for such a cruel necessity, never praise it. When creative work itself follows the current to such a degree, then it does not elevate it. The proletariat should never forget the co-operation of generations, which is not at all the same as the co-operation of the classes at the present time. The proletariat should not forget the respect we owe to the great dead who trod smooth the way for us, who bequeathed us their spirits, and from their graves extend to us their helping hand in our striving to this ideal.

In the questions of the forms of art, as well as in those of its contents, our criticism should constantly remind the artist of his responsible rôle as organiser of the living forces of a great collectivity.

Criticism regulates the life of art, not only in its creative aspect, but also in its perception. It explains art to the wide masses, it points out to men what and how they should take from art for the arrangement of their lives.

In respect to the art of the old world this is the only task of our criticism, for we are unable to regulate its development. But in respect to our new art, both tasks are equally important.

It is not only a matter of disclosing the meaning of the symbols when they are difficult to understand, or explaining what is hidden behind the images—things that the artist himself may find difficulty in formulating. It is not a simple question of drawing conclusions which the artist perhaps was unable to express clearly. Criticism should also point out the new problems that arise from the results attained by each work, and the new possibilities which go with them. And the most important thing is that criticism should introduce each work of art into the whole class culture of the masses, into the general scheme of proletarian relationship towards life. In living images it should find and point out the universal scope of the all-organisational standpoint.

This is the way that our criticism must follow in order itself to become creative work.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

Peasant Congress

A GROUP of peasants who were present at the Moscow Agricultural Exhibition in the summer of this year decided to summon an International Congress of working peasants. The Congress met in Moscow on October 10. There were more than one hundred delegates present from peasants' organisations in twenty countries. All the European countries were represented except Italy, England, and Ireland. There were delegates present representing American farmers' organisations; and a delegate from Mexico.

The political complexion of the Congress was essentially non-party. There were very few Communists among the delegates.

The Agenda of the Congress included the following points :—

- (1) The struggle against war.
- (2) The situation confronting the peasantry in capitalist countries.
- (3) The results of the agrarian revolution in Russia.
- (4) Peasants' co-operatives in Russia and other countries.
- (5) Closer relations between the peasantry and the working class.

Zinoviev was invited to address the Congress, and welcomed the proposal to set up a Peasant International. He reported that Lenin, who is now convalescent, displayed particular interest in the movement for the creation of a Peasant International, considering it as an event of the utmost significance.

The Congress discussions found expression in a manifesto addressed to the working peasants of all countries from which we take the following extracts :—

Brothers and comrades ! Since primeval times we have been winning the fruits of the soil at the price of heavy labour. At first we did this in free comradeship : each for all and all for each. The land was free ; forest and meadow, hunting and fishing, belonged to each and all. But the power seized by the nobility robbed us of our freedom, degraded us into slaves. For a thousand years we bore the yoke. Then came the emancipation of the peasantry. But this brought us no relief from serfdom. We were robbed of our rights to forest and meadow, hunting and fishing. Broad tracts of the best land remained the property of the great landowners, whose sole activity consisted in extorting high rents from us, in leading the lives of feudal lords, and in hunting over our fields.

Now a new race of lords has sprung up beside the old : the capitalists. And these too live by preying on us. They join together in cartels and trusts in order that they may force high prices on us. In autumn the speculators come and buy up our crops at low prices, to sell them again in the spring at double the price they paid. In America the high tariffs of the railroads deprive the farmers of half their income. On every side we are encompassed by deceit, usury, robbery. In the colonial countries the broad peasant masses are impoverished beneath the predatory yoke of foreign imperialist capitalism.

The large landowners and capitalists are backed up by the bourgeois State with its hosts of officials and police, its cliques of army officers. A mighty organisation opposes us. It forces our sons to fill its barracks, it carries on wars of plunder, and wars for the division of plunder, in which wars we working peasants are driven in millions to our deaths

The working peasantry is beginning to awaken at last, it is beginning to realise that it must no longer entrust its fate to the landlords and capitalists. It has already attempted to organise parties in various countries, and to seize State power. But it has not yet struck the right path. It has attempted to govern in collaboration with its enemy, with the ruling class ; but the cunning business politicians of the ruling class have outwitted, corrupted, and bought the leaders of the peasantry. The peasants' parties have thus been tools of the ruling class instead of weapons aiding the working peasants in their struggle. In Bulgaria, where the peasantry attempted to seize power for itself alone, it was taken by surprise by a small band of conspirators, one-time officers and rulers. The peasants were driven from their position of power and crushed ; thousands of them were thrown into prison or murdered.

The peasantry cannot wield State power, either in co-operation with the ruling classes or alone. If it is to rule, it must have an honest ally in the towns, for in the modern State the centre of power is in the towns. They that rule the towns rule the country. But the working peasant lives in the village, his companions are scattered over the fields. His honest ally in the town—this is the working class, which suffers as much from exploitation by the ruling class as does the peasantry. But the working class of the towns, dependent on its own resources, is too weak to carry on a victorious fight against the bourgeois State. The workers in the towns and the peasantry must fight together for their joint victory

Hitherto the ruling classes have adopted the successful tactics of inciting peasants and town workers against one another. They have persuaded the peasantry that increased power on the part of the workers would imply that more land would be taken from the peasants, that property would be divided, all liberties suppressed. We have been able to convince ourselves with our own eyes, in the Workers' and Peasants' State of Russia, that all these assertions are falsehoods. The peasants of Russia have not only retained their land but they have received that of the former great landowners as well. They enjoy perfect liberty. Their property is protected, they can sell their products without restriction. They administer the affairs of their villages by means of their own Soviets. Nobody offends their national feelings, or interferes with them in the exercise of their religion. Emancipated from Tsarist, landowning, and capitalist oppression, they are co-operating with the town workers to become free, creative, and cultured human beings. We must follow their example

You must emancipate yourselves from the dictatorship of the ruling class. You must learn to regard the workers as your allies and comrades in the struggle. You must fight together with them to crush the power of the ruling class, and to establish the Workers' and Peasants' Government all over the world.

An additional appeal was addressed to the poor peasants in the colonial countries. Emphasis was laid on the misery of their position and the intensity of their exploitation at the hands both of capitalist imperialism and the native ruling classes. The need for a common struggle side by side with the workers and peasants of the mother countries was stressed : " Pariahs of the colonies, unite ! "

An International Peasants' Council has been set up to carry on work in the spirit of the Congress manifesto. It contains representatives of every country present at the Congress, with power to add to its number as organisations in fresh countries affiliate. The secretary is Smirnov, Russian People's Commissar for Agriculture.

GERMANY

The Political Situation

THE last month in Germany has seen chiefly victories for the counter-revolution. On October 29-30 the Saxon Workers' Government was overthrown by the Reichswehr under General Müller. One or two prominent Social Democrats visited Dresden and succeeded in persuading several Social Democratic deputies to break the united front : a new coalition government was formed, comprising the Social Democrats and the bourgeois Centre Parties. The left-wing Social Democrats, like Zeigner, Premier in the Workers' Government, were not equal to the occasion. At the Chemnitz Works Councils Conference they advised against an immediate general strike.

A few days after the *coup d'état* in Saxony the Social Democrats, their task accomplished, resigned from the Great Coalition. A Fascist dictatorship now appears to be imminent. Negotiations between Stresemann and the Nationalists have been proceeding for some time, so far without final success. Already there have been a succession of separatist *coups* throughout the Rhineland. The separatists are most obviously in the pay of France, and, as one of their proclamations said, their intention was to free the Rhineland from any " radical " or left-wing movements among the masses of the population. A Fascist *putsch* in Bavaria has failed because of a quarrel in the Fascist ranks.

Stinnes and other big industrialists, Thyssen and Krupp, are openly fighting for the ten-hour day. Stinnes has locked out all the workers at one of his concerns, and has refused to take any back except on the ten-hour-day basis. Meanwhile, the negotiations in the Ruhr between the industrialists and the French continue.

An isolated workers' rising at Hamburg was crushed after many days' severe street fighting. Rumours of impending civil war are continuous. The Thuringian Workers' Government still stands at the time of writing, but a coup similar to that performed in Saxony is being prepared against it.

The ruin and degradation of the Social Democratic Party is now complete. Mr. Robert Dell, the *New Statesman* correspondent, who was quoted in these notes last month, wrote, immediately after the Saxon *coup d'état* :—

Should there be a general strike in Saxony I suppose *Vorwärts* and the Socialist and Trade Union leaders would do their best to wreck it. *Vorwärts* is doing its utmost to wreck the United Front where it exists and prevent it where it does not The once great German Socialist Party is, indeed,

a sorry spectacle. Cowardice, self-seeking, and corruption have done their work, and the rank and file drift helpless, like a rudderless ship.

Communist Tactics

In face of the changed situation, the tactics of the Communist Party are of the first importance. Accordingly we reproduce a special circular issued by the Central Executive of the Party at the end of October :—

Thanks to the treachery of the left-wing Social Democrats, who united with the right wing and the Federation of Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.) on the occasion of the dissolution of the Saxon Workers' Government by the Reich, the fighting strength of the united working-class front—which had just been achieved—was weakened to such a degree that it was necessary once more to draw back from the decisive struggle. The left-wing Social Democrats and the trade union bureaucracy, in thus aiding the reaction, did their work thoroughly. The working class was faced with the alternative, either to go into battle disunited, divided, and risking defeat, or to avoid a decisive action in order to re-establish, as quickly as possible, the fighting front that the Social Democratic leaders had broken. This last to be done in spite of these leaders, or with new leaders chosen from among the Social Democratic rank and file. It is generally recognised that the left-wing Social Democratic leaders shirked a fight : in Saxony, the Zeigner group, the so-called "left" in Thuringia, the whole of the Berlin District Executive. But it is also recognised that these left-wing leaders still possess the confidence of the revolutionary-minded Social Democratic workers, of which they took advantage.

The Chemnitz Conference, where the left-wing Social Democratic leaders succeeded in obstructing the vote of a resolution declaring for an immediate general strike, is an excellent example of this. In the same way the left-wing Social Democratic leaders at Berlin have even yet been able to prevent the formation of a Committee of Action to prepare for the struggle.

The military strength of the enemy has now reached its climax. There are, however, certain factors making for disunity, such as the opposition between Bavaria and the Reich. This is essentially an opposition within the ranks of the militarists—the von Seeckt group on one side, the Ludendorff group on the other.

To enter on a decisive struggle with the working class divided in two against an adversary who is still united and who has achieved the maximum of his military strength would be an historical catastrophe of the first order. It would bring certain and final defeat, not only to the German, but also to the Russian Revolution. On the other hand, victory is assured if we prepare the way for the attack by uniting beforehand the forces of the working class by propaganda and partial actions, and by dividing the forces of the enemy. Every member of the Party must understand that in the present situation the political general strike means the struggle for power, and consequently armed insurrection, which we must carry through without a pause till the enemy is completely crushed—under pain of being completely crushed ourselves.

This being so, there can be no half-measures. We know that the enemy are relying on an attack from our side without sufficient military or political preparation. The enemy know that time is working against them. Time works for us if we use it with the greatest energy, rapidity, and foresight in order to complete the political, technical, and organising preparations for the decisive struggle.

The time left to us is clearly very short. Party members must use all their efforts to re-establish the United Front which had been achieved.

The Social Democratic workers must be completely separated from their present left-wing leaders, or else they must choose new left-wing leaders able and ready for action.

We must secure that a number of these left-wing leaders will join with us in proclaiming the general strike. Otherwise, if we proclaim it ourselves, supported by

the Works Councils and the Committees of Action, these left-wing leaders must be already discredited and we must sufficiently possess the confidence of the working class to lead it into action as a solid phalanx.

Our chief tasks are :—

(1) To negotiate locally, regionally, and nationally with the Federation of Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), the Federation of Officials' Union (A.D.B.), the Clerical Workers' Federation (Afa-Bund), and the Social Democratic Party, with, as a common objective, the struggle for bread and against Bavarian reaction, and the preparation of the general strike.

(2) To strengthen and improve, with the utmost energy, our technical preparations and our organisation. To this end, we must put ourselves in a position to take part in all the partial day-to-day conflicts, which are increasing in number, and in which we must take the lead, so that we can use them as a basis for the decisive struggle. We must show the greatest activity in all spontaneous conflicts. We must make the Party firm by establishing it on an illegal basis of the utmost strictness, and by taking part in the whole wide movement of the masses.

(3) To gain the active support, or to neutralise, the petty bourgeois elements who are divided chiefly among the Fascist organisations, the Reichswehr, and the police.

The decisive struggle can only begin on a rising wave of spontaneous mass conflicts, in which we must take part, and which we must lead and organise. Inevitably, there will be isolated local conflicts, looting, &c. We have not to oppose these, but to consider coolly and precisely just how far we can go without being prematurely defeated.

The most important slogans and demands to be put forward in these revolutionary skirmishes must be :—

- (1) Payment of wages in dollars (*i.e.*, in the currency in which prices are quoted). Economic relief.
- (2) Provision of food products. Confiscation of the stocks of the big wholesalers, millers, and landowners. Distribution by the co-operatives, by small traders' associations, by the Control Commissions.
- (3) Defence of the eight-hour day.
- (4) Distribution of bread and other foods and fuel to the unemployed, to children, to the aged.
- (5) Re-opening of shut-down factories, to be set going again by the Works Councils with the help of credits from the State.
- (6) (a) The struggle against Bavarian reaction, the withdrawal of the Reichswehr from Saxony, the raising of the state of siege.
(b) Confiscation of the wealth of those capitalists who sabotage production.
(c) Imprisonment of the big capitalist traitors, Stinnes & Co. Trial by a People's Court.
- (7) Liquidation of the Great Coalition. Formation of a Workers' and Small Peasants' Government.

Hamburg must be an outstanding example to the Party of what not to do. As a result of the treachery of the Social Democrats our comrades at Hamburg allowed themselves to be isolated. Hamburg was a genuine wide mass action. But it had been insufficiently prepared, and, beside a well-armed enemy, there were found yet against us important sections of Social Democratic workers. The example of Hamburg shows that we must not neglect to exploit thoroughly the sabotage of the treacherous Social Democratic leaders, and to consolidate the mass forces, in order not to sacrifice uselessly the *élite* of the working class. Hamburg has been and is an episode which should not discourage us, in spite of the local set-back, if we can draw from it a political lesson for the whole of Germany.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

Miners' Strike

THIS strike was essentially a continuation of the big coal strike in the spring of this year. Like that strike, the struggle began, and centred in, the Ostrau-Karwin coalfield. At the beginning of July a meeting of mineowners in the Ostrau-Karwin field announced that they found themselves under the necessity of "regulating" afresh the wages of miners and workers in the cokeries. As the time approached for the expiry of the latest collective agreement, they put forth a demand for a 30 per cent. wage reduction. This was refused by the miners. After the mediation of certain Social Democratic leaders, in the manner of certain Labour Party leaders in this country, the employers reduced their demand to 18 per cent. Even this, according to the *Daily Herald* Prague correspondent, would have meant sheer starvation for the miners.

The National Conference of the miners, meeting on August 16, rejected also the reduced demand, and decided on a general strike, in all the coalfields of the country, for August 20. The strikers numbered 120,000.

It became apparent from the first that the attack of the mineowners was part of a general capitalist offensive. The mineowners were acting in close accord with the Czecho-Slovak Federation of Industries. The large agrarian capitalists were also involved, knowing that wage reductions in industry would enable them to launch a successful attack on the agricultural workers and the small peasantry.

The revolutionary Trade Unions, especially the International (*i.e.*, German and Czech) All-Trade Union Federation, endeavoured to widen the front. The national question, as always in Czecho-Slovakia, proved to be a serious bar to genuinely united working-class action. There are three miners' Unions, for instance, the Czech Social Democratic Union, the Czech Nationalist Union, and the German Union, which had only been forced by economic stress to form some sort of a coalition.

Meanwhile, the Social Democratic leaders were continuing their work of mediation. Hampel, a Social Democrat, Secretary of the Metalworkers' Union and President of the General Council of Czecho-Slovak Trade Unions, entered into conversations with the Minister of Labour, also a Social Democrat, in order to bring about some compromise settlement. The result of these efforts was that the mineowners proposed a 10 per cent. wage reduction in the Ostrau-Karwin field and proportional reductions in other fields. After the refusal of this offer, Hampel again used his good offices with the Government and the mineowners, this time for a proposal of gradual wage reductions, spread over a period. This, too, came to nothing.

The strike was by this time six weeks old, and the feeling was growing among the workers that some effective assistance should be given by the rest of the Trade Union movement to the miners in their struggle. Accordingly, a conference of the Central Committees of all Trade Unions was called for September 27. At the same time the International All-Trade Union Federation made several proposals to the central strike committee on this point of aid for the striking miners, including a proposal for a general strike of transport and

metal workers. On October 1 representatives of the Trade Union Central Committees and the railwaymen's organisations held a conference with the central strike committee. It was unanimously resolved to bring pressure to bear on the Government and to make a general appeal for financial aid for the miners on strike. The railwaymen were to decide for themselves what further action they thought necessary.

A temporary lull had taken place in the mediatory efforts of the Social Democrats. This was, perhaps, not unconnected with the municipal elections, and the natural desire to refrain from any action which might alienate the working-class vote. (It is noteworthy that the chief successes of the Social Democrats were in mining districts.) Once the elections were over, however, mediation again came to the fore. Hampel again took the lead : and this time his efforts were successful.

The final proposals of the Government and the mineowners included the following wage reductions : 13 per cent. in the Ostrau-Karwin field ; 12 per cent. in the Rositz-Pilsen and Schatzlar fields ; 10 per cent. in the Teplitz and Carlsbad fields ; and 9 per cent. in the Kladno field. There was to be no victimisation. Work was to be resumed on October 8-9. The new agreement was to remain in force till May 31, 1924.

At the National Conference of miners held to consider these proposals the Social Democrats adopted a frankly defeatist position. They declared that no better terms could be extracted from the Government, which was obdurate, and that there was no hope of any assistance from the rest of the Trade Union movement. Only the Communist delegates opposed this view. The Conference decided to accept defeat, by 58 votes to 13.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE COLLAPSE OF THE COLE INDUSTRY

Labour in the Coal Mining Industry. By G. D. H. Cole. (Published on behalf of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace by Humphrey Milford at the Clarendon Press, Oxford.)

TEN years ago the miners were in the forefront of the Labour Movement. They were far the best organised section of the workers. They had gained certain alterations in their conditions which were still being unsuccessfully demanded, if demanded at all, by many other sections of the workers. Their national organisation, the Miners' Federation, had been rapidly becoming not merely a defensive organisation but a force of revolutionary significance. The minority movements had already become well recognised as the units responsible for effecting and maintaining this change in outlook. Capitalism had been forced to grant higher wages, shorter hours, and minimum working conditions and capitalism knew that the miners were moving forward to demand yet more drastic concessions. Nor were the miners forgetful of the fact that it was not by their own strength alone that they, a section of the workers, could move forward. It was at their instance that the Triple Industrial Alliance was formed and it was they who pressed forward demands which were afterwards adopted by the whole Labour Movement. Their resolutions on nationalisation, their demands for more adequate pensions for old age pensioners, are but instances of this fact. They were, in fact, the spearhead of the movement.

Yet to-day the miners are faced with starvation. They are not out of work, but they are faced with starvation. Their national organisation is there, is larger numerically, it may be, but is useless, powerless, divided, and defeated. Districts are set against districts, pits against pits, workers against workers. There is still the minimum wage, but the miners are cheated of it. There are still safety regulations, but they are broken in every case. There are still checkweighers, but they are prevented from carrying out their functions. The seven-hour day is the law, but miners are compelled to work eight, nine, or even ten hours a day. Workers are victimised with impunity; they are evicted from their homes; they are cheated, oppressed, murdered, and treated like slaves, like dogs.

Yesterday, ten years ago, the miners were the strength of the working-class movement; to-day they are its weakness. This is the terrible situation that the movement has to face. How has it happened?

When war was declared, the capitalists were uncertain of the attitude of the miners. Their strength was a source of concern to the Government. They were alternatively vilified and cajoled. Their leaders succumbed to the cajolery; the minority movements were swamped by the wave of patriotism. The industry became controlled, was in a privileged position, was vitally necessary for the success of the war. Then came the armistice; their leaders were there to lead, but they let themselves be sideracked into the by-paths of the Coal Commission, dazzled by its limelight avenues. The industry was

still in a privileged position, it still possessed a monopoly in the export trade. But the leaders had forsaken their class in order to win the war for the capitalists ; they had again forsaken it in order to make peace safe for the capitalists. Then came the attacks of the capitalists ; the blows fell on an already defeated organisation. The leaders had compromised themselves at home, they were willing to compromise themselves abroad : they demanded that the workers of Europe should be exploited by maintaining export prices in order to increase the profits of their employers at home. They supported the International of the Capitalists, the League of Nations ; they demanded for their own capitalists reparations from the German workers. This they did, and thus did they forsake their class, both at home and abroad.

But Mr. Cole, what does he say ? He professes to write a book which will "recount the facts and not moralise over them" ; he states that he has aimed "not at a definite interpretation of the events, but at a simple narration which will provide material for the interpreter." He talks of the "collapse of the industry itself."

What does he mean ? Mr. Cole, like the leaders of the miners, has forsaken the working class. He speaks of the collapse of the industry. Yet to-day exports are now far above the pre-war level ; production has reached that level. Is that "a collapse of the industry itself" ? Higher and ever higher profits are being disclosed by colliery companies, and higher and ever higher dividends are paid. Is that "a collapse of the industry itself" ? The miners have been beaten down to an unexampled degradation, but the mine owners are making "record" profits. Does that imply "a collapse of the industry itself" ? Mr. Cole has forgotten the class issue. The class issue in the mining industry to-day is displayed in all its naked brutality.

What attitude does this lack of appreciation of the class issue, of the existence of a class struggle, force Mr. Cole continually to adopt ? He is continually betraying a lack of analysis not only of events but of his own phrases. For instance, when in 1916 the South Wales miners were trying to obtain increased wages to meet the huge rises in the cost of living, Mr. Cole with incredible insolence accuses the miners of "pig-headedness"—an accusation made more incredible by the admission on the same page that during this period "the South Wales coalowners were making very high profits." Then Mr. Cole with the true journalistic outlook of the Rothermere type refers to the fact that "public opinion" was against the miners (p. 46) and further on "that the industrial position was exceedingly threatening" (p. 75). Mr. Cole, in the face of the miners' leadership of the Labour Movement before the war, described the miners (p. 7) "as narrow and slow to understand others" or to feel the "influence of outside public opinion." Mr. Cole makes definite controversial statements in spite of the fact of his professed desire to be impartial. For instance, he states that the Yorkshire dispute "confused the public mind in relation to the issues arising out of the Sankey report" (whatever "the public mind" may be). On page 174 he gives the impression that decontrol even at the time it was effected was of no advantage to the owners and on page 244 he refers to the "premature removal of Government control" (as if the miners' conditions in Great Britain, Germany, India, or South Africa would not have been as they are to-day if the British Government

had returned to capitalism control over the British mining industry six months or a year later than it actually did).

Finally, true to the objects of this series, which are laid down in the Editor's Preface as providing "an institution dedicated to the cause of international peace," Mr. Cole so far forgets his impartiality as to declare, in almost the same breath as he affirms this impartiality (p. 243), that "the decline of the past two years, far more than the apparent prosperity of the preceding period, is the real outcome of war . . . Opinions differ in the apportioning of blame for this or that incident of the calamity, but the calamity as a whole is the fruit of war" (p. 244).

Such is the nature of opportunist research. Mr. Cole has collected an enormous amount of facts together in a book of 243 pages and appendices of 20 pages more. But, after all his labour, the only remedy he suggests—and he obviously suggests it with the full sense of his responsibility—is that the Labour Movement should demonstrate against war. While Mr. Cole is walking in the processions of the National Peace Council, miners are being forced down to the position of slaves in every country, are being evicted, starved, broken, defeated, and murdered, not by war, but by the bloody greed of capitalists.

H. P. R.

TEMPERING THE WIND

If Labour Rules. By Philip Snowden. (Labour Publishing Co. 1s.)

THE economic situation in this country is one which hardly requires any deep analysis. Taking full advantage of the opportunities which developed in the war and after the war, capitalism has tightened its stranglehold on the workers. It has increased the burden of taxes on necessities, it has reduced production in order to maintain profits, and thereby it has thrown a million and a-half workers out of employment and weakened the workers' organisations. Then it has proceeded to relentless wage reductions, using the State machinery to break down all resistance by the workers. Meanwhile, British capitalism has used British workers to serve its ends in Mesopotamia, in Africa, in India, Egypt, Ireland, and Germany, with the double object of making those countries safe for capital and at the same time keeping down the workers' standard of living, so that they can in turn be used to depress still further the standards of British workers. Throughout the world the class struggle stands out as the one issue that matters, the destruction of capitalism as the one aim of the workers.

The political situation in this country is ripening quickly, taking its character from the economic situation. Mr. Snowden himself realises that the openly capitalist Governments will soon be unable to withstand the pressure of the masses. Tory and Liberal must give way to Labour. And it is at this point that Mr. Snowden steps into the ring to stay Labour's hand from dealing the final blow.

The Labour Party, Mr. Snowden explains, is dominated by Mensheviks: "a Labour Government would not be a class Government." Mr. Snowden's

contempt for the workers is openly expressed : he apologises for their wanting to free themselves on the ground that they know no better:—

Men who have been roused to a consciousness of the injustices they suffer, especially when they have little education and have had their experiences confined within a narrow horizon, are apt to be violent in their denunciation and uncompromising in their demands.

Mr. Snowden, having enjoyed much education and wide experiences, knows better : his demands are exceedingly compromising. His ideal Labour Government will "wholly subordinate class interests" ; inconvenient class resolutions might be passed by the Party conference ; but "no Labour Government could be hidebound Conference resolutions are not Parliamentary bills." As for what Mr. Snowden's Labour Government *will* do, Mr. Snowden is quite clear that national interests demand public ownership of land, mines, railways, &c. But, of course, Mr. Snowden's Labour Government will pay the present owners, or will let them go on drawing interest and dividends just as before. In other words, it will make a gesture which it hopes will deceive the workers, but which will leave capitalism entrenched more firmly than ever.

What about the Capital Levy ? It is something rather more than a gesture. Therefore, Mr. Snowden's Labour Government would not really insist on it : if it could persuade the capitalists that the Levy would be for their good, the Levy would be imposed ; but, says Mr. Snowden :—

If, of course, the commercial classes, and those who would have to contribute to a Capital Levy, will not have it . . . a Labour Government would have to look in other directions than the Capital Levy for revenue to enable the food taxes to be removed.

So Mr. Snowden passes on from subject to subject, describing with accurate touch the rôle of his Labour Government. It would be anti-national ; if it opposed war, this would only be because it honestly believed that the country wouldn't get anything out of it ; it would feel to the full the responsibilities of Empire. It would, in a word, try to save capitalism for as long as possible from the wrath to come.

Is Mr. Snowden's view of the rôle of a Labour Government justified ? Mr. Snowden himself has no doubts : although not the official spokesman of the Labour Party, he has, he says, "long been associated with it" and "knows its mind and heart."

It is well that the rank and file of the Labour Party should realised the rôle which their leaders have accepted for the first Labour Government. And we thank Mr. Snowden for his candid admission that "the extremists" in the Labour ranks will be the greatest difficulty for such a Government : for the masses will not lightly be turned aside from their objective.

E. B.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Man of To-Morrow* : J. Ramsay MacDonald. By "Iconoclast." (Leonard Parsons and Independent Labour Party Publication Department. I.L.P., cheap edition, 3s. 6d.)
- An Outline of Economic Geography*. Plebs Text Books No. 4. (Plebs League, 2s. 6d.)
- State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*. II volumes (second impression). By the Hon. W. Pember Reeves. (Allen and Unwin, 21s.)
- The Philosophy of Nietzsche*. By Professor A. Wolf, M.A., D.Lit. Studies in Economics and Political Science, No. 45. New Edition. (Allen and Unwin, 5s.)
- Labour and the Industrial Revolution*. By E. C. Fairchild. (Allen and Unwin, 3s. 6d.)
- Political Crime*. A Critical Essay on the Law and its Administration in Cases of a Certain Type. By Wilfred George Carlton Hall, B.C.L., M.A. (Allen and Unwin, 4s. 6d.)
- Der Verband der Sozialistischen Sowjetrepubliken*. I. P. Trainin. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)
- Manual for Leaders of Children's Groups*. By Edward Hoernle. (Young Communist International.)
- Home and the School*. The Story of Indian Life and Education. By Professor M. M. Gidvani, M.A. (Sunshine Publishing House, Bombay, Rs.1-8.)
- Export Credit Schemes and Anglo-Russian Trade*. By W. P. Coates. With a Preface by Arthur Ponsonby. (National "Hands off Russia" Committee.)
- Present Position of Anglo-Russian Relations (November, 1923)*. By W. P. Coates. With a Preface by H. N. Brailsford. (National "Hands off Russia" Committee.)
- The Child's Right and Prohibition. A Post Liquordom Inquiry*. By Guy Hayler, (President of the World Prohibition Federation. Templar Printing Works, Birmingham, 1d.)
- Money Based on the World's Goods*. By C. H. Chomley (The British-Australasian, 6d.)
- Science and Sanctity: A Study in the Scientific Approach to Unity*. By Victor Branford. (Leplay House, and Williams and Norgate, 10s. 6d.)
- Sankaracharya the Great and his Successors in Kanchi*. By Professor N. Venkata Raman, M.A. (Ganesh & Co., Madras. Rs.1-8.)
- The Lord of the Nations*. (Yoga of the Nations Series. Vol. II.) By Paul Richard. Translation revised by E. S. Stokes. (Ganesh & Co., Madras. Rs.1-8.)

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

1924 Reduced Subscription Rates

The proprietors of THE LABOUR MONTHLY have much pleasure in announcing a reduction in subscription rates starting as from the January, 1924, issue. A considerable saving on postage costs has been effected by the purchase of a higher grade feather-weight "antique wove" text paper, which, while maintaining the same bulk as heretofore, weighs less. It is proposed to pass the entire benefit on to subscribers, and the post-free terms for the British Isles are accordingly reduced from 8/- *per annum* and *pro rata* to :

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(A subscription form is provided
in this issue on page 375)

BOUND VOLUMES

The Management regret any inconvenience caused by delay in the binding of Volume IV; this has now been overcome and all orders will shortly be fulfilled.

Volume V (July to December, 1923) will also be ready in a few weeks, and can be supplied for 7s. 6d. post free (cases 3s. 6d.). Or these numbers can be bound and returned post-free for 4s. 6d.

The title page for Volume V is now being printed and can be had on application if 1½d. for postage is sent. The index is included in this number.

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