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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

January, 1927

Number 1

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Notes of the Month

THE SPECIAL CONFERENCE

The Communist Party and the Miners' Fight

P. B.

The Miners' Struggle and International Unity

R. PAGE ARNOT

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Book Reviews

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The British General Strike P. B.

Published at

162 Buckingham Palace Road

London

S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : SLOANE 5412.

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NOTES of the MONTH

After the Fight—Why Postponed?—Living Issues—More Urgent Now—Capitalism's "Solution"—Conference Tasks—Larger Issues—Future General Strike?—Problem of Leadership—Bureaucracy and Working Class—Testing the Left—The Miners' Role—The Future of Trade Unionism

THE postponed Special Conference of Trade Union Executives on the general strike takes place at the time and under the conditions prepared for it. For seven months the Labour Party and General Council leaders have worked for the defeat of the miners as the sole means of saving themselves and defending their position. They have now secured their aim. The miners, the vanguard of the working class, are for the time broken on the wheel ; their fight without parallel in working-class history, whose permanent results as the first chapter in the new revolutionary era will make every sacrifice a hundred times worth while and bring rich fruit to the working class, has been for the moment turned to nothing by the deliberate strike breaking of the national and international reformist leadership, who know and fear the coming revolutionary period and devote all their attention and energy to stifling any action of the working class. The workers are bludgeoned on every side, and bound by their leaders. The key battalions of the workers, the miners, transport workers, railwaymen, seamen, printers, are all now tied hand and foot by shackling agreements unequalled in half-a-century of trade unionism. Further wage and hour attacks are preparing. Victimisation, police persecution and dismissals are the order of the day. The atmosphere is at last "safe" for all the reformist leaders to come into the open without shame. For the first time for ten months Thomas holds a meeting in his constituency. MacDonald, Henderson, Hicks, Purcell and Newbold can return from their trans-continental voyages to Africa, America, Mexico, Australia. The aims of industrial peace, capitalist revival and scientific wage policies can be openly proclaimed. In this situation the time has come at last to hold the Special Conference safely. In the midst of

the working-class defeat and misery they have caused, the reformist leaders can meet to pass their verdict of "Well done!" upon themselves.

OFFICIALLY, the Special Conference was postponed in order to concentrate on effective united action in support of the miners, "so that a united policy may be adopted to resist to the fullest possible extent the Government action"; and to prevent any criticism or controversy that might hinder such united action "the General Council and the Miners' Federation regard it as of the greatest importance at this juncture that all sections and parties should avoid statements either in speech or writing which create friction, or misunderstanding, or divert attention from the purpose in view." How far these two alleged purposes have been carried out can now be judged in the light of facts. So far from any attempt at action in support, blackleg coal was consistently let through in defiance of the miners' official appeals, even financial aid was sabotaged by being left to voluntary channels, and a continuous propaganda was conducted to weaken the miners, extract concessions and secure their surrender. As for the silencing of criticism, this was evidently intended to apply only to the miners' leaders as there immediately followed the Bromley publication of the more poisonous passages of the General Council's Report, thereafter to constitute the principal capitalist weapon of propaganda against the miners ("Unionist members are busily engaged in procuring copies of Mr. Bromley's article on the T.U.C., which will be read out at meetings all over the country during the week-end," *Spectator*, July 10, 1926), and, following this, the endless stream of attacks by MacDonald, Williams, Thomas, Hodges, &c., which, as Mr. Baldwin's speech in the House of Commons debate on December 8 showed, constituted the inexhaustible supply of the capitalist armoury of propaganda against the miners. Thus what was argued by the revolutionaries at the time, that the alleged reasons for the postponement of the Conference were false, and that the real reason was to tie up the miners' leaders in a pact and to prevent either discussion or the practical facing of issues of action until too late, that is, until after the miners' defeat, has now been shown by the facts to be correct. It remains for the miners'

leaders now at the Conference to say what they think of the pact and its maintenance, and of the promise of "a united policy to resist to the fullest possible extent the Government action."

THE issues of the Special Conference are not dead, but living issues. It is not only that what happened in May, 1926, is the decisive turning point for a whole period in front, and above all the decisive test of the whole existing leadership. It is still more that the events of May, 1926, are no isolated self-contained episode, but are part of a continuous process, linked up with what preceded, and still going on and unfolding itself and presenting anew the same fundamental problems to the working class. The process of capitalist development and policy in Britain which gave rise to the crisis of May is still continuing, and in a sharper form than ever. The economic and political offensives against the workers are still in course of revealing their full outline. Capitalism in Britain can still find no way forward, so long as it continues to carry the existing accumulated burden which drives it down in the international race, save to drive down still lower the standards of the workers, to lengthen hours, to speed up and intensify production, to concentrate plant and holdings and sack workers ; and all this only intensifies international competition and class antagonism at home, and so perpetually renews the crisis, driving the workers forward, in spite of habits, prejudices and years of inculcated rubbish, as well as corrupt, easy-going and rule-of-thumb leadership, to find new ways, to seek for united action, to enlarge their action at every crisis and to advance more and more to the only solution, the revolutionary solution, which cuts the property tangle, and so alone makes possible the rational, *i.e.*, Socialist, organisation of production.

IF reformism failed the workers in May, how much more must it fail them in the present and future situation, when all the factors which have increasingly destroyed its basis are only aggravated and intensified by the events of 1926 ; and, therefore, how much more necessary is it to face those questions which were not answered in May, and which still remain accusingly demanding their answer, if the whole Labour Movement is not to disintegrate

and fall back ? What has changed since May ? The old Labour Movement has been through the wars with a peace-time apparatus, and received the shattering that was inevitable. Whether that shattering was healthy or not depends entirely on what happens now, and on the power of the new forces to make rapid changes and adapt the movement. The workers are worse off ; they are momentarily disorganised ; and capitalism presses the offensive against them harder than ever. The old leaders seize on this situation to draw the moral of retreat, to throw over all the principles of class solidarity and Socialism, and to revert to economic sectional unionism and Liberal politics. But the conditions of the period provide no basis for this reversion, which is nothing more than a hankering after decaying and empty fleshpots ; and, therefore, although their control of the machine enables the old leaders to give this appearance of a " swing to the right," as at Bournemouth and Margate, it does not correspond to realities, and brings no solution either to the problems of the movement or of the social situation. It is only necessary to look at the realities of the position to see this.

CAPITALISM has " solved " the problem of the coal-mining industry—which is only the advance version of the problem of all British capitalism—after its own fashion. No one can dispute that capitalism has here had an entirely free hand, secured by the use of its political power or dictatorship, to determine the solution entirely according to its own lines without one atom of opposition, hindrance or compromise. And what is this " solution " ? It is that fewer men should work harder for longer hours on a starvation wage, while two to three hundred thousand others are turned on to the streets to join the permanently unemployed. This is the " rational " or " economic " solution. Does it solve anything ? It leads at once to intensified international competition and coal war, as witnessed in the British coalowners' refusal of the German owners' proposal of a selling agreement, the new threats to hours on the Continent, and the impending attack on American miners' wages due for next April. And it leads to intensified unemployment and social division at home. Is there here any prospect of peace ? But what happens to mining hangs

over the other basic industries in turn, as is already visible in the Keynes campaign over textiles and proposals for closing down superfluous factories. Capitalist reorganisation, because it cannot touch any of the real evils, which are protected by the magic halo of property, can only be carried through at the cost of the workers, and even then leads only to sharper crises. This economic process cannot be affected by any Labour Government, unless that Labour Government is prepared to attack and cut into property rights (not "reorganise" with compensation, which only resolves itself into a form of capitalist reorganisation); and this is just what the reformists are not prepared to do. Consequently this process is bound to continue and lead to intensified struggle, whatever the results of the next election, which itself can only be a phase in the development of the total struggle and not an alternative. If the Special Conference fails to face this prospect of developing struggle and the problems raised by it—which is the real meaning of any inquest on May—then the Special Conference will not thereby escape or eliminate these problems, but will only make their eventual facing by the workers more difficult.

WHAT are the tasks of the Special Conference of Trade Union Executives which meets on January 20 for the first time since the fateful meeting of May 1? Speaking generally, its task is to review the experience of the General Strike and to draw the lessons from it. In particular, its task is in the first place to receive the report on the General Strike, and to determine whether its mandate of May 1 was carried out or not, and if not, why not. It is clear that the mandate of May 1 to defend the miners' standards, understood in the terms of the then still unrepudiated General Council's pledge ("no reduction in wages, no increase in working hours"), was not carried out; and that, further, the General Council had already secretly decided since April 8 not to carry it out, and was already at variance with the miners, but that this was deliberately withheld from the Conference; and that this double-dealing and secret diplomacy beforehand made certain and inevitable from the start the subsequent collapse and division. The Conference will have to deal with this, as well as with the actual conduct of the strike, the

unconditional calling off without any attempt at obtaining guarantees, nominally on the basis of the thin and obvious hoax of the Samuel Memorandum and the completely contradictory explanations subsequently of individual members of the General Council of the reasons for the calling off. It will be a very feeble Conference if this whole flimsy edifice of double-dealing and treachery is not riddled with searching questions.

BUT the Conference will have to extend its view further to larger questions. The real reasons for the collapse of May, the consequences and the present situation, the character of the conditions within which the Trade Unions will henceforth have to work and the resulting needs, and whether the existing leadership is capable of meeting these conditions and needs—these questions will have to be faced. To-day the Trade Unions are broken up ; there is no longer any appearance of common leadership or policy ; the attack on the miners is passing to the other industries ; the best of the workers are being picked off individually by the employers ; and a legal offensive on Trade Union rights is preparing. How is this position to be met ? What is the policy of Trade Unionism ? If common action is abandoned, what remains ? If common action is to be maintained, what steps are being taken that it shall be effective and that the failures of May shall not be repeated ? Is a committee at work, preparing the necessary steps, drawing up the lessons of May, marking out the immediate steps in Trade Unionism necessary, laying down the conditions and methods of future mobilisation ? If not, why not ? What is the General Council's view of the future period facing Trade Unionism, and of its own function ?

ABOVE all, is another General Strike expected, or is it not ? Some of the principal leaders of the General Council (including the present Chairman) say, Yes. Others equally emphatically say, No. How can Trade Unionism go forward so long as there is this complete blur and confusion on the central issue of the present period ? The General Council is able to go forward quite cheerfully and amicably with these complete cross purposes in its midst, because the

General Council does not attempt to do anything. But this only means that the "difference" in their ranks is simply for show, and does not represent anything. Those who say, Yes, say it as a kind of declaration of religious conviction, and have no practical proposals to make. In other words, by their actions they say, No. It is as if members of the present Cabinet were to hold amicable discussions in magazines as to whether another war may or may not be likely, and in the meantime were to make no military or naval preparations. (Incidentally, when these same Labour leaders become the next Labour Government they will have no such hesitations about preparing ; they will be anxious that every item of military and naval armaments for the defence of the bourgeois State shall be up to concert pitch, and forget all their pacifist arguments against "preparedness." It is only over working-class defence that they are indifferent.)

THE "unity" of the General Council is the unity of inaction, of passivity, of absence of policy, of denial of leadership, of denial of the working-class fight. They have no policy to present, no coherent view of the present period of the line in front. They can only hide behind formalities, behind closing of discussion as at Bournemouth, behind dishonest formal diplomatic small-clerk circumlocution-office defences of particular acts, without any facing of larger issues. But does this outlook represent the outlook of the working-class movement ? If it does, then there is a bigger smash than ever coming, and deservedly. But if it does not, if there are any sound elements that are concerned for a moment with the future fight, then how can such elements tolerate the continuance of such a leadership, which can only lead to disaster by paralysing preparation to-day and strangling the fight to-morrow ? Can the Conference of Trade Union Executives, as a closed-in conference of the bureaucracy which is responsible for the present position, perform these tasks or face up to actual issues ? Certainly the Conference of Trade Union Executives has no claim as a representative conference of the working class. If a Conference were called of delegates directly elected by the organised workers during the current month from every locality in the country, the General Council would have a very different audience to face,

and there would be no doubt of the result (the District Trades Councils Conferences called by the General Council already showed this). The reformist bureaucracy cannot jump outside its own skin and see itself as the workers see it; and therefore the historical value of its verdict is negligible save as a sidelight on itself. But the Special Conference of Trade Union Executives on the General Strike has this importance; that it focusses attention on those issues which are of vital concern to the working class. It is the discussion in the working class that is important, far more than the discussion in the Conference. The issues need to be hammered out throughout the working-class movement. Resolutions should pour in on the Executives and to the Conference itself.

IN addition, there is a further importance of the Conference in relation to the bureaucracy itself. The Special Conference is an extension of the testing of the bureaucracy in the light of the events of May. The Report of the General Council compels the setting down in black and white of the outlook and responsibility of the defeatist majority, whether of the openly corrupt Right or the capitulatory Left. This Report has either to be approved or disapproved by the Conference. Whoever approve this Report set themselves down in equal responsibility with the General Council for the events of May. Whoever disapprove have to state clearly their opposition and their alternative. The crisis of May 12 ceases to be a personal condemnation of a handful of individuals who chanced to compose the General Council, and becomes the merciless test of the whole reformist bureaucracy. Is there any element that is still sound and capable of standing out against the corrupt defeatist policy of the General Council? If so, the place is here or nowhere for that minority to show what it is worth. The minority has to declare itself or merge in the defeatist majority by the same compulsion as in the days of May smashed the capitulatory Left. Three honest speeches and votes in the Conference are worth three hundred wise voices in private conversation. The issue is so serious that the principle of delegation voting, which is merely the cloak of irresponsibility, needs to be actively challenged. Every atom of strength of the minority needs to be registered behind a clear resolution. Failing this (and if formal rules are used to

prevent it, nothing can prevent a signed public declaration), responsibility falls individually upon all alike.

THE heaviest responsibility in the Conference for good or evil falls upon the miners' representatives. In a special degree the immediate future in working-class politics turns upon their role and their understanding of their role. This the miners' leaders have not yet recognised. They have still regarded the experience and struggle through which they have gone, not so much as a common experience and struggle of the whole working class, carrying with it equal tasks for the whole working-class movement, but subjectively, in the old sectional Trade Union tradition, as a special experience and struggle of the miners, in a position of peculiar distress, calling for help from the whole working class, but regarding the action of the rest of the working class as the affair of those sections rather than of the miners. This was apparent in the preliminaries of the General Strike and during the General Strike. It has been shown in the criminal inaction of the miners' representatives on the General Council. It has been shown most of all in the criminal failure at the Bournemouth and Margate Congresses, a failure that was nothing less than a betrayal of the sacrifice and struggle of the men they led. Signs of the same outlook are still visible in the reported statement of Cook with regard to the Special Conference, when interviewed by the *Daily Herald* representative on the proposal of the General Council to hold it in January :—

“It is not the business of the miners, and the miners will not place any objection in the way of the matter being thrashed out.” (*Daily Herald*, December 1, 1926.)

Such an attitude needs to be ended once and for all. The miners are not only part of the working-class movement ; they are the greatest single part ; and by their action, self-sacrifice and disciplined courage, the greatest part in spirit and understanding and the height of the level they have reached ; and in virtue of this they have not only the right, but the duty, to speak with authority to the whole working class, and to give the full weight of leadership and strength that they can give to the whole working-class movement. It is the first opportunity at the Special Con-

ference to begin to redeem the ground lost at Bournemouth and at Margate.

FINALLY it is clear that the most important development must come from outside the Special Conference, and not from inside. The bureaucracy cannot and will not reform itself. It is the pressure from outside, from the organised workers themselves, that must change the character of Trade-Union leadership and the direction of Trade Unionism. Hence, the most important task of all is the development and strengthening of the Minority Movement in the Trade Unions. The new forces cannot find expression without organisation ; and such organisation must be based on the common class interests of all the workers, acting as a single force on the myriad, sectionalist hidebound structure of Trade Unionism. This is the essential significance of the Minority Movement (and in a higher degree of the Communist Party) within the Trade Unions. It is the expression of class interests transcending sectional interests. It is in the strongest sense the expression, not of disruption, but of unity ; just as the reactionary reformist leaders represent the forces of disruption, as their policy shows. Hitherto the Minority Movement has been able to organise powerful mass pressure upon the bureaucracy. But in the moment of crisis it has not been strong enough to take over the leadership. The policies which it has forced upon the reformist leaders have been distorted, sabotaged and destroyed by them. The task of the present period is not only to exert pressure on the reformist bureaucracy, but to overthrow them and wrest the leadership from them. Such a task demands redoubled work throughout the Trade Union Movement. In the future period crisis will succeed crisis with increasing intensity. The power of the working class to meet them and go forward will depend in large measure on the power to adapt the Trade Unions in time, to learn the lessons of past crises and to win them to a revolutionary policy. The Trade Unions cannot long remain in their present half-and-half position. It is the open aim of Baldwin and the bourgeoisie to transform them into subordinate sectional industrial organs of capitalism. It is our aim to transform them into united organs of the revolutionary working class.

R. P. D.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE MINERS' FIGHT

By P. B.

"We are defeated, but neither dismayed nor destroyed."

(From a miner's speech.)

THE mine owners have won. Supported by the Government, by the banks, by the Press, by the Liberal leaders of the Labour Party, and the bureaucrats of the Trade Union movement, they have succeeded in forcing the miners back to work on the conditions which they formulated on the eve of the lockout. They are now ringing the joy bells of victory. The pigmies of thought who are capable only of crawling on their bellies are now speaking arrogantly of "blind Samsons" and "incompetent leaders." The capitalist Press is jubilant. Banquets and orgies are held in the Savoy and other haunts of the rich where Labour leaders and captains of industry clink glasses to "peace in our time." Yet everyone knows that the great fight which has just terminated is only a beginning, that the miners are neither dismayed nor destroyed, and that still further and greater battles are in front.

The end of the fight has revealed the lie on which all the enemies of the workers have united. It is now clear to all what the programme of the mine owners and the mine owners' Government means in actual fact. Half a million miners are working on half-starvation wages; another half a million miners are starving without employment; coal is not cheaper, but dearer. The lowering of the miners' standards was supposed to give an impetus to the development of British industry. Instead it has given an impetus to other employers, backed by all the powers of the State, to lower the standards of the toiling masses and to increase profits. That "harmony," in the name of which the Baldwins, the MacDonalds, and the Snowdens have made so many sweet and soothing speeches, is now exploited by a group of mine owners,

whose incompetency and inefficiency were exposed and condemned even by the capitalists of the Royal Commission on the coal industry.

The myth of "harmony" has completely vanished, and there only remains the grim struggle between class and class. The heroic fight of the miners is undoubtedly the greatest asset which the working class has to its credit for the last century, and it is bound to become a source of inspiration in the battles which are drawing nearer and nearer.

One of the outstanding factors of the miners' struggle is that a *political organisation* played a great part in consolidating the miners and in formulating their programme, their demands and their actions. We are referring to the numerically weak Communist Party of Great Britain, which has been excluded from the Labour Party by all its conferences since 1922, and against which the Labour Party, led by MacDonald, and the Conservative Government, headed by Baldwin and Joynson-Hicks, organised a formal alliance.

The fact that the Communist Party played a leading part in this great struggle is acknowledged by everyone. During the last few months Joynson-Hicks stated on two occasions in the House of Commons that he was compelled to ban the meetings of the Communist Party because he knew that the campaign of this Party was aimed at preventing the miners from accepting the conditions of the mine owners. The leaders of the Labour Party accepted this explanation and did not challenge it. Further, at the delegate conference of the miners held in London on November 18, when the results of the magnificent vote of the miners against the Government proposals were reported, many delegates emphasised the fact that this vote was due to a very great extent to the influence of the Communist Party. It should also be noted that the famous South Wales programme, which was eventually accepted by the Miners' Federation as a whole, was prepared on the initiative of the Communist Party. But we are interested not so much in stating or proving this fact, as in explaining why and how this small Party has exercised such a great influence during a struggle which is rightly considered as the watershed in the history of British Labour.

In order to answer these questions, we must first try to under-

stand what was the role of the Labour Party during this great conflict.

The Labour Party Executive, as also the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, have long ceased to act as democratic institutions. The Labour movement very rarely knows what are the intentions and strategy of these leading bodies in our movement. Since many of the members of these bodies have become privy councillors, they have accepted the rules and traditions of that institution—the privy council—which usually acts in secret. It is true that once in a while these Labour Leaders deign to make statements and pronouncements. But these public statements are usually meant to throw dust in the eyes of the workers, and to hide their real intentions and their real policy.

In order to understand the role played by the Labour Party, we must compare the events which preceded the Red Friday of 1925 with the events and the display of force during the recent conflict. In 1925 the mobilisation of the workers was centred in the hands of the General Council then headed by Mr. Swales. The General Council, in full agreement with the Executive of the Miners' Federation, made every effort possible to prevent the interference of the leaders of the Labour Party. The obvious reason for this policy was that the industrial leaders, who were at that time much nearer to the masses, were afraid that the leaders of the Labour Party might try to enforce a foul compromise.

The spirit of the Trade Union movement which culminated in the victory of Red Friday found its expression in the presidential address delivered by Mr. Swales at the Scarborough T.U.C.

He said :

Union policy henceforth will be to recover lost ground, to re-establish and *improve our standards of wages* (our italics), hours and working conditions, and to co-ordinating and intensifying trade union action for the winning of a larger measure of control in industry for the workers.

It is quite evident that Mr. MacDonald had nothing to do either with the preparations for Red Friday, or with the spirit of that period. The conditions changed on the eve of the crisis of 1926. MacDonald was one of the speakers at the conference which decided upon the general strike. In order to justify the appeal of the *Daily Herald* : "Trust your Leaders!" on the first

day of the strike, MacDonald declared on the day following: "I don't like general strikes, I have not changed my opinion, I have said so in the House of Commons that I don't like it, honestly I don't like it; but honestly, what can be done." Later he found what could be done, and he got rid of the thing which he honestly hated.

MacDonald and his associates were active the whole of the time. He and Thomas were even proud of the fact that they grovelled for peace. Behind the scenes they worked hard to discourage the miners and to pave the way for the victory of the mine owners. The work done by the leaders of the Labour Party during the recent struggle is now common knowledge. Mr. Baldwin, in his answer to the vote of censure moved on behalf of the Labour Party, against the wish of its leaders, made it perfectly clear that the Government acted in full harmony with the leadership of the Labour Party and of the General Council against the miners. To put it in the words of the pious Prime Minister, the miners let down the Government, the Labour Party and the General Council. Poor lambs!

From what we have said it is quite evident that the Labour Party could not have assumed the leadership of the miners' fight. All they could do was to dismay the miners, to weaken their resistance, and to discourage them. And the miners had to look elsewhere for a lead.

We see that it was made quite clear in a previous article in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* (December) that the miners' fight had two aspects—an industrial and a political aspect. We have seen that the miners had every reason to be disgusted with the leaders of the Labour Party. Could they look to the General Council for guidance and inspiration? Until the days of May the miners showed that they had great confidence in the General Council, and agreed to vest full powers in the Council to negotiate and try to reach a settlement on their behalf. But the situation underwent a change during the nine days of the general strike, which was called, let it be remembered, to support the miners. During those nine days a new alliance was formed. In 1925 we had an alliance of the miners with the General Council against the liberal leaders of the Labour Party. In the first days of May the General Council

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formed an alliance with the liberal leaders of the Labour Party against the miners. The miners had to look for guidance elsewhere.

Many of the miners' leaders were under the impression that this lead might come from the I.L.P. Prior to and during the great fight that Party spoke very loudly about socialism in our time, a living minimum wage, and so on. One would naturally have expected from this that the I.L.P. would have thrown all its weight into a fight which mobilised the greatest forces of Socialism, and which was directed against an attempt to lower wages already far below a decent living wage. But one of the lessons of the recent struggle is that political parties should be judged not by their words, but by their deeds. The living wage scheme of the I.L.P. has turned out to be nothing more than a window-dressing slogan. The authors of this scheme overlooked the simple fact that there is no such thing as an abstract living wage. A living wage is the outcome of the relation of forces in general, and of the strength of the Labour movement in particular. Wages are raised or lowered, not by scientific commissions, but on the battlefield of struggle between the workers and the capitalists. While the I.L.P. turned its back on the living issue of over a million miners fighting for a decent wage, it was a comparatively easy thing to reach an agreement on this problem with MacDonald and with MacDonald's associates. The I.L.P. wanted an inquiry in order to establish a living wage. They agreed with MacDonald that it was possible at the beginning to have an inquiry as to whether an inquiry was necessary. The Labour movement would win nothing from the "victory" of the I.L.P.; they do not lose anything by its compromise. The only fact of importance is that, since the I.L.P. showed that they preferred to defend the living wage by phrases, and not by acts, they lost the right to play an important part in the miners' struggle. The collapse of the I.L.P. on this issue dates from the time when they refused to accept the proposals of the Communist Party to take part in a joint campaign for the embargo and a levy.

But the great tragedy of the miners' fight consisted in the fact that even the Executive of the Miners' Federation was not capable of conducting the struggle. The majority of the miners'

leaders treated the fight simply as an industrial dispute. They were unable to grasp the political implications of the struggle, and for that reason they were as a rule far behind the miners themselves in the most critical periods of the fight. We know, of course, that the most powerful forces of this country worked in unison for the defeat of the miners. Still, it remains a fact that in the last instance the resistance of the miners was broken by their own leaders.

We are thus brought to the conclusion that only an organisation which had a clearer outlook, a clearer understanding of the issues involved, and had sufficient courage to face all the implications of the struggle, could play a leading part during the crisis. The question which now arises is whether the Communist Party was strong enough to fill the bill. To answer this question we must turn to the documents and to the most important events during this historic period. Before coming to the documents themselves, we must, however, make one preliminary remark. A survey of the documents concerned shows clearly that the Communist Party and the Minority Movement worked in the same direction. In other words, we believe that we are entitled to say that the Minority Movement in general, and the Miners' Minority Movement in particular, fully accepted the lead of the Communist Party during this fight. The Minority Movement had only two policies to choose from—the policy of the General Council, which meant surrender, and the policy of the Communist Party, which meant a grim fight. The Minority Movement had the courage to accept the latter.

Now let us come to the documents.

The miners' struggle began practically on the day following Red Friday, July 31, 1925. On May 1, 1926, it only entered a new stage. Immediately after Red Friday the Communist Party made it perfectly clear that the ensuing nine months was only a breathing space, and that it would depend upon the workers whether Red Friday would be translated into a real victory, or whether this breathing space would be utilised by the Government alone, and the miners would be ultimately crushed. In the editorial of the *Workers' Weekly* immediately after Red Friday, the Communist Party warned the workers that

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The Government, acting on behalf of the capitalist class, is certain to prepare for a new struggle with the working class under more favourable conditions than this time and will endeavour to break the united front of the workers in order to make this attack successful.

If we take the *Workers' Weekly* for the second half of 1925, we will see that this warning is repeated again and again. The Communist Party tried not only to keep the question of the inevitable struggle ahead before the workers, but made efforts to put the matter in the clearest way possible before the responsible bodies of the Labour movement. We are referring to the letters sent out by this Party to the General Council of the T.U.C. and to the Labour Party Executive, in which those bodies were called upon to start an immediate campaign among the forces. The Communist Party was convinced that the fight would be a bitter one, that the State would be behind the mine owners, and that the Government would use the forces to crush the miners. We are unable, owing to lack of space, to dwell at sufficient length upon these documents. We will only say that the letters mentioned above, and the answers thereto given by responsible leaders of the General Council and of the Labour Party in the capitalist Press showed already in the month of August, 1925, that, among the organisations of the Labour movement, the Communist Party was the only one which foresaw not only the struggle ahead, but also its dimensions.

We wish to call special attention to the chairman's address at the August Conference of the Minority Movement, delivered by Tom Mann. This annual conference of the Minority Movement was declared to be a Preparedness Conference, and all the resolutions, and in particular the address of the Chairman, had one keynote: we are not ready, we are not prepared, and we must prepare. "I feel confident," said Tom Mann, "I may say without a moment's hesitancy that all present at this conference are fully determined to be prepared." If we compare this Conference of the Minority Movement with the Trades Union Congress which, as stated above, was permeated with the spirit of the victory of Red Friday, we will be perfectly justified in saying that, although the Scarboro' T.U.C. showed a more militant spirit than many other Congresses of the Trade Union movement, still it did not grasp

the meaning and significance of the problems of the coming fight as was done by the Preparedness Conference of the Minority Movement.

The Government fully appreciated the situation existing inside the Labour movement. The leaders of the Communist Party and of the Minority Movement—in other words, those leaders who worked for preparedness—were arrested and sentenced to terms of imprisonment, one group to six months and the other to twelve.

On January 15, the Executive of the Communist Party tried to sum up the lessons of the first months of the “breathing space.” We think that this statement deserves to be quoted at some length:—

The present industrial situation and the crisis looming ahead fully justifies the Communist Party's warning to the workers that the Capitalist Class is determined to return to the offensive, on an even more gigantic scale than last July.

The Miners, after the breathing space bought for the owners by the means of a subsidy, and the sham impartiality of the Coal Commission, are now threatened with an open attack on the seven-hour day, on the Miners' Federation and on wages.

The owners have thrown disguise to the winds.

The attack on the miners is the most violent and unashamed; but workers in most of the industries are faced with similar attacks.

The railwaymen are threatened with wage cuts: the engineers with longer hours: the builders with abolition of craft control won by years of sacrifice.

Coupled with this, nearly two million workers remain unemployed. By artificial and brutal administrative restrictions, thousands have been struck off the register and refused unemployment benefit. They have become completely dependent on the Poor Law authorities, and the crushing burden of maintaining this huge army of reserve workers against possible strikes or lockouts falls entirely upon local taxation.

These facts, taken together with the steady, if unobtrusive organisation of the O.M.S., point to a definite determination on the part of the British capitalists to prevent a repetition of Red Friday, to challenge the organised labour movement and smash it, and to drive the workers down to coolie conditions. By this means they hope to achieve the impossible task of stabilising their system, undermined by war, ruin of foreign markets, chaos in production, and hideous exploitation of colonial workers.

The struggle now opening is of a magnitude hitherto unknown. But this enlarged meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party believes that the workers can meet the capitalist attack and smash it, as on Red Friday.

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More : we believe that the British Workers can turn their defensive into an offensive, and present a common demand for better conditions which will be the prelude to a complete victory over the capitalists . . .

At the same time the Minority Movement organised a special conference called the Conference of Action, which was held on March 20, 1926. This Conference of Action was responsible for two important things. In the first place, it was the first great rank and file assembly which exposed correctly the work and the findings of the Royal Commission headed by Sir Herbert Samuel. Secondly, this Conference outlined a concrete plan of action, based upon the organisations of pit and factory committees on the one hand, and councils of action in each locality on the other.

The stand taken towards the Samuel Royal Commission deserves special attention. It is a well-established fact that the dominant classes use the instrument of courts of inquiry, royal commissions, and so on for the sole purpose of stemming the development of the class struggle. The Coal Commission appointed after Red Friday had a very delicate problem before it. It was called upon to persuade the workers that it was the business of the miners to pay, by the lowering of their standards, for the mismanagement of the mines by the coal owners. The Baldwin Government found the right men to do this delicate job. The Commission drew up a long report in which the pill the miners were expected to swallow was well sugared.

It is somewhat difficult to believe that the leaders of the Labour Party and of the General Council did not understand the real meaning of the Royal Commission's Report. The situation was wonderfully clear. The miners were in a fighting mood; there was a fine spirit of solidarity among the other workers. The dominant classes arranged a well-disguised division of work : while the mine owners were demanding longer hours and lower wages the Government Commission talked only about lower wages. The intention of the ruling classes was to prevent a conflict and to persuade the miners to "face the economic facts," namely to pay for the mismanagement of the mines. Had the Government succeeded in this plan, it would have been easy for them to introduce later the Eight-Hour Bill as a measure against too drastic cuts in wages. It was as clear as daylight that the duty of every

honest trade unionist, of every honest Labour man, was to fight against the subterfuge under cover of which wage reductions and longer hours were looming.

And yet, the leaders of the Labour Party and the General Council came out immediately in praise of this Report with the definite purpose of helping the Government to avoid a fight and to secure the submission of the miners without any special efforts. There was a moment when a section of the Miners' leaders was influenced by the agitation of the Trade Union and Labour leaders in favour of the Samuel Report. But eventually the miners refused to accept the Report. During this stage of the struggle the Communist Party was undoubtedly the only one organisation which took the correct line and gave the miners the right lead, exposing the real intentions of the Report of the Royal Commission.¹ We call attention to the appeal issued by the Communist Party to the delegates to the Miners' Conference held on March 12, which deals specially with the Royal Commission's Report. The most important points of this appeal are: (a) The Samuel Commission paves the way for the coal owners' victory; (b) Lower wages mean famine wages; (c) Increased production will worsen the conditions of the miners; (d) Longer hours will add more than 100,000 to the unemployed; (e) The promised trade revival is a fallacy—that the decline of British capitalism cannot be stopped at the expense of the workers.

On March 19, the Communist Party published another statement on the Report of the Coal Commission, which is practically an analysis of all the items included in the Report. There is, however, one point in this statement which, in our opinion, should be criticised. The statement ends with an appeal for a united front of all workers under the direction of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress. This statement appeared after the Conference of Action of the Minority Movement, at which it was decided to instruct the Executive of the Minority Movement to create an enlarged Advisory Board. The only political meaning which can be placed on that decision is that the Minority Movement, and also the Communist Party, were already afraid at that

¹ Later the Labour Research Department published a detailed analysis of the Samuel Report—*The Coal Crisis*.

time that at the critical hour the leadership of the Trades Union Congress might fail, and for that reason it was necessary to have a responsible body which would endeavour to save the movement from a debacle. If this interpretation is correct, it would have been politically wiser if, in the statement which dealt with the Coal Report, the Communist Party had warned the workers against the vacillations of the General Council and the readiness of some of the leaders of that body to accept the findings of the Samuel Report.

One month later the Communist Party issued a call which is of no less significance than the documents dealing with the Coal Commission's Report. We refer to the "Call to Miners, Engineers, and Railwaymen" printed in the *Workers' Weekly* of April 23. In that appeal, the General Council is urged to (1) convene a conference of all Trade Union Executives to support the miners, by a general strike if necessary; (2) to set up a strike commissariat in conjunction with the C.W.S.; and (3) to organise international support for the miners. This call leaves no room for doubt that the Communist Party foresaw clearly the character of the coming fight and understood the measures which should be taken to meet it. It is important for another reason. It indicated *the necessity of combining the fight of the miners with the demands of the metal workers and the railwaymen.*

The Communist Party already saw very clearly the danger of betrayal, although we believe that this danger was not sufficiently stressed. In the call to the Special Conference of Trade Union Executives which began on April 29, the Communist Party reminded the delegates to that Conference that class co-operation produced Black Friday, and that working-class solidarity produced Red Friday. The same idea is expressed in the May Day Manifesto of the Party. That manifesto contains an appeal to the workers not to be misled by lying talk of reconciliation between classes, of social and industrial peace, and among the slogans there is a warning against traitor leaders.

The feelings of the Communist Party on the danger of treason found still stronger expression in the statement issued by the Central Committee of the Party, which was published in the

Sunday Worker of May 2. We consider this statement of such great importance as to be worth while to quote in full:—

For nine months the Communist Party has been warning the workers that the mine-owners and their Government intended to attack the miners, and through them the whole working class. The Right Wing in the trade unions and the Labour Party has sneered at these warnings, and deliberately neglected to make adequate preparations. The events of the last few days have shown conclusively that the Communist Party was right.

The supreme need of the moment is solidarity between all sections of organised labour. The greatest danger to the workers to-day is that the Government and the Right Wing may succeed in isolating the miners from the rest of the movement by obscuring the real issues at stake, namely, that whatever reorganisation of the coal industry is needed, the miners shall not be forced to accept lower wages, longer hours, or district agreements.

During the negotiations the Government has done its utmost to trap the miners into unreservedly accepting the Commission's Report as a basis for discussion, and abandoning their resistance to its unashamed proposals for lowering their standard of life. This would be fatal, not only for the miners, but for all workers. Therefore, every working-class organisation must tell the capitalists plainly that the miners' declaration on wages, hours and national agreements, repeatedly endorsed by the General Council, are the minimum basis of any agreement whatsoever.

Further, the Communist Party reminds the workers that the Government fears action, not words. The General Council's request for power to call out every industry will not move the Government unless the resolution is accompanied by action. Such action can only be an immediate embargo on transport of coal or blacklegs, and a stoppage of the lying capitalist Press.

The Communist Party urges every member of the working class to do his utmost, in the next few days, to mobilise the workers in every locality around the Trades Council, vested with full authority as a Council of Action to press for the creation of a Workers' Defence Corps and a commissariat department jointly with the local Co-operative and to demand that the General Council shall immediately summon an International Conference of all trade union organisations to prevent blacklegging and secure co-ordinated action in defence of the miners.

It is rather unfortunate that this danger of betrayal was not sufficiently stressed after the General Strike began. The editorial of the *Daily Herald* of May 3 was very symptomatic. The *Daily Herald* informed the workers that all the leaders were acting as a unit; that all old feuds were forgotten. It was absolutely essential to have opposed to the slogan of the *Daily Herald*: Trust your

Leaders—the slogan which the Communist Party issued much later—Trust the Workers and Watch the Leaders!

It is quite obvious that during the days of the General Strike, when millions of workers came out to fight the cause of Labour against the Government, the Communist Party believed that the General Council would not dare to betray such a magnificent fight. It is a fact that, even after Baldwin made it perfectly clear in the House of Commons that the representatives of the T.U.C. were prepared to discuss the formula drafted by Birkenhead, which definitely mentioned wage reductions, the *Workers' Bulletin* (the official organ of the Communist Party during the period of the General Strike) of May 7 expressed the hope that the leaders of the General Council would frankly admit that they had made a mistake, and that they would stand solidly by the miners' slogans.

This was undoubtedly a serious mistake. It is the more surprising that this mistake was made in view of the pronouncement of the Communist Party in the *Workers' Bulletin* of May 5. That pronouncement made it absolutely clear that the miners' fight was a political fight, and that it was necessary to add to the slogans of the miners, the general slogan for all the workers for the formation of a Labour Government. The Communist Party knew at that time that the General Council was trying its very best to act constitutionally, which meant in practice to narrow the extension of the fight and to prepare its defeat. While the Communist Party should be complimented on the slogans formulated on May 5, it should, in our opinion, be criticised for the comment made on the statement of Mr. Baldwin, referred to above.

It must also be pointed out that the sound idea formulated in the call to miners, engineers, and railwaymen, referred to above, was not brought forward during the General Strike, when it was especially important to transform the fight for the support of the miners into a general offensive against the capitalists. We still believe that, if a lead had been given to the engineers, to the railwaymen, to the transport workers, to formulate their demands, and to unite with the miners in a campaign for the defence of the workers' standards, the betrayal of the strike would have been much more difficult.

While the Communist Party did not do all it should have done to

warn the workers against betrayal and to make betrayal impossible it must be added that that Party was the first to tell the truth about the surrender of May 12. On the day of May 12, the Communist Party of Great Britain sent a telegram to its district organisations qualifying the calling off of the strike as a treachery not only in relation to the miners but to all workers. In that short telegram the Communist Party also practically summed up the action of the two wings of the General Council in the following words: "While the Right Wing of the General Council and of the Labour Party has exhibited utmost energy the Left Wing has tolerated defeatist agitation and not protested against this treacherous decision."²

After the calling off of the general strike, this small Party threw all its weight and energies into the miners' dispute, considering the securing of victory for the miners to be the paramount issue of the Labour movement as a whole, and of the Party itself in particular. A careful study of all documents relating to the activities of the Communist Party during the miners' fight leads us to the conclusion that the Communist Party was fully justified in the message it issued to the miners after they were starved into submission, and that it is the only organisation which has the right to say with pride to the miners:—

Comrades, whatever you may think of Communist policy in general, you will not deny the great services rendered by the Communist Party in consolidating your struggle. At every point of the struggle, from the Samuel memorandum, through the bishops' terms to the last offer of the Government, the Communist Party not only fought by your side, not only fought to induce the rest of the Labour Movement to come to your help, but expressed your point of view better than your official organisation itself.

—*Workers' Weekly*, December 10, 1926.

The general strike began three days after the miners were locked out, and was called off some six months before the miners' fight was brought to a close. The workers who participated in the general strike considered that they were out to defend the miners' standards; the miners, fighting the mine owners and the

² These extracts, as many others quoted in this article, are taken from *The General Strike: Its Origin and History* by R. Page Arnot, a proof of which we have had the privilege to see, and which will be published shortly by the Labour Research Department.

Government, proudly and rightly thought that they were defending the cause of Labour in general. Nevertheless, these two great events in the history of the working class must be treated separately.

One cannot but agree with the estimate of the general strike as summed up in the *Workers' Weekly* of June 4, that it was the high-water mark of British working-class resistance to the lowering of standards. But it was something still bigger and more important. It was the first time in the history of Labour when all the walls which had been artificially built up between workers of different crafts and of different industries were burnt down in the great fire of working-class solidarity. The workers came together as a unit. They fought as a class. That is why the general strike, in spite of its bad leadership and final betrayal, revealed the great power and force of the workers.

The consolidation of the workers in the strike led also to the consolidation of the old Trade Union bureaucracy against the strike. Those who regarded themselves as "left" in the days of July, 1925, became frightened when the general strike threatened to become a great struggle between class and class. The cleavage between right and left in the General Council, as in the upper strata of the Trade Union bureaucracy in general, disappeared.⁸

During the strike the bureaucracy tried to combine class co-operation and class struggle. While issuing open appeals to the workers to stand united (see the *British Worker* day after day) they continued *secret* negotiations with representatives of the dominant classes. Such a double game could not last for long. The leaders of the General Council, under the guidance of the leaders of the Labour Party, had to choose one way or another. The strike developed, gaining strength and power every hour;

⁸ In order to avoid any misunderstanding, we want to make it clear that wherever we refer in this article to the Left Wing, we do not include either those rank and file members of the Labour Party and of the Trade Unions who are disgusted with the liberal policy of their leaders, and who consider themselves Left Wingers, or that part of the movement which is organised in the Left Wing National Movement. We refer solely to those so-called Left Wingers who adapt themselves in phraseology to the fighting mood of the workers, while remaining a part of the liberal bureaucratic machine. Some of these so-called Left Wingers occupy high positions in the General Council and in the Labour Party. Their political function is mainly to strengthen the hands of Thomas and MacDonald inside the Labour Party and the Trade Unions.

the negotiations were producing no results, and when the opportunity came, they clutched at the Samuel Memorandum, which everyone knows was simply a repetition of the Samuel Report (see the confessions of Sir Herbert Samuel in *The Times* of December 10) and behind which there was no power or authority, in order to call off the strike.

We are now able to refer to a careful selection of documents published by the Labour Research Department (see *The General Strike, May, 1926: Trades Councils in Action*, by Emile Burns), which prove convincingly that on May 12, *i.e.*, when the strike was called off, there was no signs of any weakening among the workers. On the contrary, the strike was developing and becoming a real great power, and it was for that reason that the General Council called it off.

We must say quite frankly that for a long time the lessons of the general strike were not brought home to their fullest extent even in the literature of the Communist Party.

In the article referred to above, published in the *Workers' Weekly* of June 4, we read: "This strike (the general strike) was broken not by the power of the capitalist class, but by the failure of the Right Wing leadership." The pamphlet published by the C.P.—*The Reds and the General Strike*—which brings home many lessons of the nine days, also speaks only about the crimes of the Right Wing leadership. Only later, much later, the Communist Party formulated strongly and clearly the great change in the relations of forces inside the Labour Movement brought about by the general strike. That change consisted in the consolidation of the bureaucracy—Right and Left, against the consolidation of the workers.

The general strike revealed another great possibility, namely, the consolidation of the workers for a *political* fight against the Baldwin Government. The by-elections following the general strike showed quite clearly that there was a great development of the political consciousness of the workers. The Communist Party was the only Party in Great Britain which explained the meaning of the general strike while the general strike was still on. A perusal of the appeals, manifestos, &c., issued by this Party shows, however, that for a long period it did not take up

the slogan of a Labour Government, which the Party itself had formulated during the strike.

The leaders of the Communist Party would probably tell us that the Party threw all its energy into trying to prevent the isolation of the miners, and that they therefore concentrated on the slogans of the embargo and a levy on all workers, and upon the consolidation of the miners themselves. This work was undoubtedly to the greatest credit of the Communist Party, and we are quite convinced that as a result of these activities the Party succeeded in doubling its membership. Still we think that a clear explanation of the relations of the forces inside the Labour Movement was absolutely essential, even with a view to strengthening the miners in their fight. To make this point perfectly clear, we are of the opinion that it was necessary to explain to the workers that the fight was a political fight and that neither the embargo nor the levy could be carried through the old bureaucracy, but in spite of it.

We also know that for a certain amount of time the Communist Party regarded with some suspicion the slogan—dissolution of the Baldwin Parliament. They saw quite clearly that this slogan was put forward by the I.L.P. in order to cover their retreat from the slogans of the embargo and the levy. We share the view of the Communist Party with regard to the I.L.P. slogan. Nevertheless, we believe that the best way to have fought this measure of the I.L.P. was to combine the slogans of the embargo and levy with that of the dissolution of Parliament.

We have enumerated some of the acts and omissions of the Communist Party which we consider as mistakes. We do this at the same time knowing perfectly well that many of the mistakes mentioned were afterwards not only admitted, but, where possible, rectified by the Party. Nevertheless, we think that they should be carefully studied. We accept unreservedly the contention of Marx that self-criticism is one of the strongest weapons of the workers in their fight for emancipation. Let those who preach continuity of capitalist policy occupy themselves with window dressing. Sincere working-class fighters should never be afraid of acknowledging omissions and mistakes.

Now let us try to analyse the activities of the Communist

Party during the miners' fight. Before we come to this, however, we want only to mention that among the documents relating to the General Strike which are of the first importance we include the statement of the General Council of the Russian Trade Unions on the lessons of the general strike. This document produced some hot blood in the relations between the British General Council and the Russian General Council. This conflict has not yet ended. It would appear that, just as the Baldwin Government is trying to introduce legislation aimed at preventing a repetition of the general strike, so the General Council in its turn is trying to "legislate" in a way as to make such "interference" as that mentioned above impossible. For our part, we welcome this interference. We only want to remind the patriots of continuity that the dominant classes of Great Britain played a decisive part in world politics for the simple reason that they were the first to carry through the capitalist industrial revolution. The Russian workers play, and will play, a leading active part in working-class politics for the reason that they were the first to carry through the working-class revolution.

Now let us come back to the activities of the Communist Party during the miners' fight.

From the day when the general strike was called off to the day when Lord Birkenhead had a chance to speak in the name of the Government about "our victory"—in the middle of December—the Communist Party did not stop for a second to popularise and to defend the idea of an embargo on blackleg coal and a levy on all workers. It may be argued that neither of these slogans actually materialised. This is quite true. The organised bureaucracy of the Labour Movement proved itself stronger than the Communist Party. It cannot be disputed, however, that this campaign had a very great effect. It focussed the attention of the workers to the miners' fight. The miners felt that the rank and file were with them in their struggle, and this was a source of courage to the miners and gave them confidence to continue the struggle. To this we want to add that the Conference of Trade Union Executives held at the beginning of November, which, although only half-heartedly, declared itself in favour of a voluntary levy, should be honestly considered as the achievement of the

Communist Party propaganda. The importance of the activities of the Communist Party will be better understood if we study the critical moments in the history of the great fight.

It was at the end of June when the leaders of the miners first revealed their weakness. We refer to the agreement concluded between the General Council and the Miners' Executive to postpone the conference called for June 25, which was supposed not only to thrash out the lessons of the general strike, but also to organise the support of the workers for the miners. We understand perfectly well why the General Council was anxious to postpone this Conference. June 25 was not far from May 12, and the workers might well still remember the nightmare of that tragic day. But why did the miners' leaders agree to this postponement? There is no doubt that a section of the Miners' Executive hoped that at least the postponement of the conference would result in a greater measure of support from the General Council. They could not understand that the General Council was first and foremost interested in the defeat of the miners, and not in their victory. There was, however, another section of the leadership which was in sympathy with the leadership of the General Council, and was prepared to follow that lead.

In the *Workers' Weekly* of July 2, that is, the first issue after the Conference was called off, the Communist Party came out with a clear explanation: "Why was the Conference called off?" In that statement the Communist Party stated that the miners' leaders had made a mistake:

They (the miners' leaders) have enabled the Right Wing leaders to hide their real faces from the workers a little longer; they have enabled the Left Wing leaders to go a little longer without declaring once for all where they stand; they have won no permanent advantage either for the miners or for the workers generally, and they have placed themselves at the mercy of the General Council in any manoeuvre it may undertake in pursuance of its settled policy of forcing wage reductions on the workers.

This statement, as nearly all the statements of the Communist Party for this period, finished up with an appeal for an embargo and a levy on all workers.

The second critical moment is connected with the bishops' proposals. Those who declare that Cook and the Communist Party followed the same policy during all the phases of the struggle

are doing an injustice to both of them. It is a fact—it does not matter whether we like it or not—that in July, when Cook and his colleagues persuaded themselves that they would get nothing from the agreement with the General Council, the general feeling among the miners' leaders, including Cook, was that the bishops' proposals should be accepted. And they came out openly in favour of them. Those who want to blame them or criticise them for this undoubted blunder must remember that the bishops' proposals were praised by all our Labour leaders—the Right and so-called Left—and that at that time the coalition of all the reactionary forces against the miners was already well at work. The Communist Party was the only organisation (we must again remind the reader that the Minority Movement accepted the lead of the Communist Party in all the stages of the fight) which warned the miners that the memorandum of the church dignitaries had the same purpose as the famous Samuel Memorandum, namely, to prepare the retreat of the miners. We would like to quote the following sentence from the Communist Party statement on the bishops' proposals:—

The Communist Party reminds A. J. Cook and Herbert Smith that their ambiguous statements implying a readiness to accept wage reductions only encourages the capitalists *to renew their campaign to trap the miners into surrender* (our italics). Their prime duty at the moment is to devote all their time to a campaign for the embargo.

On August 22, the Central Committee of the Communist Party congratulated the miners on their historic struggle, emphasising the fact that partial surrender would not placate Baldwin and the coalowners. We believe that the Communist Party in its turn deserves to be congratulated on the results of its campaign against the bishops' proposals.

The longer the struggle continued, the greater became the energy of the Communist Party in the coalfields and in the great industrial centres. At the beginning of October the position of the miners began to worsen day by day. We have so far mentioned only two critical periods in the struggle—the agreement with the General Council and the bishops' proposals. To these it is necessary to add a third—the Churchill-MacDonald proposals, the object of which was to open the mines on the terms of the mineowners. And, in fact, the mines were partially opened.

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At that time the Communist Party came out with a clear fighting programme which was later accepted first by the South Wales Miners' Federation, and then became the programme of the whole of the Miners' Federation. The following is the South Wales Resolution :—

South Wales Resolution

That we revert to the *status quo* conditions. In order to obtain this the policy of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain on the following items to be:—

- (1) Safety Men.—All such to be withdrawn from every colliery.
- (2) Embargo.—That we urge this on all foreign-produced coal.
- (3) Outcrops.—That the Miners' Federation of Great Britain immediately order the cessation of this practice.
- (4) Levy.—That a special congress of the Trade Unions be called specifically to deal with this matter.
- (5) Propaganda.—(a) That we send speakers to all black areas;
(b) That the Labour Members of Parliament be marshalled for a nation-wide campaign.

In the event of any or all of these proposals becoming the National policy, that central control of the operations be in the Miners' Federation of Great Britain Executive Committee, who shall direct them to the supersession of local barriers where necessary.

Although the Miners' Federation accepted the South Wales programme, still it is an open secret that, with the exception of Cook and a few of his nearest colleagues, the Federation as such showed no great enthusiasm to carry through that programme. On the contrary, although the South Wales programme was never reconsidered and remained in force, the first November delegate conference of the miners dared to recommend the acceptance of the Government proposals, which were practically the proposals of the mineowners. Who conducted the fight against these outrageous proposals of the Government? Only the Communist Party. And if the workers throughout the world may feel proud of the fact that in the twenty-ninth week of the lock-out hundreds of thousands of miners had the courage to vote against surrender proposals, the Communist Party has a right to claim its share in this historic decision, which will never be forgotten in our annals.

It is true that this momentous decision was never carried through by the miners' leaders. Instead they chose to liquidate the fight. Still the far-reaching result of this vote can be observed,

first in the fact that the Federation as such refused to sanction the conditions on which the workers were returning to work, and secondly, in the mood of the workers themselves. The miners declare, We are defeated, but not broken. The Federation declared that the conditions were imposed and not agreed to. In such circumstances, it is quite possible to rebuild a new strong united union which will be capable of converting the defeat into a great victory.

In discussing the activities of the Communist Party during the miners' lock-out, we dealt mainly with *the policy* of the Party. We must add that the part played by the Communist rank and file during the lock-out is illustrated in the way Communists are being singled out by the coalowners on the question of reinstatement. (It should also be remembered that well over 1,000 members of the Communist Party were imprisoned under E.P.A., and many of them are still in gaol.) It is an open secret that in all collieries, even in the most remote parts of the country, the Communists are the first to be victimised and the last to remain at their posts. The owners are acting thus knowing that the Communists would be and will be the first to renew the fight, as they were in the front ranks of the miners' army during the fight, which is now at its close.

We say at its close advisedly, because the fight is not yet finished. Hundreds of thousands of miners are still out of work. Guerilla fights are taking place in every part of the country, and again in these guerilla fights the Communists play a very active part.

The rank and file and the leaders of this small Party acted as a unit. In March seven of the twelve Communist leaders arrested after the Liverpool Conference of the Labour Party were released. Their first word was that they would devote all their energy to the miners' fight. They kept their word both during the general strike and the miners' lock-out. In September the second group, who had been serving a sentence of twelve months, were released. Joynton-Hicks watched them carefully, trying to prevent them from being active in the coalfields. He did not succeed. Together with all other Communists, they were at their fighting posts.

We have given only a short and concise statement about the part played by the Communist Party during the recent great struggle. The conclusion which must be drawn from a close survey of the activities of the Communist Party during this eventful epoch is that there is a new strong force in the Labour Movement which gives us the right to believe that the sacrifices of the great battles of the last seven months will not be lost, and that the working class, which has become ripe for a great march forward, has already a Party which is capable of undertaking the leadership of that advance.

The Communist Party was and remains an integral part of the Labour Movement. We have every reason to believe that the efforts of the present leaders of the Labour Party to make that Party safe for Liberalism, will fail. The rank and file will see that, not only the Communist Party shall not be kept out of the Labour Party, but that it will play the part in shaping the policies of the Labour Movement that it deserves to play.

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The MINERS' STRUGGLE AND INTERNATIONAL UNITY

By R. PAGE ARNOT

THE miners' struggle opens a new chapter for the working class of Great Britain—so much is known. What is not realised is that it also writes *finis* to every previous chapter whatever the subject matter. One illusion after another has now been stripped away by the miners' struggle.

One long chapter was the first campaign for International Trade Union Unity. As a development of the United Front put forward in December, 1921, there came the gradual progress towards the campaign for International Trade Union Unity. Then, in the autumn of 1924, that campaign began ; it proceeded apace ; it met with enormous difficulties ; bit by bit those difficulties seemed harder and harder, but still appeared surmountable. Suddenly, in the first fortnight of May, 1926, they began to appear insurmountable. The process ran quickly through this last summer. The officials stood by to unloose the official bonds and were only restrained by the fear of its effect upon the masses.

Now that those bonds are almost unloosed, now that the General Council are seeking to cripple or stop the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, it might seem that the campaign has completely failed and that we are back at the position of two and a-half years ago ; or rather that we were much further back, because there is now no question of such developments towards International Trade Union Unity as in the 1924-25 manner. But it would be the greatest possible mistake to think that we are " back again " in 1924. History does not go for a stroll and come back in the evening ; history marches on, and a stage once reached is never exactly repeated.

No doubt the gentlemen of Amsterdam feel that they have won a great victory or, rather, that a great victory has been won for them. But they are much mistaken if they think so ; and even they

do not imagine that the agitation of 1925-26 can have taken place without leaving an abiding effect upon the masses of workers.

Let us recall first the purposes of international trade union unity—the situation in which it arose—the effect it was bound to have upon the workers in each country—the resistance it was bound to evoke from the capitalists and the lackeys of the capitalists.

The purpose of International Trade Union Unity was clear from the beginning. It was to unite on the basis of their common struggle against the capitalists the organised workers of every country in the world. It was thus the preliminary to a successful resistance of the workers against the capitalist attacks. These attacks took many forms, of which the most obvious were :—

- (1) The increasing drive for reduction of wages, lengthening of hours, and disintegration of trade unionism ;
- (2) The operation of the Dawes Plan in Germany, the gold standard deflation in Britain, the move for the revalorisation of the franc in France ;
- (3) The drive against the Colonial peoples in order to keep China, India and the other countries safe for overseas investments ;
- (4) The move (initiated from Downing Street) to unite the States of Western Europe against the U.S.S.R.—the Workers' Republics.

These attacks it was clear would be brought to naught if those attacked were to form up in one united resistance. If the Chinese trade unionists and the Russian trade unionists and the Indian trade unionists and the British trade unionists stood together, and if with them the trade unionists of France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and America were able to heal their internal divisions, then the whole attack that was being prepared (which the capitalists themselves called “the process of stabilisation”) would be prepared in vain.

This was more immediately obvious to the capitalists than it was to the workers. Scarcely had Trade Union Unity been mentioned than they launched a campaign against it, and threw into the struggle not only the terrible columns of the capitalist Press, but also the Social Democratic Press, the bureaucracy of the trade unions of Western Europe and lastly the body which had served them better than any other in the last ten years in making divisions within the Labour Movement and carrying the capitalist policy through the ranks of the workers, viz., the leaders of the Second International (Vandervelde and company).

The Russian and British trade union leaders had a stiff task before them to fight and to break all these forces. But on their side they had the fact that they were fighting for a cause which was bound to prevail in that it attracted battalion after battalion of ordinary workers in the ranks of the Trade Unions, whose leaders alone were so opposed to unity. They were bound to win because they had the workers on their side. They were bound to win—provided they remained true to the workers and the cause they had taken up.

With the visit of the Trade Union Delegation to Russia and the agreement there made for an Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, and the subsequent ratification of that Agreement in the spring of 1925, a beginning was made. For six months thereafter the campaign went ahead briskly enough—though a close observer might have seen even then curious signs of hesitation—but after the Scarborough Trades Union Congress in September, 1925, the campaign, which should have been speeded up in view of the unanimous acceptance by the Congress of the General Council's policy, began to be mysteriously slowed down. There was sand in the bearings. Into this it is not necessary to go in detail. It suffices to say that the same General Council that could not take the slightest step to prepare for the terrible struggle that was to confront the Trade Union movement at the end of April could not logically be expected to go rapidly ahead with working-class preparation on an international scale.

All that was done was done in the direction of preserving a surface amity with Soviet Russia while at the same time an accommodation attitude towards Amsterdam was displayed. In short, for the last eighteen months, at a time when the workers were finding the realities of their life grimmer and grimmer, the General Council, instead of determinedly carrying through the campaign for international trade union unity in conjunction with the leaders of the Russian Trade Unions, has been acting a delightful play adapted from Bunyan's *M. Facing-Both-Ways* in which it reserved to itself the title role.

We have now to trace as clearly as may be the steps by which the General Council reverted to the attitude of opposition to International Trade Union Unity—from May right on to

November. It is the miners' struggle which sweeps away the drama and makes the reality clear. Let us see what help the miners had during their struggle from the professors of international trade union unity.

On June 7 the Central Council of the Soviet Trade Unions published a statement on the general strike in which it exercised its right of friendly criticism. Three main facts were before it. First, the insulting refusal of their fraternal offer of help. Secondly, the breakdown of May 12, including the damning verbatim report of the interview between the General Council representatives and the Prime Minister. Thirdly, the decision of the miners to continue the fight and their welcome acceptance of the help that had originally been offered to the workers through the General Council. In their published statement the Central Council of the Russian Trade Unions were not withheld by any trumpery considerations of surface *bonhomie*, or acquaintance with individuals, from stating in a clear manner their definite opinion of the policy pursued by the General Council. At once our General Council were insulted. What right had outsiders, foreigners, to criticise the British Trade Unionists? It was clear that they did not for a moment imagine that it was not only the right, but the bounden duty, of the representatives of one working class to lend not only their friendly aid but their friendly fraternal criticism; fraternal, however sharply it might be necessary to express it in the case where another movement had been before the world so obviously misled by its representatives. No immediate action was taken, but the members of the General Council were angry, and nursed their wrath to keep it warm.

Meantime, the miners had not only accepted gladly the aid of their fellow Trade Unionists that had been spurned by the General Council, but began to press for an early meeting of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee in order that they should receive therefrom such further aid as could be devised. Eventually a meeting was held at Paris on July 30 and 31, 1926. This, it should be noted, was the first meeting that had been held since the beginning of December, 1925. The Soviet Trade Unionists at once proposed that the meeting should be devoted to helping the miners. The British Trade Unionists insisted that the first item

must be a withdrawal of the June 7 statement of the Soviet Trade Unionists. The General Council thus showed themselves sticklers for etiquette at a very curious moment. The miners were in the direst need. The meeting of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, however, was not to be permitted to deal with the needs of the miners until this question of withdrawal had been fully discussed. The result of the meeting was a deadlock.

A further meeting was held at the end of August in Berlin. This time the Soviet Trade Union delegation definitely put down the question of helping the English miners as the first and most important point to be discussed.

It was now the sixteenth week of the lock-out. They tabled a definite series of proposals for concrete support for the miners. The meeting went on for two days. The General Council of the British Trades Union Congress at first refused to discuss the question of the miners, and, when at last they were pressed to make some declaration on the concrete proposals put forward, stated that everything suggested for helping the British miners had already been done. Throughout the account of this meeting there is obviously an attitude of resentment at the idea of other Trade Unionists meddling with British affairs. It is clear that here we have the whelps of the old British Lion roaring in the manner of their sire.

Finally, the Soviet Trade Unionists and the British Trade Unionists at this meeting of the Anglo-Russian Committee agreed to recommend to their respective General Councils proposals for a full discussion of outstanding matters within one month.

It was now within two weeks of the Bournemouth Trades Union Congress. This year again, M. Tomskey, the Chairman of the Russian Trades Union Congress, was to have been the fraternal delegate to Bournemouth. His visa was refused by the British Foreign Office at the instance of Joynson-Hicks. This insult to the working class of Great Britain was not swallowed by the General Council without a formal protest being made, but the hollow nature of the protest was shown by the fact that the General Council prevented the Congress from ratifying and reinforcing it.

The capitalist Press, which seems during the past two years to be very close to right-wing sources of information about the doings

and thinkings of the General Council, stated that the members were relieved at Jix's decision. They did not state that the members of the General Council had approached Jix to ask him to prevent Tomsky's coming ; and it would not have been true to say so. But according to them Jix's decision was a relief to the General Council, and their protest was very obviously a *pro forma* protest. The atmosphere was not one of Anglo-Russian Unity, but of collusion between the Trades Union Congress General Council and the Tory Government against the miners and against all the aid or comfort the miners might get from Tomsky's speech as fraternal delegate.

The Soviet Trade Unionists, however, have had a long experience (both before and after the revolution) of attempted suppressions by Governments with or without the collusion of the reformists within the Labour Movement. Somehow or other, they wished the British workers to know their opinion. A letter was sent in the name of Michail Tomsky to the Bournemouth Trades Union Congress, conveying the greetings of the Soviet Trade Union Central Council. In the course of this letter they said :—

We may be accused of being too sharp, but when it comes to choosing between empty compliments (which mean nothing) to leaders, and the service of the working masses, we will always choose the latter. These are the dictates of our working-class conscience and our bounden proletarian duty. If we Soviet workers held it to be necessary to do everything possible to extend brotherly material aid, we clearly believe it to be our proletarian duty to extend our moral aid.

The letter had begun by greeting the miners and hoping that the Congress would make it its first business to help those miners. After the passage quoted above, the letter went on to deal with the question of aid, and in the course of this, frankly, but without any offensive language, criticised the General Council. The letter ended by announcing the decision to allocate a further 3,000,000 roubles for the benefit of the miners on the basis of a 1 per cent. voluntary levy of workers in the Soviet Union, and finally said :—

Proletarian solidarity is displayed only in deeds. Just as the proletarians of over a hundred nationalities inhabiting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics helped each other in their struggle, so our whole proletariat considers it is fraternal duty to help their British brother-workers in this their critical hour. We are firmly convinced that, in our hour of trial, the British proletariat will do

the same by us. More than once it has withheld the mailed fist of the British bourgeoisie hanging over our Workers' State. Thus will grow and strengthen brotherly bonds between the toilers of both countries, bonds that will become a tower of strength when in Britain the real Workers' Government, whose advent is inevitable, is formed.

We strongly believe that the Trades Union Congress will do everything possible to consolidate further the Anglo-Russian Committee—the symbol of International Trade Union Unity, the symbol of the brotherly bonds which exist between the British and Soviet workers.

Long live International working-class solidarity!

Up the fight against the capitalist offensive!

The letter was dated September 5. The reply of the General Council was issued on September 8, together with a copy of the Russian telegram. The General Council really replied in two ways : one was to print the message of the Russian Trade Unions in the semi-grammatical telegraphese in which long international communications are dispatched. By a piece of petty malignity they endeavoured to convey the impression of illiterate ravings on the part of the Russian Trade Unionists. It was no doubt considered a satisfactory revenge.

The second reply was a brief retort which ended by saying :—

The General Council has no intentions of replying to this ill-instructed and presumptuous criticism. The General Council most emphatically asserts that it cannot permit the position of a fraternal delegate to be degraded into a tirade against representatives of the British movement and the fraternal delegates of other countries, nor of countenancing an intolerable interference in British trade union affairs.

This, of course, was the very language of Mr. Pecksniff. In Pecksniff, Charles Dickens portrayed that not uncommon type of Englishman who uses fine language to clothe mean feelings, and who was an adept at expressing envy, malice, and all uncharitableness in pompous, hypocritical language. As this is the regular language of the editorial columns of the newspapers, the Fleet Street journalists naturally hailed the reply of the General Council as "calm and dignified."

We now come to the Congress Debate on International Trade Union Unity. It will be recalled that the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee had met on September 17, 1925, at the time of the Scarborough Congress and again in Berlin on December 8 and 9, 1925, and that thereafter there had been a great gap until the

quarrel-over-procedure meetings of Paris on July 31 and of Berlin at the end of August, 1926.

Not a single step, unless it were a step backward, had been taken on the question of International Trade Union Unity since December of 1925. The General Council's Report to Congress was remarkably curt and unenlightening. In the debate on the International Federation of Trade Unions and International Unity, Horner pointed out straightaway that the language of the General Council was such as

to lead delegates into the belief that the British Trade Union Movement had never attempted any other than to secure association with the Russian Trade Union workers. That limited objective, which it was suggested in this report had been the idea of the British Trade Union Movement, was not correct. Some of them were perfectly well aware that it had become necessary to find some pretext or other for separation from an association which talked or acted in terms of deeds.

All the delegates in this Congress, he believed, had been under the impression that the unity they aimed at with the Russian workers was merely intended to be a preliminary to unity with all the rest of the world's workers, whether they were dissident or Communist workers, or any other workers. There was not merely the problem of unity with Russia, but as miners his people during the period of this dispute had been face to face with the fact that on the Continent there were workers who were not associated with Amsterdam, and these workers they had found to be equally essential to them as those who were occupying membership inside the I.F.T.U., and when the British Trade Union Movement had been seeking to secure Trade Union unity it was not merely unity as between the I.F.T.U. and the Russians, it was, they believed, unity between those dissident elements whether in France, Belgium, Germany or Czechoslovakia, and those organised elements in the Eastern portion of the world.

Meantime, the General Council had considered the proposals jointly agreed to at the Berlin meeting of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee ; had rejected them and had resolved "to defer all considerations of Anglo-Russian Unity questions for a period of three months." The formula is suspiciously like the House of Commons rejection formula "that the Bill be read this day six months," and no doubt there were enough Parliamentarians on the General Council to think of such a device. No doubt also they thought that another three weeks or another month would see the miners' lock-out finished.

Mr. Purcell cannot be said to have replied satisfactorily to Mr. Horner in the contentions he brought forward, notably in his suggestions that "the Russians themselves should ease the situation."

Thus the General Council within a very short space had either itself or through its representatives :—

- (1) Refused to discuss aid to the miners.
- (2) Pretended that it had done all that could be done to help the miners.
- (3) Decided to have no more truck with the Russian Trade Unionists for a period of at least three months.
- (4) Sent a formal intimation of their regret, but privately, according to the papers, were relieved at the refusal of a visa to the fraternal delegate.
- (5) Submitted a report which contained tendentious passages veering towards amity with Amsterdam and the Amsterdam ideals of separateness and sectionalism.
- (6) In the debate, through their chief spokesman, showed a disposition to mark time and perhaps even to step backward.

Logically, they had to do these things, for the betrayal of the miners on May 12 and in the months that followed could not, in reason, be accompanied by non-betrayal of the miners on the international field and ardent support inside the Anglo-Russian Committee.

There remained little enough for the General Council to do. They had all but broken off the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, the propaganda of Trade Union Unity had ceased, the campaign against the splits and disintegrations of the Trade Union movement had been dropped. The chieftains of Amsterdam could now carry on their policy of disunity once more—a policy which in practice means handing over the workers to the mercy of the employers.

Finally, the capitalist Press of Europe and the whole world could feel that it had in some way contributed to a victory for civilisation and that it had warded off the terrible danger of a Trade Union body whose scope would cover the world and whose membership would embrace British and Chinese, Indians and Russians, Americans and Africans, every section of every country.

The Times in particular was pleased ; but true to its tradition felt it necessary to make assurance doubly sure. Its Congress editorials which had begun with such a fearful note now ended : " Still the Council and the Congress continue to pay lip-service to the idea of unity. Consistency and the normal dictates of self-respect require them to make a speedy end of the Anglo-Russian Committee."

But the General Council know how to do their own business better than *The Times* can advise them. A breach such as *The Times* suggests would at once be plain in its meaning to every worker and would arouse intense indignation. It would be an insult not merely to the largest body of Trade Unionists in the world, but also to the millions of miners and miners' wives and families by whom the Soviet Trade Unionists had stood so well. So the General Council will probably propose some means of maiming or crippling the functions of the Committee so that it will gradually die " a natural death." A sudden death is always suspicious.

But we may take leave to doubt whether the General Council will be successful in its plan of stifling the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee as part of its general tendency to " forget " about International Trade Union unity. The General Council may hold the machine—and it is a machine whose strength should not be underestimated—but they have lost their moral authority. And where the workers have lost faith in their leaders it will not be so easy to trick them or to destroy the fraternal bond that exists between the Soviet Trade Unionists and ourselves—a bond created not by committees, but by the help they gave the miners in the biggest struggle of British trade union history. It is on this basis that Trade Union unity now rests—a basis that cannot be shattered.

IMPERIAL DEFENCE

By W. N. EWER

CLAUSEWITZ'S famous dictum that "war is a continuation of policy" is none the less true because it is trite. The problems of strategy and diplomacy are inextricably connected, for they are posed by precisely the same economic and political conditions. The work of a Foreign Office is necessarily linked with the work of the Defence Ministries. The same causes which created the Triple Entente created simultaneously the Committee of Imperial Defence and the Rosyth Dockyard.

So far as the British Empire is concerned the strategical and diplomatic problems of the moment are essentially defensive. Great Britain has in the past been a predatory and expansionist power. She will be so again if strength and opportunity serve. But for the moment she must concentrate on the retention and digestion of her existing possessions. She is unlikely in the near future to attempt aggression—which must not be confused with a tactical offensive—or annexation—unless for the purpose of consolidating defensive positions in a given area. Syria and Persia may be suggested as areas in which such a thing is possible.

The defence of the Empire falls immediately into two categories—defence against external enemies and defence against internal revolt. Of the two the former has become relatively less, the latter relatively more, important than before 1914.

Now the problems of defence against external enemies are determined by two sets of data—the things to be defended and the potential enemies against whom they are to be defended.

Of these the first may be classified as :—

- (1) Great Britain and Ireland.
- (2) The overseas territories.
- (3) Essential lines of communication and trade routes.

Among potential enemies we do not need to include the whole of the sixty odd independent states of the world. There are among them many—indeed a great majority—with whom war is inconceivable (unless as a minor incident in a general conflagration). War with Czecho-slovakia or Paraguay is a physical impos-

sibility. War with Denmark or Bulgaria is a political impossibility : for there are no discoverable causes of serious conflict.

Eliminating all these cases we find as potential enemies a baker's dozen of States of varying strength.

In Europe : France, Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union.

In Asia : Turkey, the Hedjaz, Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, Siam, China, Japan.

In America : the United States.

Now of these, two may be eliminated again. A German war is, for the moment, out of the question for obvious reasons. An American war is equally excluded, for equally obvious reasons. In the one case, Germany is physically incapable of waging war against Great Britain ; in the other, Great Britain is economically incapable of waging war against the United States. Neither eventuality needs to be seriously considered by the military and naval experts.

Of the remaining eleven, France is in a category by itself. It is the only power which, from its geographical position, is capable of striking immediately at the centre of the Empire. A military invasion is probably as impossible as ever. But London is within easy striking distance of the French air squadrons ; every port and every trade route is within easy range of the French submarines. The experience of 1914-1918 is sufficient warning of the potentialities of an Anglo-French war. The prospect involves for both parties so tremendous a risk, such certainty of mutual destruction, that unless under the greatest provocation they dare not hazard it.

Therefore — apart from any other motive — the strategic position makes a continuation of the Anglo-French entente essential. That entente has been seriously strained on occasion since the war. The very fact that it has survived those strains is eloquent of the forces compelling its continuance.

Therefore, though the Imperial General Staff and its affiliated military, naval, and air organisations are compelled—because of the supreme importance of the one in a thousand chance if it were to come off—to study the problems of a French war, to prepare London's air-defences and the like, this is not really a vital

strategic problem of the moment. France may be counted—as in the years before 1914—as an ally, or at the least a benevolent neutral, in any struggle.

We are narrowing the field. We have only left Italy, the Soviet Union and a group of Asiatic countries from Turkey to Japan. The problem is becoming an Eastern one—Eastern and Mediterranean.

Italy we should also be able to exclude were it not for the curiously incalculable character of the existing Italian government. For Italy, dependent upon sea-borne traffic for her fuel and her food, has in the past made it a definite rule of her policy that she cannot afford to quarrel with the nation whose sea-power is still supreme among European states. To blockade Italy would indeed be less easy to-day than in the pre-submarine era. But it should not be impossible. And—except for making Mediterranean traffic difficult by submarine activity off Gibraltar and Port Said—Italy could not retort effectively. Still, there are possibilities in Mussolini's dramatic diplomacy. War with Italy cannot be entirely excluded. But it would only be a serious menace to the Empire if it were associated with trouble in the East; then, indeed, Italian hostility in the Mediterranean would be a danger to be dreaded.

We are left, as the real questions of the day, with the Asiatic States. And not one of them (save Siam, powerlessly compressed between British and French territory) can be ruled out of the class of possible enemies. The central problem of Imperial defence against external enemies becomes visible as primarily an Asiatic problem. And be it noted that it is precisely in Asia (including Egypt and the Sudan) that the twin problem—of defence against internal revolt—is a serious one. In the self-governing Dominions that problem is non-existent. In the tropical African colonies it does not yet seriously exist, though it may come into very real being within the next few decades. The other Crown Colonies are too small and scattered to be of considerable moment.

Asia—and Australia, which neighbours it very closely—are the crux of the whole question. The protection and retention of that band of Imperial territory which stretches with a few breaks

from the Libyan Desert to the great Barrier Reef is the first and immediate task both of British strategy and of British diplomacy.

Of the Asiatic states which neighbour that territory, four—the Hedjaz, Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet—are important by reason of geographical situation rather than of their military strength. They may be fields of operation. They may operate as allies or instruments either for the British Empire or against it. They take their place, and a by no means insignificant place, in the strategic complex. But they are subordinate, not principal, factors. The principal factors are the four remaining states—the Soviet Union, Turkey, China and Japan. Of these, two are strong military powers, one may rapidly become so ; the fourth is a first-class naval power.

Military defence must be provided against Turkey in Iraq, against the Soviet Union both in Iraq and on the Indian North-West Frontier, against China on the Burmese North-East Frontier. Naval defence against Japan must be provided for Australia, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies (for whose protection—owing to the close inter-connection of the Dutch and British capitalist interests and the naval weakness of Holland—this country tacitly accepts responsibility). In addition there are the lines of communication to be safeguarded and preparations made for counter-attacks.

Here then, stripped of all unessential and less essential things, are the central key-matters of the problem. The British Empire is organised primarily for war, not in Europe, not in America or Africa, but in Southern Asia.

The distribution of its armed forces is in close accordance with the requirements of this purpose.

Take the Army first. There are some 90,000 British troops outside the British Isles. Of these—apart from those who are temporarily and for purely historical reasons on the Rhine—all but a single battalion and a few garrison artillery units are in Southern Asia or on its lines of communication.

India with its 60,000 is of course the main centre of concentration. The rest are in the strategic points to East and West from Gibraltar to Hong Kong : Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Aden, Ceylon, the Straits, China.

The distribution of the Air Force tells the same story. There are $27\frac{1}{2}$ squadrons at home, $18\frac{1}{2}$ abroad. Of those abroad, 6 are in India, 8 in Iraq, 4 in Egypt and Palestine, the half-squadron in Aden.

The Fleet : one cruiser squadron in the West Indies on the Panama Canal route to Australia ; one in S. Africa on the Cape route ; one in Indian, one in Chinese waters ; and in the Mediterranean a battle squadron, two cruiser squadrons and four destroyer flotillas.

The naval concentration, it will be noticed, is less definitely Eastern than the military. But even this is temporary. So soon as the new bases—Trincomali, Singapore, Port Darwin—are ready, we shall see a big shifting of naval strength to the East.

Indeed, just as Rosyth was the outward and visible sign of the politico-military situation before the war, so Singapore is the outward and visible sign of the new situation. Germany was the certain naval enemy then. Japan (leaving aside for the moment the incalculable Mussolini) is the most probable naval enemy now. And the East—from India to Tasmania and New Zealand—is nakedly open to Japanese attack unless an adequate base exists from which the opposing fleet can work. Singapore, one may note, is the obvious site for such a base. Hong Kong is untenable against land attack unless Kowloon be guarded by elaborate fortifications and a large field army. Singapore is easily defended and supplied, and in as perfect a geographical situation as can be imagined. A battle squadron and two or three cruiser squadrons there, with Trincomali and Port Darwin as subsidiary bases, is the preparation for the possibility of a Japanese war.

We turn to the defence problems of the Asiatic continental frontiers.

The problem of India's North-Western frontier defences is one which has been worked out a hundred times. But if you need evidence that it is being again anxiously studied, note the new Khyber railway, the building of aerodromes near the frontier, the strenuous experimenting with cross-country motor transport, to which the Maharaja of Bardwan makes not over-discreet reference in the published report of the very discreet, formal discussion on Defence in the Imperial Conference. And if you need evidence

that the problem of the North-Eastern or Chinese frontier is now being taken seriously, note the recent tour of the Commander-in-Chief and the sudden interest taken in the tribes of that tangled area of jungle and mountain which abuts on Szechwan and the upper waters of the Yang-tse.

But perhaps of all these troop, ship and 'plane distributions the most interesting is the concentration of air squadrons in Iraq. The official explanation that an air-garrison is cheaper than troops will scarcely hold good. Else why not substitute 'planes for troops in Egypt as well? The fact of course is that for strategic purposes the Middle East and its garrisons are one. In the event of trouble, troops from Egypt could be in Iraq in a few days, troops from Gibraltar and Malta in Egypt, from home in Gibraltar and Malta. But it is deemed advisable that the army should be concentrated in Egypt, in the centre of the lines of communication, and the air force concentrated in Iraq. Why?

The answer is to be sought in the final problem of attack. Of the four important potential enemies three—Japan, China, Turkey—are exposed to damaging attack from the sea. The fourth—the Soviet Union—is (unless big risks be taken in sending a fleet through the Straits) immune from sea attack in any vital spot.

But—from Mosul to Batoum is only 500 miles; from Mosul to Baku little more. The Transcaucasian oil-fields—perhaps the most vital economic centre in all Russia—are as open to attack from the Mosul air-bases as was London to attack from the German air-bases during the Great War.

That is the real significance of the air-force concentration and of the preparation of air-force bases in Iraq: that, also, is the real significance of our determination to keep Mosul at any cost.

The British strategy for a Russian war is based upon the plan of holding the Indian frontier defensively, while hammering Baku and Batoum by air from Mosul.

Singapore for naval action against China or Japan; Mosul for air action against Russia. Egypt as central military station for the whole Middle East.

Everything is being got ready. The strategic indications reinforce the diplomatic. Great Britain is making all preparation for the great war in Southern Asia.

GREAT BRITAIN AND CHINA

A Study in Revolutionary Development

By RALPH FOX

THE appearance of the Labour Research Department's booklet on British imperialism in China is an important occasion.¹ The book tells the story of as strange an adventure in the annals of piratical imperialism as has yet been unfolded, and it is for the first time. There have been no end of books on China, but this is the first to give in detail the whole story of one of the most astonishing facts in history ; the wanton destruction of a huge empire by a concert of Great Powers and its division and subjection for the profit of capitalist imperialism. True, China has been conquered before, but the invaders have either receded or been assimilated. This is the first time they have deliberately remained outside the life of the Chinese people and interfered in Chinese affairs simply and solely for the purpose of making money.

The book is short, and necessarily suffers a little from compression, but nevertheless it succeeds in giving an excellent picture of this conquest and the leading part played in it by Great Britain. It gives, moreover, a very clear picture of the forces at work behind the great national movement of liberation which is to-day challenging the whole system of slavery represented by capitalist imperialism. The strength and the implications of the Chinese revolution are for the first time explained in full to English people, for the book goes much deeper and contains far more detail than the recently published pamphlet of Colonel Malone.

The adventure, as every schoolboy knows now, began, so far as Great Britain is concerned, with opium. The East India Company had for long carried on an opium trade with China, which various Chinese governments tried without success to control. In 1839, and again in 1856, attempts to stop the opium trade at Canton

¹ *British Imperialism in China*. (Labour Research Department. Imperialism Series, No. III.)

resulted in wars with Britain, seizure of territory, and, in 1860, the appointment of a British Inspector-General of Customs.

The L.R.D. book, for reasons of space, leaves out a most interesting period in Chinese history about this time. For in 1851 began the first of those great national movements which have culminated in the present war of liberation. This was the movement known as the rebellion of the Tai Pings, which began as a movement against the Manchu dynasty; and when that effete government called in foreign help, continued as an anti-foreign movement. The Tai Pings came within an ace of overturning the Manchus, and though their movement degenerated and split up, the rebellion lingered on for nearly twenty years.

The movement was a social-nationalist one, led by a semi-Christian mystic called Houg from the province of Kwantung, the home of every national movement in China. Houg, who had been in contact with American missionaries, at first directed his campaign entirely against the exactions of the foreign Manchu dynasty and their officials. The exploited peasantry rose in thousands to join the banners of the Tai Pings, Southern China was rapidly overrun, and the Yangtse reached at Hankow in 1852. Finally, in the spring of 1853, Nanking, the ancient capital of China, fell to the rebels, in whose hands it remained for eleven years as the capital of their own rebel empire.

The British were not long in putting themselves in touch with the victorious rebels, and a month after the capture of Nanking the governor of Hong Kong was visiting the city in a British cruiser. Further irony of history, these early rebels were also known as "The Reds" from their uniform of a red scarf twisted round the head!

The Tai Pings, although they received some help at first from the foreign Powers, failed to keep their movement united after the death of the great leader Houg. It lost its social basis, brigandage and militarism, those curses of Chinese life, disintegrated it, and it spread no further. Yet the Manchus themselves were unable to reconquer China, so they called in the help of the Powers, and these latter, seeing a better chance of expansion in China by siding with the Manchus than the southern peasants, lent them money, ships, arms and men to carry on the struggle.

Capitalism had chosen to bind itself up with feudalism in China against the popular will, and so it has been ever since. In the Boxer rising of 1900, in the revolution of 1911, in the support of the militarists against the armies of the Kuomintang, imperialism and reactionary feudalism have marched hand in hand.

The British joined hands with the Manchus after the second Opium War in 1860, when Peking was taken and sacked. Henceforth the struggle against the foreigner and the struggle against the feudal militarists ran together ; even during the Boxer rising this was so to some extent, though only in recent days has the movement clarified and become an irresistible social revolutionary force. For this reason alone the Tai Ping rebellion, and its suppression by military adventurers of the Gordon type, is well worth remembering.

The British worked themselves firmly into China as a result of the Tai Ping wars, and the effects of their occupation on British trade in the next twenty years are excellently shown in the L.R.D. book. China was definitely a market. Between 1851 and 1885 the excess of imports from China over exports thither was over £175,000,000. Yet 1885 is the year when the character of our trade changes. From being a market China becomes a field of development. Instead of textiles capital is exported in the form of loans, railways are laid down, harbours developed and industries started with sweated Chinese labour.

This is also the period of the growth of the native Chinese bourgeoisie. Houg, chief of the Tai Pings, was a disappointed young intellectual slightly tainted with Western revolutionary mystical Christian philosophy. But the new leaders of China got their education not from ignorant missionaries, but in the universities of America and Europe. They became thoroughly Westernised in every way, and together with Western ideas of industrial development they received the complementary ideas of Western national freedom. In the same way the revolutionary initiative in China began to shift from the peasantry to the new industrial workers, employed under slave conditions on the railways and in the new factories.

The Manchus actually fell in 1911, under the impact of the new bourgeoisie starting their revolutionary movement from

the old historical centre of Canton and the southern provinces. But the bourgeoisie alone could not destroy the chief support of the system of feudal reaction which the Manchus represented, namely, the foreign imperialist Powers led by Great Britain. Yuan Shih Kai was installed as a semi-royal dictator under British protection and the republican movement was momentarily defeated.

Most of its leaders were executed, but one of them, Sun Yat Sen, escaped to his home in Canton and very clearly thought out the problems of the future. He saw, as the Tai Pings in a muddled way had done, that the forces in the way of Chinese freedom were double; the force of feudalism, with its oppression of the peasantry, extortionate taxation, and militarism; and the force of foreign imperialism, with its unequal treaties, concessions, customs service and shameful exploitation of human labour. He saw too that no purely nationalist movement could fight against these two. What was needed was a social-nationalist movement to draw in both workers and peasants on a revolutionary programme to achieve the liberation which the bourgeoisie alone had failed to obtain. Part of his inspiration he got from the Russian revolution in 1905, but he only completed his programme after the great Russian worker-peasant revolution of 1917, which also coincided with a new phase in Chinese politics.

Yuan Shih Kai died in 1916. The Powers dragged China into the war and took thousands of coolies to labour on the various fronts. Chinese nationalism as a result began to revive again, and at Washington in 1921 the Powers made various rash promises with regard to their privileged position in China. At the same time they continued to prevent the unification of the unhappy country by openly supporting the various militarists who had divided its Government after the death of Yuan Shih Kai.

Sun Yat Sen meanwhile succeeded in turning his nationalist party, the Kuomintang, into a real national revolutionary party based on the principles of national equality, democracy and Socialism. Its influence spread: a Kuomintang government was established in Canton; the workers all over China felt its influence and from 1923, led by the Communist Party, which was affiliated

to the Kuomintang, they began to establish labour unions and to strike against the foreign employers.

The rest is recent history, though ably set out and explained in the L.R.D. book. To-day the Kuomintang armies have reached and conquered the Yangtse Valley. They are in the position of the Tai Pings in 1853, and have even been visited by the British Minister ! Will they succeed in uniting China, or will their social basis disintegrate and shall we see British officers leading armies against them in the name of some shadow Government at Peking, as Gordon did in 1863 ?

We have said enough in this article to show that this will not be so. The young Chinese working class, with its militant unions and revolutionary Communist Party, the enlightened left wing of the bourgeoisie who have learnt from the West the social virtues of industrial organisation and the social evils of capitalism, are guarantees of a strong and invincible leadership. Behind them are the peasant masses, awaking to consciousness of their double exploitation by feudal militarism and foreign imperialism. They accept the lead of the Kuomintang, the party of the revolutionary alliance of the peasantry with the young proletariat and the young bourgeoisie of China. To disintegrate the present social revolutionary movement in China, Imperialism would need to be far stronger than in the 'sixties. But it is not. In the middle of the last century Western capitalism, especially British capitalism, was growing vigorously. To-day it is visibly decaying in many places, above all in Britain, which has been the leader of imperialist piracy in China hitherto, while over the vast territories of Russia it has disappeared altogether, and for thousands of miles of land frontier contiguous to China there is to-day a chain of free Socialist republics.

Undoubtedly, the imperialists will try once again to divide and conquer. There is a rich Chinese capitalist class which is open to anti-revolutionary propaganda, and to suborn this class in order to disintegrate once more the Chinese revolution becomes the principal task of imperialist diplomacy. The resistance to this falls largely on the Chinese Communist Party, on whose ability to unite peasantry with proletariat under the leadership of the latter depends the successful future of the Chinese revolution. For the

wide sections of the bourgeoisie who are to-day revolutionary will be made to waver between the workers and the richer capitalists, once the new imperialist tactics start, and will cease to be a fully reliable part of the national revolutionary front.

This question of the peasantry is an enormous question in China, the country with the largest peasant population in the world, and it is perhaps to be regretted that the L.R.D. book does not treat it with sufficient depth or give it the large place due to its importance. Yet it must be confessed it is a problem to baffle the best equipped student, for reliable economic information about the situation of the Chinese peasant is almost non-existent. He is very much a dark horse, but just now he holds the future of Asia in his hands.

The interest of the British Labour Movement in the tremendous revolution now going on should be quickened by this new book, the first of its kind on China. There is a very definite community of interests between the British and the Chinese workers. It has been shown by the resolution of the Scarborough Congress of the Trades Unions to the effect that a delegation of inquiry be sent to China; it has been shown again by the "Hands off China" resolution at Bournemouth and by the recent setting up of a British Labour Council for Chinese Freedom. The British Labour Movement now has before it the information it has long been needing to give substance to these expressions of a common Anglo-Chinese working-class interest against British imperialism.

Every trade unionist and every propagandist should read the L.R.D. book on China and draw from it the obvious lessons of setting up committees in every town for the defence of the Chinese revolution, and the sending of the long-deferred delegation of the T.U.C. to China to establish close relations between the workers of the two countries.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE BRITISH GENERAL STRIKE

The Political Meaning of the Great Strike. By J. T. Murphy. (Communist Party of Great Britain, 1s. 6d.)

The General Strike, May, 1926 : Trades Councils in Action. By Emile Burns (Labour Research Department, 1s. 6d.)

The General Strike, May, 1926 : Its Origin and History. By R. Page Arnot (Labour Research Department, 3s. 6d.)

J. T. MURPHY'S book (to which J. R. Campbell has written a clear, concise preface) is one of the first serious contributions to our library on the General Strike. It was written directly under the influence of the events of May, and while the miners' fight was in full swing. In every page the reader can feel the breath of the great fight. At the same time the book is well documented, and the author has, on the whole, succeeded in bringing home his main thesis : "That the General Strike of May, 1926, is the greatest political landmark in the history of the working class of Britain. It proclaimed as nothing else has ever done that the challenge of class power, raised four times in six years, is inextricably bound up with the growth of the working class and the decay of capitalism."

In the first chapter the author easily disposes of the theory that the General Strike of 1926 was due to some "exceptional circumstances or to some malignant conspiracy." The following two chapters : "What Led to the General Strike," a short clear sketch of the political and economic events which preceded the General Strike, and "Red Friday and the Nine Months' Truce," demonstrate the failure of our movement to grasp the great changes which have taken place in Britain since the war. The *Labour Register*, published by the Labour Research Department, dealt to a certain extent with the first great wave of unrest which followed the war, but our literature has paid far too little attention to these great changes, and it is obvious that we shall have to study in greater detail not only capitalist strategy, but the policy of our Trade Union bureaucracy in post-war England.

In the third chapter, Mr. Murphy has given us a good selection of documents concerning the activities of different social groups in the period between Red Friday (July 31, 1925) and the day when the General Strike was declared. These documents show perfectly clearly that, with the exception of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement, there was not a single Labour organisation which did anything to prepare the workers for the inevitable struggle ahead. We think Mr. Murphy has done well to reprint the statement made by the I.L.P. in the *New Leader* two weeks before the strike was declared. In this statement the I.L.P. endeavoured to explain why it did not participate in preparing the workers to resist the attack of the mine-owners and the Government. We think it worth while to give the exact words of the I.L.P. : "Silence within the Labour Movement has become a test of loyalty. This reserve was inevitable and within limits it was proper.

It is not for *outsiders* (italics ours) to incite the miners to fight : still less is it their business to remind them of the risks they run."

The truth of the matter is that no one was inciting the miners to fight except the mineowners, who were determined to lower the standards of the miners still further. The official leaders of the Labour Movement "incited" the miners to surrender. And the I.L.P., posing as Pilate, declared that it had nothing to do with the affair, and left it to their leaders to crucify the miners. Still, we must admit that the I.L.P. had the courage to remind the miners—true, in a negative form—about the risks they ran !

In his description of the General Strike itself, in which the author actively participated, Mr. Murphy combines his personal experiences with a careful study of documents relating to the crisis. Included in the latter are a number of important documents showing the different tendencies in the international movement in relation to the strike. We think, however, it was a mistake on Mr. Murphy's part to omit from the documents bearing on the tragic event of May 12 the telegram sent out by the Communist Party to its district organisations. (This document will be found in the book by R. Page Arnot, with which we deal below.)

Mr. Murphy did well, however, to include in his book the agreements concluded after the strike by the Transport Workers' Union, the Printing Unions and the Railway Unions. These documents will help the reader to understand the mentality of our trade union leadership, and at the same time they form, so to speak, a good appendix to the description of the General Strike itself.

The chapter on "Casualties" is of necessity far from adequate, as at the time when the author wrote it was impossible to have a real idea of the casualties of that great fight. It should always be remembered that the General Strike, a great event in itself, was closely linked up with the miners' fight, and that this fight continued long after the General Strike was called off. Only now would it be possible to prepare a full list of the casualties.

We find that we are unable to agree with all the reflections of the author in his final chapter : "Reflections and Perspectives." Mr. Murphy is of the opinion that the Conservative Party and the whole capitalist class emerged from the struggle with increased political power. Unfortunately, lack of space prevents us from following up the arguments which Mr. Murphy puts forward to defend this point of view. We will only say this. It is a well-known fact that in every struggle between the classes the ruling class has the advantage of being better organised and better prepared for the fray. The new class which is struggling for power organises and consolidates its forces during the process of battle. For that reason the Baldwin Government would have preferred the miners and the rest of the workers to have agreed to accept the lowering of their standards without a conflict. During the first stages of a great struggle for power, the victories of the dominant class, as the defeats of the oppressed class, are equally inevitable. But the advantage for the new class in these struggles is that it is bound to become stronger while fighting, at the same time weakening its powerful and well-organised enemy. From this point of view, we believe that during the General Strike and the miners' lock-out, notwithstanding the fact that the conditions of the workers were

worsened, the political power of the working class actually grew, while the political power of the dominant class suffered irreparable loss.

Again, we do not think that Mr. Murphy's definition that the feathers of the Left Wing were blown away by the organised power of the Right Wing is a convincing one. But this question we will take up when reviewing the book by R. Page Arnot.

On the whole, we think that this book will help the reader to obtain a clearer understanding, not only of the political meaning of the great strike, but of some of the lessons which this strike contains for the working class in Great Britain.

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In our opinion the most interesting part of the book prepared by Emile Burns for the Labour Research Department is the section which contains the reports of the local organisations, numbering 131 in all. These reports are undoubtedly a mine of information for the student of the Labour Movement in general, and of the General Strike in particular.

Not all the reports are of the same value. Furthermore, we think that, on the whole, they are too formal in character, and do not give a sufficient idea of local initiative, of the activity of the masses. We would like to submit the following suggestions for the consideration of the Labour Research Department: first, to try once more to obtain reports from those localities which sent no response to the questionnaire sent out; and, secondly, to re-arrange that questionnaire in such a way as to allow for more detailed information to be given in the answers.

To our mind the most striking factor in these reports is the almost universal opinion expressed with regard to the state of the strike on May 12. As the report from Aldershot puts it, "No sign of weakening whatever; stronger if anything." And they nearly all speak in the same tone. Some add: "The spirit of the workers, both men and women, could not be better." (Bermondsey.) Bethnal Green put it in a more pathetic form: "Our nightmare was always pushing second line of defence back to work." The same idea is expressed by Canterbury in a more simple way: "Our difficulty was to keep the men not involved at work." According to Deeside, "Members were surprised at sudden collapse." Even the constituency of J. H. Thomas reports: "There were no signs of weakening; on the other hand, more workers were coming out and joining the strike."

We have given a few quotations on this point because among the reasons given for calling off the strike was that the workers were weakening and that there was a danger of the strike collapsing. The facts as stated in these reports from those who were actually conducting the struggle in the country prove that the reverse was the case. The fight was only just developing. And the question that inevitably arises is whether it was not the weakening but the strengthening of the strike which frightened the General Council into abject surrender.

We are bound to say, however, that the reports do not convey a sufficiently clear idea of the feelings and reactions of the masses in the fight. In this connection, though, the report from Dartford and the special note to the report

from the Dartford Divisional Labour Party is well worth studying. In the special note the writer says: "The men were not actuated by any revolutionary feelings. They felt they were fighting the Government to get a fair deal for the miners upon the basis of no reduction in wages and no increase in hours. On that issue the men were solid and their enthusiasm was white-hot." It would be interesting to know what the writer of these lines would consider to be revolutionary feelings! But we agree with him when he says: "It was a great beginning, but a pitiable ending."

The reader will also find in these reports an answer to the important question of preparedness. The reports prove convincingly that the movement, and, in particular, the local organisations, was not at all prepared for the great fight. In this connection we call special attention to the reports from Middlesbrough, London and Sheffield.

In the first part of this book the author tries to give a résumé of the reports which form the second half. We venture to state, however, that Mr. Burns did not exhaust the rich material at his disposal. In one particular, we think he has omitted a very important fact. While he refers to the existence of Councils of Action in 1920 in connection with the Polish war against Russia, he entirely omits to state that before Red Friday, on the initiative of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement, a considerable number of Councils of Action were set up in different parts of the country. And it was the agitation carried on by both these organisations for more than twelve months in favour of Council of Actions which made possible the rapid formation of such bodies when the General Strike was declared. In our opinion, the new feature in the fight was not the Councils of Action, but the defence corps. We wonder why the author made so little of this, and failed to tell his readers who took up the campaign for the formation of these defence corps, and how the fight for them was conducted.

* * * * *

We have been fortunate in obtaining an advance proof of the second volume on the General Strike, by R. Page Arnot, about to be published by the Labour Research Department: *The General Strike, May, 1926: Its Origin and History*. The Labour Research Department itself regards this book as a companion volume to the book prepared by Mr. Burns. For our part we think that Mr. Arnot's book should be read first, as it contains the documents and explanations necessary for an adequate understanding of the material contained in Mr. Burns' book.

In the foreword to his book Mr. Arnot states that he tried "to give not only a documented chronicle of these twelve days, but also a sketch of the preceding twelve months." We wish to say right at the beginning that the "documented chronicle" is arranged in such a way that it holds the interest of the reader unabated from start to finish. We have here, not a collection of dry documents of use for reference only, but a vivid story of stirring characters in a great social drama. In his sketch of the preceding twelve months Mr. Arnot has given a very well documented survey of the events which practically prepared the great fight, as well as the great defeat.

Let us begin with the so-called sketch. Now that it has become rather a fashion in our movement to talk sneeringly, and even arrogantly, about the

mere slogans to which the miners were tied, and which the wise leaders of the General Council saw fit to abandon, it is of the utmost importance to remind ourselves of what was the attitude of the Labour Movement towards these slogans in the days when the previous General Council acted for the miners and not for the mineowners.

The reviewer is rather tempted to quote at great length some of the documents contained in this book. Unfortunately, lack of space makes this impossible, and we will have to confine ourselves to giving a general idea of their significance and meaning.

The documents contained in this section prove convincingly that organised Labour in the months which followed Red Friday did not even entertain the idea of accepting conditions which would lower the standards of the workers in any shape or form. The keynote of all the speeches and resolutions of that period was that the workers must not only retain the gains secured in the past, but must improve their conditions. Very influential Labour leaders, who by no means belonged to the extremists, spoke loudly of a Labour offensive. At the same time the author shows that, while pleasant speeches were being made and good resolutions were being passed, the responsible bodies of the Labour Movement did not make any use of the nine months between Red Friday and the end of April, when the subsidy ceased, to prepare for the coming fight.

We must congratulate Mr. Arnot on his masterful selection of documents, in which he has succeeded in giving a vivid picture of the three main forces involved in the social arena. We will deal with these forces one by one.

(1) *The Government*.—All the documents reproduced in this book show that the Government had a very clear policy which it pursued from the day following Red Friday to the first day of the General Strike. That policy can be summed up in a few words. The Government strained every effort to get the miners to agree to a lowering of their standards without a fight. Baldwin would then have been enabled to continue speaking about "peace in our time." At the same time, in the event of the impossibility of avoiding a conflict, the Government was making every preparation to crush the workers. In other words, the Government had a clear purpose in mind—the lowering of the standards of the workers—and it was determined to achieve this purpose—by diplomacy if possible, by victory on the battlefield if necessary.

(2) *The General Council and Labour Party Leaders*.—The official industrial and political leaders did not even think of making any use of the nine months which the Government decided was necessary to make adequate preparations for the coming fight. The trade union leaders were busy making all kinds of vague general speeches, while the leaders of the Labour Party were working hard to make that party safe for Liberalism. Their aim was to settle the conflict by means of a compromise. Many of them relied mainly on their negotiating abilities, and they were sure that negotiations would prevent a conflict. They assisted the Government in its efforts to avoid a fight, but at the same time took no steps to defend the workers should a fight become inevitable. Up to the very last day they believed that they would be able to induce both sides to make concessions, which meant in practice that they were prepared to agree to the lowering of the workers' standards without even trying to resist the mineowners and the mineowners'

Government. In the last hour the strike was practically imposed upon them—on the one hand, by the Government, which wanted either complete surrender without a fight, or victory if a fight came ; and, on the other hand, by the workers, who were not prepared to accept the worsening of their conditions. And when the strike eventually came the leaders tried to combine secret negotiations with open appeals to the workers to stand firm.

(3) *The Communist Party and the Minority Movement.*—These were practically the only two organisations that worked for preparedness, and which foresaw clearly the inevitable fight and the magnitude of that fight. While it cannot be denied that these two organisations exercised a certain influence upon the workers, they did not participate in shaping the policy of the official leaders of the Labour Movement.

We must repeat that the parts played by these various forces in the General Strike are not depicted by the author from his own store of knowledge or imagination, but by convincing documents. And these documents are arranged in such a way that the reader sees not only the conflicting ideas, but the social groups behind them.

The chapter dealing with the General Strike itself—"The Eleventh Hour"—is comparatively weaker than the previous. The great march of millions of workers could not be represented entirely by documents, although Mr. Arnot has included all those documents which are necessary for understanding how the strike developed and how it was betrayed. In this chapter the author is true to his method. The social forces in struggle are represented in their own words.

We regret that we are unable to speak so enthusiastically about either the introduction or the conclusion of this book. For instance, the description of the parties to the dispute is somewhat too formal in character. Again, the famous Constitution, which played such a big part in the propaganda of the Government, and which revealed the narrowmindedness of the leadership of our Labour Movement, is neither well explained nor sufficiently well interpreted. While reading this chapter it occurred to us that it would be a good thing to reprint that brilliant pamphlet of Ferdinand Lassalle—"What is the Constitution?"—in order to give some elementary education to the authors of the innumerable articles in the *British Worker* who were so anxious to prove that they were not against the Constitution.

The final chapter, in which the author makes some conclusions is too short and too sketchy ; the problem of the Left and the Right is treated too formally. It is an undeniable fact that a part of the bureaucracy of the trade unions tried to adapt itself to the trend of the workers towards the Left during the last few years. To them the eventful days of May were a great test. In this test they had to choose between the masses who were fighting and their colleagues who were preparing the defeat and betrayal of those workers. And they chose. They lined up with the organisers of the defeat. Their crime is undoubtedly greater than the crime of the Right Wingers, who were at least true to their principles. They helped the Right Wing to do their dirty work. The documents printed in this book are a standing indictment against them. Unfortunately the conclusion weakens that indictment.

In conclusion we would like to say with regard to the three books under review that they are undoubtedly the most important publications concerning the General Strike yet issued. We hope at least that they will serve as an impetus to the working class to study the great events treated in these volumes, the lessons of which have not yet been brought home to the full extent. But these books by no means exhaust the history and lessons of the General Strike and the struggle which followed that strike. We need a special library on this subject, to which the books in question make a good contribution. We have no hesitation in saying that the authors of these books deserve the gratitude of the Labour Movement for the important contributions they have made towards a real understanding of this historic period.

P. B.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Comradeship of Economic Equality.* (The Committee of the Llano Circle. 8 pp., 3d.)
- Our Radio Programmes: What is Wrong and Why?* By Corbett-Smith. (John Bale, Sons and Danielsons, Ltd. 38 pp., 1s.)
- The I.C.W.P.A.* A Speech delivered in Moscow by Geo. Lansbury. (I.C.W.P.A. 28 pp., 2d.)
- Fraternity and Evolution.* A Study in Social Dynamics. By Tom Swain. (I.L.P. Publications Dept. 56 pp., 1s.)
- Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution.* By Max Eastman. (Allen and Unwin. 263 pp., 7s. 6d.)
- The General Strike, May, 1926: Trades Councils in Action.* By Emile Burns. (Labour Research Department.)
- Eighth Annual Report of the Industrial Welfare Society for the Year ended June 30, 1926.* (Industrial Welfare Society.)
- The British Public and the General Strike.* By Kingsley Martin. (The Hogarth Press. 128 pp., 3s. 6d.)
- Kenya.* By Norman Leys. With an Introduction by Professor Gilbert Murray. (Third edition. Hogarth Press, 4s. 6d.)
- The Wages of Unskilled Labour in Manufacturing Industries in the United States, 1890-1924.* By Whitney Coombes. (Columbia University Press, \$2.25.)
- Poland's Economic Development.* By Prof. Francis Bujak, Ph.D. (George Allen and Unwin. 67 pp., 3s.)
- New China; Report of an Investigation.* By Col. C. L'Estrange Malone. Part I: The Political Situation. (I.L.P. Publication Dept. 20 pp. quarto, 6d.)
- Red Money.* (Labour Research Department, 6d.)
- The Miners' Struggle and the Big Five Banks: How Victory can be Secured.* With a Foreword by A. J. Cook. (The Labour Research Dept. 16 pp., 1d.)



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W. FRANCIS MOSS, Managing Director
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
London, W.C. 1

Telegram: Edcalopres, Kincros, London
Telephone: Museum 1311
Museum 7777



*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
W.C.1*

w13148

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

February, 1927

Number 2

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Notes of the Month

*IMPERIALISM, INDUSTRIAL PEACE,
COALITION*

The Conflict of Ideas in British Trade Unionism

A. J. COOK (Secretary, M.F.G.B.)

The Conference of Executives

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AN AMERICAN VIEW

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Published at
162 Buckingham Palace Road
London
S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : 5 LOANE 5412.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

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NOTES of the MONTH

*The New Capitalist Offensive—Shackling the Movement—Government plus Reformists—Saving the Right Wing—Labour Party Evolution—"Liberalising" the Labour Party—Conservatising the Labour Party—Imperialising the Labour Party—A New Journal—Imperialism's Home Policy—Imperialism and Coalition—Future National Coalition—Against the Working Class—Labour Party Past and Present—Hardie on the Empire—1906 and 1909—Beyond Cobdenism?—Out of the Liberal Frying Pan—Into the Imperialist Fire—New Imperialist Watchwords—"Commonwealth of Nations"—Are the Dominions Self-Governing?—Australian Workers' Views—Canada—"Socialise or Smash"—Imperial Utopianism—Stuttgart Controversy—"Socialist" Colonialism—Explicit Rejection—Kautsky's Arguments—Practical Consequences—Lenin on Imperialism—Why Social Imperialism Fails—Cheap Beef at a High Price—Socialist Phrases and Capitalist Facts—"Saving the Empire"—Through Empire Collapse to Socialism—Imperialism, Industrial
:: Peace, Coalition. ::*

IN the present period the existing Labour Party and trade union leadership are giving expression to their policy more openly and shamelessly than at any time since 1922, since, that is, the period of reaction following on Black Friday. Once again they calculate that, having driven the workers down into the depths by their treachery, they can come into the open in co-operation with capitalism. Industrial peace dinners and lunches are the order of the day, both between trade union leaders and industrialists and financiers, and between Labour Party leaders and Government Ministers. This ugly conviviality with their supposed "enemies"—fresh from starving the workers, imprisoning thousands, breaking their resistance and preparing fresh attacks—should open the eyes of ever greater numbers of

workers to the character of the existing leadership, and forms the fitting logical sequel of their betrayal of the General Strike and the miners' struggle. The united leaders of capitalism and the servants of capitalism in the Labour Movement meet to celebrate their common "victory" over the forces of class struggle, and to prepare new treaties of enslavement for the workers. This is the first stage of the impending attack on the Labour Movement, as prophesied as the result of the betrayal of the General Strike and of the miners' struggle.

BUT there is a great difference between the present period and previous periods of reaction and industrial peace propaganda. This difference lies in the fact, first, that there is now in existence a growing and active organised revolutionary opposition movement, centred around the political leadership of the Communist Party, which is ready to fight the reformist policy, and can only gather strength from the more and more clearly revealed treacheries of the reformist leaders; and, second, that the whole character of the present period, the worsening conditions, the increasing attacks on the workers, the capitalist reorganisation by dismissals, lower wages and longer hours, the intensified struggle and growing imperialist antagonism, all make certain the failure of the policy of class peace and provide the ready ground for the advance of the new forces. It is for this reason that the existing leadership is fighting more openly and recklessly than ever before, more shamelessly in co-operation with the capitalists, because they know that if they cannot impose lasting shackles now on the movement in the moment of defeat they will inevitably go under before the new forces.

IN one of the capitalist periodicals that are the normal organs of publicity of the Right Wing, Thomas has declared that he is fighting "with his back to the wall." This is rhetorical exaggeration. With all the forces of the State behind them, with all the resources of capitalism, with all the publicity of the capitalist Press (it may be observed how the whole capitalist Press loyally co-operated with the trade union bureaucracy in keeping secret the General Strike report, and only the *Sunday Worker* broke the

ring on behalf of the workers), with all the autocratic power of the trade union machine and discipline, the Right Wing are not to be so easily dislodged; indeed, it will be a highly advanced stage when their position is really threatened. But it is true that their moral influence with the working class is already largely shattered; and the Left Wing is rapidly advancing towards the point of organised power to be able to assume the leadership of the working-class struggle, as was already shown in part in the development of the miners' struggle. And for this reason the reformist leaders are seeking, not only to strengthen their hold on the machine, but to tie the machine firmly to capitalism and transform the trade unions in the direction of Americanised company unions. The impending capitalist attack on the trade unions is not only an attack from the Conservative Government: it is an attack from the Conservative Government *in union with the reformist leadership*, and the industrial peace propaganda is the artillery preparation of the attack.

THE fight for industrial peace is indissolubly bound up, for the reformist bureaucracy as for the Government, with the fight against Communism and the Left Wing. When the Government invites Labour leaders of the type of Snowden, Clynes, Williams, Cramp, Pugh, &c., to dine with a Churchill, while at the same time publicly refusing even the presence of Cook as a nominated representative on a technical committee, it is conspicuously drawing a distinction between friends and enemies which should be no less clear to the working class. What is being proclaimed is that one form of trade unionism will be allowed, and another will not; that so long as trade unionism accepts capitalism, and is prepared to act as its instrument of administration, legal facilities will be permitted it; but that so soon as trade unionism begins to threaten capitalism, then the law needs at once to be revised, the scales must be weighted in favour of the approved Right Wing leaders, in order that their leadership and policy may be maintained, and if this is not done, Government approval will be removed from the trade unions. By this fact the rôle of the Right Wing is stamped as that of the Government's servants in the trade unions. The distinction

between Right and Left is not the distinction between two possible view-points or policies within trade unionism, but between the Government's servants and the workers' servants. Lenin's words on Henderson and his colleagues should never be forgotten: that they are in fact nothing but "zubatovs" (secret police agents acting as trade union leaders), "differing from ours only in their European dress, in the gloss of their civilised, refined, democratically smooth manner of conducting their mean, sordid politics." To fight the Government attack on the trade unions it is not enough to repeat the customary formulas of trade union rights and solidarity and leave their maintenance to the existing leadership; it is necessary to recognise that the Government's objective is, not to "destroy" the trade unions, but to secure the maintenance of Right Wing leadership and policy within them, that the enemy is already within the gates and the negotiations have already begun, and that the only way to fight the Government attack is to strengthen the revolutionary Left.¹

BUT the same fight is developing in corresponding forms in the Labour Party; and here the offensive needs especially careful watching. The general character of the fight of the Right Wing against Communism, *i.e.*, against independent working-class politics and expression, in the Labour Party has been conspicuous during the past five years, with its steady intensification to the point of widespread disaffiliation of local Labour Parties during the past twelve months, formation of rival local parties, and consequent disruption of the unity of the

¹ Since the above was written *The Times* articles on "Trade Union Reform" completely bear out the view-point taken.

No accommodation is possible with the Left Wing, but accommodation is possible with the Right Wing. Reform within the unions is far better than compulsion by the law. . . . This does not mean that legislation is unnecessary. Some change in the law would be required to give effect to agreed reforms. . . . The Government has to protect the public from the national danger of revolutionary strikes engineered by a minority. . . . All parties alike, the trade unions themselves and all who care for the national welfare, have a common interest in solving this problem.

The aim of trade union "reform," by agreement with the Right Wing leaders to prevent by legislative means Left Wing control, is here baldly stated.

working-class movement at a constantly enlarging rate: a process which, unless checked, will automatically lead to the disruption of the Labour Party (exclusion of national trade unions sympathetic to Communism, splitting of the trade unions, abandonment of the trade union basis). But this process is only the spearhead and visible point of conflict of a wider process of the social and political transformation of the Labour Party: and it is this transformation which is important to note.

THIS process has sometimes been spoken of as the "Liberalising" of the Labour Party. The term is in principle accurate, in so far as it fixes on the root of the issue as the attempt to divorce the Labour Party from the working-class struggle, which it was originally formed to express, and its consequent reversion to the old deceitful "classless" Liberal politics and supposed representation of the interests of the "community" of all classes (which "community" can in practice only mean the interests of the dominant or capitalist class, as the 1924 Government showed). But this term in practice only faintly and inadequately suggests the extent and character of the transformation, adulteration, moulding, and absorption which has taken place and is taking place in relation to the upper strata of the Labour Party and its official policy: and it is just the specific character of the change of which it is above all important to be aware.

IT would be more vivid and illustrative of the actual process to speak of the "Conservatising" of the Labour Party. For, on the one hand, the old pre-war Labour Party was, in the traditional sense of the term, a great deal more "Liberal," and more completely tied in adoring worship to the doctrines and shibboleths of the Liberal prophets, than the present party, which has shown considerable ability to rise superior to old-fashioned Liberal notions of democracy, civil liberty, free trade and national freedom. And, on the other hand, in actual day-to-day politics at present the official "Labour" Opposition differs very little in practice from the Conservative Government in the most essential questions (*e.g.*, Locarno, gold standard, League of Nations, Empire development, industrial peace, anti-Com-

munism), so much so that it has been frequently remarked nowadays that the two official front benches find very little to oppose each other about, and the more radical criticism of the Government, such as it is, has commonly come from Lloyd George.

HOWEVER, the term "Conservatising" lacks sufficient positive meaning, and does not indicate the real ground of the process. For the essential character of the process is not so much the "Liberalising" or the "Conservatising" of the Labour Party as its adaptation to modern capitalism, and in particular—and this is the key to the whole process—to modern large-scale trustified State-controlled imperialist capitalism. Using the term "imperialism" in its scientific sense to denote, not merely the colonial policy of capitalism, but the whole character of modern advanced capitalism, the process of transformation of the Labour Party can be most correctly spoken of as the *imperialising* of the Labour Party. *The parallel to the "Americanising" of the trade unions is the "imperialising" of the Labour Party.* Here in these two are the essential current grounds of conflict.

A VALUABLE sidelight on the current trend of policy of the Labour Party Right Wing—and in itself a symptom of the extreme stage that has been reached—is afforded by a new journal that has appeared since the beginning of the current year. This journal appears under the non-committal title of the *London Weekly*, and describes itself as "non-party." It is edited by a prominent member of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and is contributed to by Labour leaders, such as Snowden, Thomas, Pugh, Lansbury, Graham, &c. It is equally contributed to (under the same Labour editorship, and alongside the same Labour leaders) by the Conservative Colonial Secretary, by Conservative and Liberal politicians, and by leading business men. This co-operation of Conservative, Liberal, and Labour spokesmen in a single political organ is already a notable fact. What is the platform on which this coalition of Conservative, Liberal, and Labour spokesmen find it possible to give expression to their unity? The editorial policy of the journal is declared to be "to help the economic and political organisation of the Empire with a view to making its resources more generally available for all, and

in the expectation that this will lead to a higher standard of life and a greater prosperity for all." Thus the programme is a programme of Empire development and "prosperity." The common basis on which the Conservative, Liberal, and Labour leaders find it possible openly to declare their unity is the basis of imperialism.

BUT what goes with imperialism? Imperialism is not a special and separate question, like, let us say, prohibition, on which it would be conceivably possible for capitalist and Labour representatives to combine in advocating some particular measure without prejudice to their respective class points of view. Imperialism involves the whole field of modern capitalism. Who says "imperialism" must say "capitalism" (that is, in daily practice, whatever illusory shibboleths for the imaginary future he may add to salve his conscience). What is the home policy of the new journal? Here the programme statement is silent, but the editorial notes throw light. In the first number industrial peace is advocated on the basis of "high wages" and a "real partnership in industry." In the second number Cook is rebuked for his "frothy stuff," "no practical programme," "a vague insurrectionism which would certainly lead to a worse economic disaster in 1927 than that of the coal miners in 1926"; and the Labour Council for Chinese Freedom is rebuked as an "unofficial and self-appointed body" which "complicates the situation." In the third number the Communists receive their turn for their "gloomy theories of catastrophic development" ("the painful facts are that the development of the modern world and the modern application of science have proceeded too rapidly for comprehension by some minds of Communist tendency. The organisation of the British Empire at present is altogether more hopeful than anything the 'Extreme Left' had dreamed possible"); the General Council discussion is referred to with the remark that "what will certainly emerge very clearly is the loss to trade union funds, membership and morale caused by the strike"; and a "conference of trade unionists, industrialists, and members of the Government" is advocated to "put in true perspective the position of organised industry in the national life both from the point of view of the

employer and the employed, organised business and organised labour." These extracts are sufficient to indicate the political colour of this "non-party" organ. The home policy of imperialism is industrial peace.

BUT the political correspondent of the new journal carries the matter further. He declares that nowadays the differences between the official Conservative, Liberal, and Labour Parties are much less than the differences between individual members of each. Conservative and Labour policy are practically the same in all essential questions. "There is no quarrel upon foreign policy at all, the proof being that the House of Commons has had no debate whatever of any importance upon this vital subject." "The second common factor in all parties is their policy towards the Empire." During the Labour Government foreign politicians were amazed to observe that "their foreign policy is the same," "their financial policy is the same"; now with their Conservative successors they find that "their social policy is the same" (this is actually written, without challenge or correction, of the Conservative "social" policy, of which the workers have had full taste during the past year). "The Conservative Party has a spiritual complexion not very different from that of the evolutionary Socialists" (this is very true, though the workers will draw a different lesson from it to that which the writer intends). But to what does all this lead? The political correspondent draws no lesson save that "the character of British politics has not radically changed" (*i.e.*, capitalist politics are still unchallenged) and "Parliament is not in danger" (*i.e.*, the capitalist State is still safe). But the practical lesson which is suggested is obvious. If there is no vital difference between the parties, why should they not unite, as they are already virtually united, or at any rate the "sane" men in all three unite, when the time comes, to maintain the Empire and the "unchanging character of British politics" and the sanctity of "Parliament"? Thus the political complement of imperialism and industrial peace is here correctly foreshadowed—namely, coalition. Imperialism, industrial peace, coalition—these are the three signs of the existing Labour Party leadership. The appearance of the non-party *London*

Weekly is a foreshadowing of the future national imperial coalition of Conservative, Liberal, and Labour leaders against the working class (of which an embryo form was already revealed during the General Strike).

CERTAINLY such a coalition is no immediate question, short of a very rapid sharpening of the class struggle. In the first place, the present virtual coalition, in which the front benches act together, while maintaining a slight show of difference (MacDonald's ugly rôle on China as mediator for the Foreign Office to the Labour Movement illustrates this), is more effective for the present. In the second place, the immediate next step, short of a Labour majority—which would carry forward development most rapidly—is still likely to be some form of Liberal-Labour understanding. But the essential outcome of the present parliamentary approximation, which is a conspicuous feature of the present period, is sooner or later, when the national emergency comes, the national coalition, when Thomas and Churchill will stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of capitalism and the Empire—called “Parliament” and “democracy”—against the advancing working class, as well as against the revolt of the subject peoples and the opposing forces of the imperialist enemies. The working-class movement will do well never to leave out of mind this future confrontation of forces; because it means that the essential task at present in the building up of the Labour Party is not the building up of the influence of Thomas, MacDonald, &c. (as shown in the common argument against the public criticism of Thomas, MacDonald, &c., that “it may injure the Labour Party”—not at all: it will injure the Labour Party a great deal more if they are not criticised), but the building up of a strong, conscious, awakened Socialist working-class movement throughout the localities of the whole country that will be able to go forward unbroken when the reformist leaders fail and finally join their friends.

FOR there is this fact about the commonly reported closer approximation of political parties, which is usually left out of account: the political reporters who draw these comments nearly always have their view confined to the limited parliamentary

arena. But at the very same time as this undoubted closer unity of parliamentary parties is taking place the divisions within the country are growing greater than ever before. The social and economic gulf of rich and poor is widening year by year, as the statistics of profits and wages, of fortunes and pauperism, abundantly show. Not only that, but the political, conscious organised antagonism of classes is at a higher point than ever before, as shown in the General Strike, and the growth of the Labour Party in the country (entirely unjustified by the spineless representation in the House) is only a symptom of this. Social division is, in fact, more intense than at any time since Chartism; in its deep-seated and widespread character it is greater than at any time since the last civil wars. Thus the closer unity of parliamentary parties is not an evidence of the diminution of conflict; on the contrary, it is a symptom of intensification; it is the drawing together of the parliamentary puppet-representatives of the capitalist State in face of the new and larger conflict. And an evidence of this process is the unchallenged appearance—with Labour co-operation and nominal leadership and Conservative financial backing—of this imperialist journal of open and shameless social and political class-co-operation.

IN the past, when the Labour Party, however limited and timid in social philosophy, was still at any rate more closely tied to the working-class movement and responsive to the elementary demands of class instinct, the appearance of a journal of this character, of open co-operation in imperialism between prominent Labour spokesmen and Conservative Government Ministers, would have aroused considerable commotion and emphatic repudiation from the Labour Party Executive. In 1909 Blatchford raised the disgust and indignation of the movement by coming out with a series of imperialist Big Navy articles in the *Daily Mail*. Although Blatchford held no official position in the movement, and was only editor of an unofficial pseudo-Socialist journal, the Labour Party Executive came out with an official repudiation:—

We regret that Mr. Blatchford, whose previous work has identified him more or less with ourselves in the eyes of the public, has lent his name to this most absurd and wicked outburst against Germany. We emphatically disassociate ourselves from all such actions.

To-day the reformist Labour leaders regularly write articles in the *Daily Mail* and the rest of the capitalist Press, attacking, not merely the imperialist enemies of their own imperialist masters, but the workers' own leaders and fighters; and no question is raised. A parliamentary Labour leader (secretary of the so-called Labour Commonwealth Group, representing the majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party) edits an imperialist journal in direct co-operation with Conservative politicians and the Conservative Government—and the Labour Party Executive members all rush in to contribute. This is a measure of the path that has been travelled.

BUT this is only an instance of a general process. In the early days the Labour Party was on the whole anti-imperialist in instinct, even though without any very grounded outlook or active policy. This anti-imperialist tendency might represent mainly the simple conception of democracy and self-determination as against imperialist domination and conquest. But it saw also very clearly the Empire as the instrument of capitalist exploitation and the enemy of Socialism. Thus Hardie could declare in the far-off days of the South African War, when only the Fabian corruptors were open imperialists:—

In the transition stage from commercialism to Socialism there must be such suffering. . . . A great extended Empire lengthens the period required for the change, and thus prolongs the misery, and it follows that the loss of the Empire would hasten the advent of Socialism. The greater the Empire, the greater the military expenditure, and the harder the lot of the workers. Modern imperialism is in fact to Socialists simply capitalism in its most predatory and militant phase.—Quoted in the *Life of Kier Hardie*, by W. Stewart, p. 147.)

As a statement on imperialism and its relation to Socialism this is not complete; it could be easily subjected to criticism. Nevertheless it is a thousand times nearer to the essence of the question than the trivial lies and hypocrisies about the "Commonwealth of Nations" and "Empire development" which pass muster for "Socialist" teaching on the Empire among Labour Members of Parliament nowadays. In the same way Hardie, in the House of Commons, could hurl across the benches

the charge that the organ of imperialism, the Colonial Office, was "synonymous with treachery and duplicity" (*Hansard*, 1905, Vol. 142, p. 491). To-day the Conservative Colonial Minister is the honoured collaborator of our present Labour statesmen.

ANOTHER type of example will also help to illustrate the change that has taken place. In 1906 the Liberal Government introduced "self-government" for the Transvaal and the Orange River on a basis of white enfranchisement—the whites representing the minority of the population. The Labour Party demanded the enfranchisement of the black man on the same basis as the white man. In 1909 the Liberal Government introduced the South Africa Federation Bill, in which the colour bar was established for the election of the Union Parliament. The Labour Party moved an amendment for striking out the colour bar, although the Government declared any amendment would "wreck the Bill." The amendment was defeated, and the Labour Party Executive formally reported its regret at the "retrograde" character of the provision. This was seventeen years ago, when the Labour Party still believed that Africans had equal human rights with Europeans, and that one race was not created to rule another. To-day South Africa is still under the same white minority rule (the disfranchised Africans are 80 per cent. of the population); but to-day in Labour Party propaganda South Africa is proclaimed to be a "free" dominion, and the agitation against black disfranchisement is forgotten. On the contrary, the incapacity of Africans for equal rights with Europeans is taken for granted, and in the Liverpool Conference 1925 resolutions on Empire policy all the customary sugared imperialist hypocrisies about the white man's trusteeship and guardianship over the African races "pending self-government" are complacently repeated.

WHAT is the meaning of this change? In the eyes of those concerned the change represents a great "advance." It represents a throwing off of the old servitude to Liberal shibboleths of anti-imperialism, free trade,

Cobdenism, &c., and an advance to a larger sphere of economic and political relations, providing an admirable basis for Socialism. These disciples of imperialism seriously believe that modern working-class anti-imperialism is a revival of this "Cobdenism" that they have thrown off. Thus a typical representative of the school writes:—

This idea that the Empire is a danger and a menace is not a Socialist idea at all, but a survival from the Whig theories of three-quarters of a century ago. . . . Surely we needn't simply meander around repeating the stale and flyblown phylacteries of a discredited anti-Socialist Whiggery, imagining that in so doing we are "advanced."

What is believed to be the alternative to this "Whiggery"?

The Empire is a big fact—now. It is a League of Nations in being. Under a Socialist inspiration, with Home Rule all round and a federated parliament for the Empire dealing with imperial affairs of common interest to all the federated nations, it might be made the greatest lever for human emancipation known.

This quotation is a typical statement of the current school, and affords an instructive contrast to the supposed "Liberal" or "Whig" outlook of Keir Hardie.

NEVERTHELESS there is an element of half-truth in the alleged advance from "Liberalism" which is very important to disentangle, because it leads us straight to the actual character of the change that has taken place, and the real alternative to imperialist policy. It is perfectly true that the pre-war Parliamentary Labour Party was still closely tied to the already obsolete doctrines of Liberal capitalism, and nowhere more than in foreign affairs, to the philosophy, that is, of trading, manufacturing capitalism at the time of British industrial domination of the world market, when every country could be assaulted by the stream of cheap goods in the name of peace and free trade, without the burden and unnecessary expenditure of military and colonial policies, which were regarded with suspicion as a relic of mercantilism. This kind of Liberal "pacifism," "internationalism" and "anti-imperialism" was in reality nothing but a disguised species of imperialism, resting in fact on a position of world exploitation. The representatives of the Labour aristocracy, raised up above the

level of the international proletariat on the basis of this world exploitation, united with their masters and echoed their philosophy and outlook, including the spurious "internationalist" free trade tradition. Only a few Labour representatives, such as Hardie, fought their way even partially to a conscious Socialist working-class outlook. In so far as the "pacifism," "internationalism" and "anti-imperialism" of the pre-war Parliamentary Labour Party was of this spurious Liberal type, it was rotten through and through, as the stroke of war completely showed, when a rapid change of tack, in accordance with the new dictates of capitalism, was immediately carried out by the majority.

BUT what have the representatives of the new school done who so proudly announce their emancipation from the doctrines of Liberal capitalism? It is perfectly true that they are emancipated (or rather, the simple force of events and the current trend of bourgeois thought have emancipated them) from some of the more obviously obsolete portions of the philosophy of Liberal capitalism. But they have freed themselves from the philosophy of Liberal capitalism only to enslave themselves to the philosophy of modern imperialist capitalism. The victory that they celebrate so triumphantly, making mock of the Leninists as out-of-date "Cobdenites," is not the victory of Socialism over Liberalism, but the victory of imperialism over Liberalism. Monopolist or imperialist capitalism has succeeded to Liberal capitalism—and the servants of capitalism have followed suit. The motto is no longer "free trade," "non-intervention," "splendid isolation," &c. The motto is "Empire organisation," "Empire development," "the large-scale unit," &c. And the reformist "Labour" representatives, the servants of capitalism, have changed their tune accordingly. They have adapted their rôle to the new forms of capitalism, and so are able to come forward again in unity with their capitalist friends, serving with them on Empire marketing committees, &c., and joining with them in united Empire propaganda (as formerly in united free trade propaganda). But their *relative* position is still exactly the same as before. They have not advanced a single

inch yet to Socialism, *i.e.*, to the fighting of capitalism (which in the present period must necessarily mean the fighting of imperialism, since modern capitalism is imperialism).

IN order to cover their new servitude, they bring out a host of new watchwords, which are even more manifestly hypocritical than the old Liberal watchwords, and are in fact nothing more than a very threadbare adaptation of the old Liberal watchwords. They speak of the Empire as a haven of "liberty," as a "commonwealth" of nations, as a harbinger of "peace," as a nucleus of "internationalism," and as a potential instrument of "Socialism." Of these dingy signboards for a very commonplace capitalist enterprise the last is the only one that has an appearance of originality (the supposed connection of the Empire with the possibility of Socialism), and that it is therefore important to discuss with some care. The rest can be very rapidly dismissed. To speak of the Empire as a "commonwealth" obviously changes nothing, and is only the old Fabian trick of conferring new titles on capitalist institutions, like "ceremonial head" for the monarchy, as a suitable "intellectual Socialist" alternative for the more laborious proletarian process of class struggle to change the realities. To speak of "liberty" because one-twentieth of the population outside Britain enjoy the same "free" institutions as Britain is obviously a very bad joke, compared with which the old Liberal propaganda of "freedom" and "equality" in England was an almost plausible illusion. And to speak of a partial capitalist combination in the midst of warring imperialist antagonisms as a step to world peace and internationalism is like describing the rival imperialist alliances during the war as instruments of peace and internationalism (which, incidentally, the imperialist "Socialists" on both sides did during the war).

"THE Communists and their supporters erred," declares Dr. Haden Guest in his book *The Labour Party and the Empire*, "by leaving out of account the self-governing Empire and concentrating on India and the tropical dependencies." (It is noticeable that in this book the author frankly admits that the Communist conception represents "the older international Socialist conception" as against "the new Empire conception" which he

advocates.) Let us consider this "error." In the first place, it would appear, even assuming the correctness and relevance of the supposed distinction between the "self-governing" and other portions of the Empire, that the "error" would be on the other foot. The disfranchised subject portion of the population of the Empire outside Britain consists of 380 millions (India, 320 millions; Crown colonies and dependencies, 55 millions; South African coloured population, 5½ millions). The enfranchised "self-governing" portion numbers 20 millions. To overlook 5 per cent. of a population for the sake of 95 per cent., or in fact not even to overlook but simply to refuse to treat the 5 per cent. as of paramount importance outweighing the 95 per cent., might seem a pardonable "error" in an international Socialist. But to overlook the 95 per cent. for the sake of the 5 per cent., to throw into the background the autocratic domination of 95 per cent., and on the strength of a 5 per cent. enfranchisement to speak of the principles of "liberty" of the Empire and a "commonwealth" of nations—that would seem to be an unpardonable "error" in any international Socialist. The one is a failure to deal with a special sectional question in a general statement (in point of fact, the special questions of the dominions have been very fully dealt with in Communist propaganda); the other is a failure to deal with the dominant overwhelming character of a whole institution, and in consequence to give a completely false colour and conception of the whole question. To those who are inclined to accept at face value the type of Imperial Conference propaganda expressed in the constitutional report ("The British Empire depends essentially, if not formally, upon positive ideals. Free institutions are its lifeblood. Free co-operation is its instrument") we would recommend the words of a bourgeois democratic statesman who is a favourite authority and hero of the whole of this type of school: "*It is self-government,*" declared Abraham Lincoln, "*when the white man governs himself. But when he governs himself and also governs others, it is no longer self-government; it is despotism.*"

BUT the question of "self-government" goes a great deal farther than this. Are the dominions "self-governing"? If even to a bourgeois democrat like Abraham Lincoln the

application of the conception of "self-government" to communities like Britain and the white dominions governing subject populations was nothing but cant and humbug and concealment of the true facts (thus putting to shame even by his bourgeois democratic directness many of our modern "Socialists"), what must be said when we come to consider the question from a Socialist point of view? What is meant by the supposed "self-government" of the dominions? It is only necessary to look at the facts to see that what is meant is simply the lying Liberal-capitalist sense of "self-government," which it has been the work of Socialism to expose for the past three-quarters of a century. Our social imperialists, who claim to have left Liberalism behind them, remain remarkably faithful to some of the old Liberal fig-leaves. Baldwin at the Imperial Conference spoke of £850 millions invested by London in the dominions. The South African Economic and Wage Commission (1925) declares that "every year £16 millions leaves South Africa to pay interest and dividends to overseas companies." Is this the reality of power, or is it not? Are the workers who pay this tribute "free" yet in any Socialist sense? All the Parliamentary Labour Governments in all the states of Australia (with the vision of which the British social imperialists endeavour to delude the British workers) have not been able to affect and cannot affect the reality of capitalist power and tribute, whether based in the country or in London, which grows heavier in total weight every year. The control of the dominions from London has to take more subtle forms; there is a local bourgeoisie with growing independent tendencies to be taken into account; but the reality of imperialist domination exists also for the workers in the dominions, as for the workers in Britain, as for the workers in India and the colonies, for *all* the workers in the Empire, despite all the cunning variations of grade and degree. These variations, these small concessions to limited upper strata of a delusory "self-government," instead of being the justification of imperialist rule, as the Labour imperialists (representing the narrow sectional view of the interests of these upper strata) argue, are on the contrary the enemy of the workers, who should unite without regard to these distinctions, upon the basis of their common interests, white, black and brown, skilled and unskilled, highly paid and low paid, "free" and unfree,

against their imperialist masters, instead of letting one small section be drawn into support of imperialist rule by petty and delusory concessions.

WHAT is the view of the dominions workers themselves? Do they so readily accept the facile illusions of "self-government," on the sole basis of which it is endeavoured to build up a philosophy of the Empire as a "commonwealth of nations"? Dr. Guest asserts that Australian "citizens," enjoying the advantages of their "self-government" and "Socialistic" legislation, would find ridiculous Communist appeals to the unity of interests of "workers and peasants" throughout the Empire against the imperialist exploiters. Let us turn to the Australian Labour Press. This is what the best known Australian Labour paper, the *Australian Worker*, has to say on the question of "self-government" and the decisions of the Imperial Conference, under the heading "Imperialism's Big Bluff" :—

To assert that from now onwards every dominion is a self-governing member of the Empire and master of its destiny is simply political humbug. Of what value is political independence when the people are still throttled economically and financially by the Shylocks of Great Britain? So long as British money power has a stranglehold over the dominions the latter can never be masters of their destinies.
—(*Australian Worker*, December 1, 1926.)

The *Australian Worker* is not a Communist paper; it is in fact conducting a very active anti-Communist campaign; but it can see enough of plain working-class interests to know that the relation of Britain and Australia under capitalism is not the relation of equality, federation, commonwealth, kinship and all the rest of it, as our Labour imperialists make out, but the relation of Shylock and his victim, and that the interests of Australian working-class freedom demand complete independence of capitalist Britain.

IN the same way, take Canada. When the British Labour Party called a "Commonwealth Labour Conference," this is what the president of the Canadian Labour Party had to

declare for the benefit of the British Labour leaders, whom he found to be "imperialists up to the eyebrows":—

Speaking for the actual workers in the Canadian Labour movement, I say quite openly that we are not at all interested in preserving either British imperialism or the Empire.

The dominions working-class movements have many special difficulties to contend with and many obstacles and local prejudices to overcome before they can enter into full unity with the workers all over the Empire in the struggle against the imperialist exploiters. But if the British Labour imperialists imagine that they can draw the dominions Labour movements in their wake in the service of the Empire and in co-operation with the imperialist exploiters, they have many more shocks to face in front of them, of which the failure of the "Commonwealth Labour Conference" was only the first.

BUT the picture of the "self-government" of the dominions, and the gradual—very gradual—approach of the remaining 95 per cent. of the Empire to the same happy status, is the *sole* basis of the Right Wing Labour propaganda of the Empire as a "commonwealth of nations," a "League of Nations in being," &c., which Labour should help to maintain and build up, instead of as a capitalist prison-house whose workers have the sole interest to break their chains. If this basis goes, what remains? The idealisation of the existing Empire is so obviously threadbare and discredited that there remains only one resource—to make a draft upon the future as the means of justifying the present. So is presented the picture of the Empire becoming, as it were, converted to Socialism, of the tiger becoming a milch-cow. The Empire, it is declared, "under Socialist inspiration . . . *might* be made the greatest lever for human emancipation the world has ever known." It might be "possible to make the Empire a great Socialist instrument." Elysian pictures are presented of Parliamentary Labour Governments in Britain and the dominions happily building up Socialist relations. It is, in the words of Dr. Guest, "the vision of a Labour-controlled Empire." The policy is summed up in the Right Wing Labour slogan, "Socialise the

Empire," which is contrasted in its "constructive" character with the supposed "destructive" Communist policy of "smashing the Empire." (The description of Communist policy is misleading. The Communist seeks to liberate the peoples in the Empire and to smash the capitalist domination over them, and for this reason supports actively their real, not formal, independence; but this leaves entirely open the possibility of the closest relations between the resulting free workers' communities, or between, say, workers' Britain and nationalist India, which is an entirely practical question, depending on the circumstances of the time, only this being certain in relation to the present question, that fruitful productive economic relations can only be built up, when the element of exploitation and domination has been entirely removed. The Labour imperialist policy, on the other hand, of "not smashing the Empire" ("There is no reason for breaking up the British Empire," says Lansbury; "I am opposed to any policy of wrecking the Empire," says Wheatley, &c.) means in practice maintaining the existing imperialist domination by guns, cruisers, tanks, garrisons, punitive expeditions, air-bombing, nationalist executions, imprisonments, treason trials, Press Acts, &c., and the rest of the apparatus—or "loose tegument," in Johnston's phrase—by which the Empire is held together and which the Labour Government maintained. Thus the real issue is not between "Socialising" and "smashing" the Empire, but between "with the imperialist exploiters" or "with the workers and subject peoples" of the Empire. This whole question, however, needs separate treatment.

THIS propaganda of "Socialising the Empire" brings us to the heart of Labour imperialist propaganda. What is the essential character of this form of "Socialist" defence for co-operating in maintaining the existing capitalist Empire? The essential character of this propaganda is that it utilises a hypothetical Socialist future (which on examination will be found to be completely contradictory and impossible) to defend an existing capitalist present. It abandons the ground of *what is* as indefensible, and enters on the ground of *what might be*, which is

subject only to fancy, since it is not based on any serious consideration of the real factors, forces and contradictions of the total situation (compare the complete ignoring of the relation of the Empire to other imperialisms, and dismissal of this question with the idealistic picture that it is a "factor of peace"). That is to say, the method is Utopian, not dialectical. But this Utopianism, in common with most Utopianism, is in reality a form of reconciliation with the existing—which is why Utopianism and opportunism, seeming opposites, commonly go together. In the name of this visionary Socialist future, of the "possibility of Socialism," the Labour Party is to maintain the actual imperialist despotism, *i.e.*, defend capitalist interests. The "Socialist possibility" is the usual verbal sop to the Left, the pious recognition of the ultimate goal; the actual capitalist administration, with the armaments, penal codes, trusts, loans, concession-hunting, &c., is in the hands of the Right. There is in fact the usual "division of Labour" between "Left" and "Right" in the Labour imperialist propaganda as in the rest of the policy of class corruption. The working-class Socialist is to be reconciled to the ugly task of maintaining the capitalist Empire by hope of the "Socialist possibilities." But when Thomas says, "We love our Empire," he does not mean, "We love the Socialist - possibilities - implicit - in - the - otherwise-hateful-Empire"; he means, "We love our existing capitalist Empire." Thus the slogan in practice amounts to a trick of propaganda, a kind of double-dealing between capitalism and Socialism, a use of Socialist phraseology to defend capitalist realities. Nevertheless it raises extremely important questions, affecting the whole relations of imperialism and Socialism and the method of transition from one to the other, which it is essential to clear up.

THE question of a "Socialist" taking over of imperialism, of a "Socialist" colonial policy, is not, as is often suggested, a new proposal in international Socialist policy. On the contrary, this precise question received the most exhaustive and most representative discussion in international Socialism before the war (including by most of the present leaders of the Labour and Socialist International), and

ended in the most decisive and explicit rejection of the whole conception of any "Socialist" colonial policy, of any "Socialist" taking over of the existing colonial systems or any "Socialist" co-operation in existing colonial rule. This discussion came to a head, and the decisive ruling was reached, at the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart in 1907, at which were represented the leaders of the entire international Socialist world from right to left. The Stuttgart decision is very far from an adequate treatment of the question of imperialism, and in the last resort is open to serious criticism. Nevertheless, this decision, and still more the discussion leading up to it, shows definitely that at that time the international Socialist world decisively rejected the conception of a "Socialist" colonial policy.

IT is interesting to note that in a recent discussion of "Socialism and the Empire" in the British Labour Press reference was made to this resolution. In complete innocence the representative of Labour imperialism (T. Johnston) declared that he "quite agreed" with this resolution against the "colonial policy of capitalism," but that this did not in any wise affect his position that a Socialist regime might make use of the Empire for Socialist ends :—

Mr. Arnot quotes the Stuttgart resolution against the "colonial policy of capitalism." With that resolution I quite agree. I am against capitalism and its colonial and home policies. I deny that the Empire must of necessity be an engine of oppression. Mr. Arnot nowhere seeks to show that it is impossible to make the Empire a great Socialist instrument.—(T. Johnston, *Forward*, August 9, 1924.)

The naïve representative of Labour imperialism has here given himself away. Instead of frankly declaring (like his colleague, Haden Guest) that he is *against* the old international Socialist policy, he rashly imagines that all that is involved is the usual pious verbal repudiation of capitalist colonial policy, to which he can easily subscribe, and so he gaily declares that he "quite agrees" with the decision, in apparent complete unconsciousness that the resolution in question was reached *in opposition to* an alternative resolution which declared that, while all capitalist colonial policy was necessarily bad, Socialism might make use of and take over colonial policy for Socialist civilising ends. This is the decision

with which our Socialist imperialist declares himself "quite agreeing," and then proceeds to outline as his new alternative the exact policy that was rejected. This trifling and confused treatment of the whole development of international Socialist thought and action is so typical of the "British School of Socialism," which, being in its own opinion free from all "theoretical nonsense," discovers anew all the oldest fallacies fifty times a year, that it may be worth while to recall the essence of the discussion.

THE alternative resolution in question was moved by Van Kol, of Holland, and supported—of course—by Bernstein and David, the two most notorious German Revisionists, and by Ramsay MacDonald. In the condemnation of capitalist colonial policy it agreed in general, though in weaker terms, with the ultimately adopted resolution. But the controversial clause ran as follows :—

The Congress does not in principle and for all time reject any and every colonial policy, which under a Socialist regime could work as a civilising influence.

The victorious resolution, which was in the end, after a sharp preliminary division, adopted unanimously with one abstention, ran :—

The Congress declares that capitalist colonial policy in its innermost essence of necessity leads to the enslavement, forced labour or extermination of the native population of the colonised areas. The civilising mission which capitalist society professes serves only as a cover for the thirst for exploitation and for conquest. Only Socialist society will first offer all nations the possibility of full cultural development.

Here are two alternative policies, and the debates brought out their character clearly. One declares that Socialist co-operation in the existing capitalist colonial empires could lead to beneficial civilising results. The other declared that the existing capitalist colonial empires were and could only be instruments of exploitation, against which all Socialists must fight, that the only path to human advance was the path of international Socialism, and that Socialism was sharply opposed to all and any colonial policy. In this debate all the customary arguments about the necessity of a "practical" "constructive" policy, the uselessness of "negative"

policies, that the abandonment of the colonies would only lead to their relapse to "barbarism," the necessity of "higher" civilisations leading "lower," and the rest of it were brought forward. Nevertheless the Socialist International was still at this time sufficiently sound to reject the whole plea, although only by a small majority (127-108, thus revealing the inroads which opportunism and the still concealed social imperialism had already made by 1907). In this debate the decisive speech was made by Kautsky, who was then still a revolutionary Socialist and Marxist.

KAUTSKY argued in essence as follows. The conception of a "Socialist" colonial policy is based in reality on a confusion. It starts from the correct conception that our policy in relation to the colonies cannot be a merely negative one, that we cannot merely "deny," *i.e.*, ignore, the colonies, that we must perform positive tasks in relation to them. Certainly no one disputes this. But what are these positive tasks? In essence they are the same tasks as at home: to fight against capitalist exploitation, to fight against the bureaucracy, to fight against militarism. But this is social democratic policy, not colonial policy. The confusion arises when, in the name of this necessity of a positive policy in relation to the colonies, is introduced the necessity of a colonial policy, *i.e.*, the maintenance or conquest by force of overseas territory. But colonial policy is the enemy of any possibility of a so-called civilising mission. The conquered nation becomes hostile to the whole culture of the conqueror nation. The possibility of a genuine civilising influence only begins when we completely abandon the relationship of force, *i.e.*, give them their freedom. Bernstein's argument that the domination of lower races by higher is a natural necessity is a simple application of the old argument of despotism and aristocracy from the relation of individuals to the relation of peoples: that certain nations come into the world booted and spurred to ride, and others with saddles on their backs to bear them. The conception that certain peoples are "children," are incapable of self-rule: this is the basic conception of all despotism, the invariable argument of all slave-owners in favour of slavery. So Kautsky argued twenty years ago, and carried the Congress with him.

IT is to be noted that as in all the discussions of the old pre-war Second International, while the Marxist position is more or less laid down in principle, the practical conclusions are not clearly drawn, and dangerous loopholes are left for opportunist distortions. In particular, the question of the rôle of the Socialist parties in relation not merely to particular abuses in the colonies, but to the active struggle for colonial independence, is indicated, but is not clearly laid down. In the debate Ledebour, the official spokesman for the adopted resolution, was directly questioned whether the logical consequence of the position was not the direct demand for full colonial independence and renunciation of the colonies, and answered "Yes" amid applause ; but the revolutionary task was never explicitly formulated in the resolution. Both the theory and practice of Socialism of the Second International were not equal to the gigantic problems raised by imperialism. It remained for Lenin to work out in all its amplitude the Marxist theory of imperialism, and to deduce in consequence the practical policy of revolutionary Socialism with exact precision.

LENIN showed, first, that imperialism is not simply a special policy, a separable "colonial policy" of capitalism, but that modern capitalism, having outgrown the small-scale free-trade stage and reached the monopoly stage, is and can only be imperialism ; consequently all petty bourgeois Utopian talk of "reforming" imperialism, eliminating the "bad" elements, &c., is a futile ignoring of the real character of the problem ; second, that imperialism represents the final stage of capitalism when no further progressive development of capitalism is possible, the stage of parasitism and collapse, of "decaying, dying capitalism," when all the contradictions reach their extreme point, and the only solution is the proletarian revolution ; third, that the victory of the proletarian revolution over imperialism lies in the union of the proletariat in the imperialist countries with the revolting subject peoples struggling for national independence against the imperialist yoke. This, the Leninist theory of imperialism, is the essential basis for the modern working-class movement, and in particular for the British working-class movement.

WHAT is the essential weakness of the conception of a "Socialist" taking over of the Empire and administering the Empire for Socialistic aims ? In the last resort the weakness lies in the conception of the Empire as a unitary economic system independent of its capitalist character, that can be taken over at will ready-made and developed in a Socialist direction, without regard to the inner laws of its development inherent in its capitalist character. But in fact, so long as its fundamental capitalist character remains (*i.e.*, so long as the power and ownership of the capitalist class remain unbroken), these laws necessarily govern its direction, and these laws necessarily mean its intensified contradictions and break-up. The projects of "Socialising" the Empire are projects made in a vacuum, because they ignore the contradictions that are the essence of its capitalistic structure ; and therefore, when it comes to realising them, these projects will invariably be defeated, or broken up, or distorted, or thrown into secondary importance by these realities.

SUPPOSING, for example, some ambitious scheme of lowering the price of beef by State bulk purchase within the Empire painfully accomplished in face of all the obstacles, the opposition of the Big Five Meat Combine and their agents, and so forth. The "gain" achieved is the lowering in price of a certain commodity of working-class consumption. It is obvious in how many ways this gain can disappear in the economic flux of wage-earners' conditions (like the "gains" of Snowden's Budget). But in fact the disappearance may arise through causes intimately associated with the same policy that produced the supposed gain. It may disappear through a fall in wages consequent on the policy of class peace, which in practice invariably accompanies Labour imperialism. It may be submerged in the costs of increased armaments or a new war or the suppression of a revolt in India. It may be completely outweighed by a new development of finance capital transferring industry to the colonies (all part of Empire development), throwing masses out of employment. It needs very little imagination to see the net deficit with which a policy of Labour imperialism, even at its most successful, will leave the working class (while as for the effects of how such a policy will

really be operated, not in a Socialist propagandist's imagination, but by a J. H. Thomas—!). In all these questions it is the midget looking at a *single* point—*e.g.*, the price of beef—as of sole interest to the working class, and not looking at the *total* relations of modern imperialism and their effect on the working class, that is the source of error, as indeed of all opportunism.

THE conception of “scientifically organising the Empire for the common good” (which is the basic conception of the Liverpool resolutions on the Empire) within the capitalist frame-work is a myth which is contrary to every known character of capitalism. The idea that the Empire can somehow be at once capitalist and not capitalist, that it can be capitalist and yet freed from the “abuses” of capitalism, is contemptible self-delusion. Thus the Liverpool Conference calls upon the Conservative Government for

a survey of the natural resources of the British Commonwealth as a whole, with a view to the scientific direction of their use and to prevent exploitation in the interests of private capitalists.

What a piece of consummate hypocrisy, since the resolution makes no proposal for the expropriation of the capitalists of the Empire, and therefore implies that capitalism is to be run somehow not in the interests of the capitalists ! All this propaganda simply consists in applying the phraseology of Socialist conceptions to capitalist realities, with the result that the practical policy when in office is a very different thing.

THE only practical meaning of the Labour policy of “Socialising the Empire” consists in reality, not in the advance of Socialism in the Empire, but in the giving of the service of the Labour Movement to help the capitalist class to maintain their decaying Empire, to endeavour to smooth over its contradictions, to draw off for a while the working class from fulfilling their rôle of its undertakers, to delude the nationalist movements with illusory promises and hopes, to call for sacrifices from the working class in the name of patriotism and financial stability, to throw a glamour of Socialistic phrases over

facts of capitalist exploitation—in short, in the words of Professor Zimmern in the *Daily Herald*:—

As sure as the sun will rise to-morrow the Labour Party will be called upon to save the British Empire from the disintegration with which it is now threatened.—(*Daily Herald*, December 3, 1924.)

He is correct; but the Labour Party will not be able to do it. Where the Chamberlains and Churchills have failed the Thomases and MacDonalds will not succeed. The forces of break-up, which are in reality the forces of growth, are too strong.

FOR the contradictions which on every side are intensifying in relation to the British Empire (class struggle, national awakenings and struggle, independent capitalist orientations and interests, weakening of the British financial centre, advancing rivalry and penetration of American imperialism, war dangers, &c.) are not accidental difficulties for the sapient Socialist "statesman" to endeavour to smooth over and solve with a few sermons on harmony and good-will. On the contrary, the contradictions, so far from being the enemy, are the conditions of the advance to Socialism. It is precisely the contradictions that are the conditions of the collapse of the capitalist Empire and of the real advance to Socialism. It is precisely the intensification of the contradictions that provides the ground for the working class in union with the subject peoples to overthrow the imprisoning, paralysing capitalist rule, and so to set out on the real path of Socialist construction in deeds and not in words. The transition from imperialism to Socialism lies, not in futile attempts to harmonise the contradictions of modern imperialism, but by the proletariat taking advantage of the intensification of the contradictions to win power. This is the essential difference between Leninism and social democracy, or rather, social imperialism.

FOR this reason the question of the Empire is not and cannot be treated as a separable question, to be regarded apart from the other aspects of working-class policy in the economic and political field. It carries with it inevitably the whole of working-class policy, since it carries with it the whole of modern capitalism. The path of Labour imperialism is the path of capitalist recon-

struction. But the path of capitalist reconstruction is the path of industrial peace and the path of coalition. It is impossible to advocate the harmonious development of the Empire abroad and the intensification of the class struggle at home. It is impossible to fight the capitalist class on the industrial and political field and to appear in unity with them on a supposed neutral imperialist field. Imperialism is the highest expression of co-operation with capitalism. The acceptance of lower wages at home is the counterpart of the advocacy of capitalist Empire development abroad. For the capitalist class the depression of the standards of the workers in Britain in order to raise additional new capital to export for the development of the Empire abroad is the key to the whole scheme of capitalist reorganisation at the expense of the workers. But the policy of capitalist reorganisation is, as the historic example of the coal industry has most clearly shown, the whole policy of reformism in the present period, since the alternative is the facing the intensification of the class struggle to a point that has become revolutionary in fact and raises direct questions of Socialism or capitalism. The policy of the reformist leadership, of the Labour Party Executive and the General Council, as indeed of all the reformist leadership "Right" or "Left" (commonly spoken of as the policy of the Labour Right Wing, because these represent its most conscious and consistent expression and actually govern practice), is in the last resort a policy cut of a single block. Its innermost character is co-operation in capitalist reorganisation. Its outward signs are imperialism, industrial peace, coalition.

R. P. D.

THE CONFLICT OF IDEAS IN BRITISH TRADE UNIONISM

By A. J. COOK

SINCE the struggle of the miners, which involved the workers in the General Strike and the bringing to bear of the Government weapons of E.P.A., &c., we have been inundated with statements from Labour leaders, especially political leaders, about the "Great Catastrophe," and by the swan song of "Never Again." These views compel us to make a clear statement of the position. It is only when the workers are defeated that this phenomenon of everybody being wrong who advocated and supported the struggle takes place.

If the miners had won they would have been right, even in the eyes of these critics. There is, however, something else which must be remembered, and it is much more than criticism—something which is not personal, but which makes up the vital principles inherent in a real Labour Movement. These principles have been stated and re-stated in this magazine. They are, firstly, that there is no identity of interest between Capitalism and the workers; secondly, that the struggle must continue and that conflict is inevitable under Capitalism; and lastly, that the workers are compelled to fight on both the industrial and political fields, even when not sure of victory. There is no need for argument on these points—neither Mr. Ramsay MacDonald nor Mr. Philip Snowden would have been Members of Parliament if the principles which they now put forward had been adhered to. In a word, the refusal to fight for justice means the acceptance of slavery.

It is true that the miners were defeated, but the cause of this defeat must be fully explained, without fear or favour, even though certain well-known personages in the Labour Movement may be discredited.

Two of the great questions involved in the struggle are :
Were the miners right in resisting a lowering of their standards

of living and the lengthening of their working day? Were the rank and file of the Trade Unions right in deciding to support the miners in their struggle against reductions? The answer to both these questions is in the affirmative—therefore, in view of the actions of the coalowners and the Government, the struggle was inevitable. No Trade Union or political leader would have dared, either before the struggle began or during the struggle, to recommend openly that the miners should accept wage reductions and a lengthening of hours, as everyone knew that the miners' standards were inadequate even before the lock-out. The expressions of sympathy with the miners must have been nothing but hypocrisy, since that sympathy was not translated into positive action. Therefore no one will declare that the miners were wrong in defending their already inadequate standards and struggling against oppression. There is no need to argue this question over again.

In spite of this, the General Council will, before these words appear in print, have declared before the world, almost with joy, that they were right in calling off the General Strike and leaving the miners to be defeated, as they openly declared would be the case. Therefore we can logically say that by their withdrawal of the General Strike they were bringing about what they believed would be the inevitable defeat of the miners.

The miners' leaders and our Committee will have placed our case before the workers. We are not the defendants—we are the accusers. We are not in the dock, because we did our duty not only to the miners, but to the whole working class in resisting the onslaught of Capitalism.

Now let us consider the struggle which is going to be fierce and bitter between the two schools of thought. Snowden has declared that they have taken the gloves off, and MacDonald, Thomas, and Havelock Wilson, in conjunction with Baldwin, Churchill, and the Capitalist Press, are all united in declaring that the General Strike was wrong and must not take place again, that the miners were wrong in resisting the attacks of Capitalism, and that their leaders are incompetent. Apparently the miners' leaders showed their incompetence by refusing to compromise and to betray the decisions of their members. So, in the eyes of

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MacDonald and Snowden and Co., it is incompetent to be loyal to the men. They would have considered us perfectly competent had we acted against the decisions of the men, had we betrayed their trust and compromised by accepting lower wages, longer hours, and district agreements.

Attempts are being made to form an Industrial Parliament, composed of representatives of the workers and of the employers. This is Mr. Henderson's new move for "Peace, Perfect Peace." While conferences of Trade Union leaders and politicians with prominent bankers and industrialists are the order of the day, the Government prepares its plans to break the Trade Union Movement and restrict its functions, and in thus breaking the Trade Union Movement to slay the Labour Party. Oh, yes, they will take off their gloves to fight Cook and the principles that Cook believes in, as that struggle will be popular with the employing classes, and will not endanger their persons or their pockets. It will provide them with wealth by writing for the capitalist papers, and numerous dinners from bankers and captains of industry—while the workers in industry will continue to suffer victimisation and unemployment. All this to secure the stabilisation of Capitalism, which is the logical outcome of the policy of these "champions" of Labour.

The questions that must be asked and answered are, firstly, what is the Trade Union Movement for; and, secondly, what is the Labour Party for? Are these two great movements to become props to Capitalism, to assist in its stabilisation, or are they to be used for the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of the Co-operative Commonwealth? Yes, Mr. Snowden, you declare in effect that we, the miners, must be fought with the gloves off—not the capitalists, not the coal-owners, nor even the Government. Of course, occasional speeches will be made in the House of Commons to give plausibility to the appearance that the Government is being threatened. There is no hope of building up either a Trade Union Movement or a Labour Party on these principles. Men that work in the mills, the mines and the factories are suffering all the tortures of persecution and victimisation. In many of our areas there are those who are risking their all in the sole belief that they are building up a movement which will bring about their emancipation.

Snowden and Co. will not fight the capitalist class but are determined to split the Labour Movement from top to bottom. They are attempting what Spencer is attempting at Nottingham; that is the only logical outcome of their policy. We are indeed at the cross-roads. Whatever unpleasantness it may mean, we cannot allow these men to wreck the working-class movement. They are encouraging not only an attack on the rest of the workers, they are not only justifying the coal-owners' attack on the miners, but they are encouraging an attack on our comrades in Russia. They hate the Russian Workers' Movement more than they hate the Capitalist class. They are out to destroy all those who are prepared to fight the capitalist class.

They are determined to have peace at any price, but they forget the one great fundamental fact that the masses, whom they have fooled, are not receiving the same standard of living as they are, are not attending these dinners, are not economically secure, but are living in poverty, under the shadow of the workhouse. It is these masses who will decide the issue, not Snowden, MacDonald and Co. These gentlemen have been weighed in the balance and found wanting in the greatest test in the history of the British Labour Movement.

I am in more direct contact with the masses of the workers than any leader in this country. I know well their thoughts and aspirations, and they are in no mood to allow hero-worship of past gods to determine either present or future policy. They know their real enemy, and suffering and persecution and unemployment will determine their actions.

Let us join issue with Snowden, MacDonald and Co. ; let us fight with the gloves off, by informing the workers of the truth of the situation. Once the masses know the economic facts of the world crisis, which Capitalism has created, then neither the sophistries of Snowden nor MacDonald will hold them back from organising politically and industrially to overthrow Capitalism. It is our duty to harness the revolt and to use every means at our disposal to secure the end we have in view.

THE CONFERENCE OF EXECUTIVES

By HARRY POLLITT

THE special conference of trade union executives that took place in London on January 20 and 21 had to discuss the most serious issue that our movement has had to face—that of the General Strike, and the future policy of the trade union movement, an issue that cannot be described as something that belongs to the past, because upon the conduct and leadership of the General Strike and the lessons to be learned depends the future of the whole movement.

It must be noted that at the conference, two-thirds of the 1,200 delegates present were there in the capacity of full time trade union officials, who, in the majority of cases, live in a world far removed from the direct working-class struggle, and therefore approach every question from a different angle from those workers who have to eke out an existence on 30s. or £2 per week.

This special conference was to have been called last June. The reason for its postponement was not because the General Council were concerned to preserve the solidarity of the miners in view of Baldwin's attack on the eight hour day. It was because the anger of the workers was so strong on account of the gross betrayal on May 12 that, had the conference been held then, it would not have been as easy to obtain an endorsement of the General Council's policy as it was in January. The real reason for the postponement was, therefore, a political reason. It was to escape a vote of censure and condemnation of the leadership of the General Council.

When the conference did actually take place, it was not an accident that the Chairman of last year's Trades Union Congress, Mr. Pugh, was called upon to make the opening statement on behalf of the General Council—a statement which consisted of reading for one and a half hours a report containing 20,000 words, which no conference in the world could follow unless it had thoroughly read and discussed it. This method of procedure was adopted deliberately in order that the conference should be

damped down, and any opposition stifled as a result of this treatment of the General Strike.

The discussion that took place brought out quite clearly certain admissions that the workers will not forget to note. First, the admission of Mr. Pugh that the Samuel Memorandum had only the backing of Samuel, and that the General Council did break its pledge in regard to the movement standing firmly together to prevent victimisation of all the sections that had responded to the strike call of the General Council. Secondly, the admission of Mr. Bevin that until April 27, 1926, no preparations of any kind were made by the General Council for the inevitable conflict that was to take place. Third, the position as shown clearly by Mr. Thomas that the formula drafted by the General Council on the night before the General Strike was declared was a wage reducing formula; and fourth, the emphatic declaration of Mr. Smith, the miners' leader, that when the miners were called upon to meet the General Council and were told what the Samuel Memorandum was, they, the miners, were not allowed to make any suggestion, alteration, or amendment to the Memorandum, which represented the basis on which the General Council had decided to call off the General Strike, knowing full well that this Memorandum did mean wage reductions, a policy which was a complete repudiation of the expressed will of the movement as repeatedly shown on many occasions from Red Friday, 1925, to April 30, 1926.

Much was said at the conference about the need of discipline and loyalty to the movement. That is a line everybody would agree with. We cannot have a centralised movement and a fighting leadership unless there is discipline and loyalty in the movement. But discipline and loyalty to a fighting leadership and discipline and loyalty to a leadership that has betrayed the whole working class are two very different things. When it is proved that an important section like the miners are going to be defeated as a result of the treachery of the General Council leaders, and which defeat will have the greatest reaction on the whole movement, then it would have been the miners who would have been guilty of the greatest disloyalty to the whole movement, never mind the General Council, had they not done the only possible thing by repudiating the General Council traitors in refusing to accept the Samuel

Memorandum. You cannot get discipline and loyalty to a General Council which admits that the first preparation that it made for a General Strike was three days before that General Strike took place—the chief leaders of which have since declared that they “never believed in the General Strike” and “will never take part in one again.” Yes. Discipline and loyalty by all means—but to a fighting leadership that will lead the movement to victories and not defeats.

The vote of confidence which the General Council received at this conference in no way represents the feelings of the rank and file of the movement. This is proved by the refusal both of the General Council and the majority of the delegates present at the conference, who opposed the resolution of the miners that the report should be referred back to the rank and file of the unions represented at the conference for their consideration and decision. When a leadership is afraid to refer its policy to the rank and file of the movement, it is an open admission that that policy is a treacherous one and has led to a heavy defeat of the workers. The plain truth of the matter is that neither the General Council dare submit their report to the rank and file, nor will the majority of the trade union executives present at the conference themselves submit that report or a record of how they themselves voted to the rank and file of their own unions. The working class will not be misled by this vote of endorsement, because it in no way represents the feelings of the workers upon the General Strike and the leadership of the General Council.

What are the political implications of the result of this conference? They are of the most serious character, because it is the deliberate intention of the strongest part of the leadership of the General Council—that led by Mr. Thomas—that the decision of the conference should, if possible, put paid once and for all to the policy of the General Strike as a weapon of working-class struggle. That is the real significance of the decision of the January conference so far as the existing leadership is concerned.

But this goes further. The repudiation of the weapon of the General Strike is intended to lead to the rejection of sympathetic strike action, and from this it is but an easy stage to the position where the strike weapon will be discarded altogether, if the existing leadership have their way, in order that their policy of industrial

peace and a five years' truce with the capitalists may be operated. This is the policy the present leadership intends to pursue.

In opposition to this, the policy of the National Minority Movement, directing and organising the activities of the revolutionary workers inside the trade unions, is quite clear. It is to declare unhesitatingly that the General Strike, given a new leadership, is still the most powerful weapon in the workers' armoury. The plain facts of the class struggle make future General Strikes inevitable. Our task is to commence to fight now for the complete reorganisation of the whole trade union movement, as regards policy, structure, and leadership.

The special conference, however, did not consider it its duty to spend ten minutes in discussing what line the movement has to take in view of the experiences of the General Strike, and the immense struggles immediately ahead. This failure of the official element throws added responsibility on every active and honest worker. They must range themselves with the Minority Movement, and by organised activity, on the basis of a common policy, by work inside the existing organisations from the workshop upwards, conduct such a campaign amongst the workers that the Trades Union Congress in September will be compelled to give attention to the following proposals, as being the best way out of the present terrible position that the trade union movement is in:—

- (1) Concentration of power in the hands of a new General Council with a fighting leadership.
- (2) Reorganisation of the method of electing such a Council, and the complete reorganisation of the method of conducting the business of the Trades Union Congress.
- (3) The best ways and means of giving effect to the Scarborough resolution on the formation of factory committees.
- (4) The immediate amalgamation of unions in kindred industries, and a general plan for the adoption of the policy of one union for each industry as the basis of our future industrial organisation.
- (5) The development of the local trades councils, so that not only shall they be local centres of the workers' struggle, but also have a definite place in the organisation of the national

trade union movement, with representation at the Trades Union Congress and on the General Council.

- (6) The creation of a Trade Union and Co-operative Alliance.
- (7) Closer co-operation with the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, and definite activity on behalf of the unemployed.
- (8) The organisation of Workers' Defence Corps.
- (9) The achievement of international trade union unity.
- (10) The whole question of trade union strategy in relation to—
 - (a) Wage campaigns, defensive and offensive.
 - (b) Joint action, methods and responsibilities.
 - (c) Relation to Government and State.
 - (d) The trade unions and the rôle of the Labour Party.
 - (e) Future issues facing the working class.

In spite of the official sabotage, and the threats of expulsion as indicated by Thomas in his speech at Newport on the same night that the General Council got the endorsement of their official trade union bureaucrats, the Minority Movement will go forward popularising the above programme amongst the widest circle of the masses.

In case any reader should think that we are not giving a fair picture of the attitude of the trade union officials present at the special conference, it is only necessary to mention that when an old fighter like Alex. Gossip attempted to put a reasoned case against the General Council, he was deliberately interrupted; and when Comrade Purcell, of Barrow, tried to raise the urgent question of China, he was howled down by a gang of officials who were more concerned to get the conference over by twelve o'clock (to be able to get a drink) than they were to give serious attention to the issues calling for consideration. But another twelve months' campaigning will make such an impression on the movement that these types will be forced to retire from their positions of responsibility for the safeguarding of capitalism, and give way to the new leadership that will organise the defeat of capitalism and the victory of the workers.

ITALIAN IMPERIALISM

By L. W.

THE pressure of Italy to secure colonial outlets has been the primary factor in her history during the past year. Her practical statesmen and her theoreticians alike realise the need for development. A well-known Italian journalist, in the Fascist Press last March, wrote :—

It is important that foreigners should realise exactly what we mean when we speak of an Italian empire ; we mean an empire of colonies, outside Europe, beyond the seas.

The Fascist Government represents a combination of banking and industrial interests (with landlords as a poor third), and both of these classes must secure colonial expansion in order to maintain the profits of their economic operations. The industrialists require a steady source of raw materials, well under their control; and an assured market for their manufactured articles, while the iron and steel masters see in a spirited military policy the best prospect of sales of heavy munitions of war. The financiers equally desire further fields for their investments as the home market becomes increasingly inadequate.

The existing Italian colonies are small and few. Tripolitania has six million inhabitants, of little economic importance, and subject to incessant military outbreaks on the part of the natives. Eritrea, on the Red Sea, and Somaliland are more valuable, but the whole colonial area is insignificant by contrast with the vast possessions of Great Britain, France, or pre-war Germany.

In this disproportion, and in the contrast between the territorial gains of France and England after the war and the petty concessions made to Italy, is found the constant Fascist newspaper argument for imperial extensions.

In the spring of 1926 Mussolini was sent on a triumphal tour round Tripolitania, where he exercised every art to secure the friendship of Arab chieftains.

Simultaneously arrangements were being made with England to share out the spoils of Abyssinia. Engagements were entered into giving Italy power to link her East African colonies (Eritrea and Somaliland) by a railway through Abyssinia. Italy further

was to have "exclusive economic influence in the west" of that country.

Another area in which feeling has run high on account of the expansionist policy of Fascism is Tunis. In this French possession the Italian population outnumbers the French by five to two, and there is always a good deal of angry talk proceeding on the treatment of the Italians by the French administration.

The only direction in which an expansion of territory is conceivable for Italy without a bloody and hopeless war with a major Power is in Asia Minor. Italy already wields a good deal of commercial influence in Anatolia, and, but for the resurrection of the Turkish power, under Kemal Pasha, this would have reached even more considerable proportions. Constant rumours are heard that the Fascist Government propose to take some immediate step or other to secure additional territory; and if these have any basis in fact, then Asia Minor is the most probable objective.

It is in the light of these territorial ambitions that the foreign policy of Italy is to be explained.

That policy has been directed to two ends: first, to securing an understanding with one or more of the Great Powers of Europe; and, secondly, to penetrating the Balkans in order to secure political support and economic outlets.

Albania is the natural base for any general move to obtain control of the Balkan countries, and Italian penetration has already reached an advanced stage there. Albania is of great strategical importance to Italy in that it controls the entrance to the Adriatic; moreover, it provides a military base for operations on the east of the Adriatic; and, thirdly, it has economic potentialities of which Italian capitalists are well aware. Albania would be invaluable as the granary of Italy (which does not provide enough corn for the use of her population), and as an outlet for the surplus population of Italy. Italian penetration has proceeded, under the friendly eyes of the Albanian landowners, ever since the war, and has reached its culmination in the loan recently granted and the Italo-Albanian agreement, the terms of which constitute in effect an Italian protectorate over the Balkan country.

Rumania, too, has been brought well under Italian influence

by means of a loan. The conditions prescribe that part of the loan must be spent on submarines to be purchased from Italian shipyards, while the bulk of the remainder is to be invested in mineral companies, which will thus come under the control of Italian capitalists.

Relations with the Great Powers

The orientation of Italy in the European Powers is naturally determined by her colonial ambitions, the nature of which are such as to set up a profound hostility to France. Italian expansion is directed in many cases towards areas at present dominated by France—Tunis, Asia Minor, Syria, and even Corsica and Savoy. The anti-French feeling thus induced is fostered by Great Britain, whose interests are served by such hostility among her rivals for Mediterranean hegemony.

The policy of hostility to France has been carried to extreme lengths during 1926. In the main it was a genuine hostility based on the cleavage of economic interests outlined above, and one aspect of it was the newborn friendship with Germany. But in no small measure it has been created artificially in order to foster chauvinist enthusiasm among the population of Italy so as to distract their attention from domestic evils.

The Italo-Spanish Treaty, concluded in August, gives Italy support in her Mediterranean schemes, and is a further weapon directed against France.

The Italo-German Treaty, signed at Rome on December 29, marked the formal culmination of the tendency for these two Powers to unite forces. Both are seeking the same objectives—territory for colonial development and sources of raw materials.

It is premature at the time of writing to form a final judgment as to the real significance of this move, and it will be possible to understand it only when the results of the Stresemann-Mussolini conversation are known. It is perfectly possible that the German diplomats are using this flirtation with Italy primarily as a means to securing better terms for themselves in the negotiations with France; at any rate, this is no doubt an important factor in their minds. Whether it is the dominant consideration, or whether they feel that economic and political union with Italy is the best

remedy for the losses suffered by Germany after the war, only the future will reveal. The relatively friendly reception of the treaty accorded by the French Press suggests that France does not stand to lose seriously by the deal.

Internal Affairs

The two alleged attempts on Mussolini's life in the summer of 1926, and the famous affair at Bologna during the celebrations of the fourth anniversary of the Fascist Revolution, led to a condition of hysteria in Government circles and to the passing of panic legislation.

There was, indeed, cause for anxiety. The internal economic situation was so serious that only the diversion caused by a violent foreign policy could succeed in blinding men's eyes to the facts. It is widely believed that the attempted assassinations—at any rate, that at Bologna—were publicity stunts arranged by the Fascist secret service and worked up by the Press with a view to distracting attention from the failure of the Fascist Government, and to furnishing excuses for further repression.

This followed without delay.

There came first a hideous wave of terror, unequalled even in modern Italy. Clubbings, kidnappings, burnings, pillage, and murder were carried out against all suspected of anti-Fascist leanings on a scale and to a degree of brutality that surpasses all credibility.

Then followed the famous Defence of the State Law. Under this law every form of political criticism of the Government is made an offence, punishable in the heaviest manner; the persons of the King and of the Principal Officer of State (*i.e.*, Mussolini) are protected by a special provision making plots against them punishable by death; and the same penalty is prescribed for attempts against the "independence and unity of the State." Such a term can clearly be interpreted to include any form of political activity which is unacceptable to the Government.

To administer these loosely defined laws special courts have been established on the lines of courts-martial. No juries sit with these courts, which consist exclusively of officers of the armed forces of the Crown or of the Fascist Militia.

The domestic history of Italy since last May has been marked by a continuous decline in the effective control of affairs on the part of the Fascists, by a constant worsening of economic conditions, by the increasing disunity in the ranks of the Fascist Party itself.

Superficially there appears to have been a strengthening of the Fascist grip. Both legally and by extra-legal violence the suppression of all opposition has been carried to lengths previously undreamt of. No parliamentary opposition exists; the anti-Fascist Press is silenced; opposition leaders have been murdered, imprisoned, or exiled; the trade unions have been reduced to complete impotence.

But in fact these stages in the repression of the Italian masses indicate not the strength of Fascism, but its weakness; they show the necessity for ever-increasing pressure to keep the workers in subjection, and they mark the decline in the Fascist control over men's minds.

Fascism is the organ of finance-capital and landlordism; its instrument is the middle and lower-middle classes; its objective is the subjection of the workers. The significant phenomenon which 1926 has witnessed is the final emancipation of the lower-middle classes from Fascist ideology. No longer are the small shopkeepers, the clerks, and similar social strata prepared to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the wealthy bankers and industrialists and landowners.

The consequences have been numerous and significant. In the first place, Mussolini has found it necessary to reorganise his militia, to intensify the discipline, and to bring this weapon under his personal control.

Secondly, the Fascist Party has been reconstructed so as to place all power in the hands of a few self-elected leaders. The rank and file of the party can no longer be relied upon to support capitalist interests and the extreme measures which these necessitate; they are accordingly excluded from all share in shaping the policy and administration of the party.

One serious attempt to placate the lower elements in the party was made when the extremist Farinacci (whose die-hard antics were by no means acceptable to the peace-loving middle classes)

was replaced as general secretary of the party by the moderate Turati. But this did not suffice.

Another effort to rally the support of the middle classes is seen in the militaristic policy in foreign affairs: Mussolini, seeing the defection of his supporters under the influence of economic realities, hopes to win them back on a wave of nationalist emotion.

Of the three elements in the ruling class in Italy—financiers, industrialists, and landlords—the first is now predominant in control of the Fascist Party and the Italian State.

This fact is demonstrated by the policy of deflation, which improves the stability of moneylenders and restricts the business of industrialists. In following this policy (with its inevitable consequence of unemployment and increased poverty) Mussolini has definitely yielded to the pressure of the bankers, who, in turn, are largely controlled by the financiers of New York and London. Foreign investors desire the stabilisation of the lira, in terms of which their investments have been made; but they want the stabilisation to proceed with caution, so as not to ruin the productivity and profit-earning capacity of the country in the process.

The exchange value of the lira has indeed been raised, and the demands of the investors thus met. The price has been paid by the working class. The number of unemployed and partly employed workers has risen to considerable heights, while bankruptcies are very numerous. The foreign trade balance is adverse, and exports are still falling. The poor harvest of 1926 has led to a further increase in wheat imports.

It is difficult to secure up-to-date figures of wages and cost of living, but the following tables, prepared by Professor Mortara and published in the *Manchester Guardian* of July 27, 1926, show the terrible plight to which Fascism has reduced the mass of the population:—

	Cost of living	Wages
1913-1914	100	100
First half of 1921	560	540
" " 1922	503	515
" " 1923	495	480
" " 1924	517	475
" " 1925	594	513
December 1, 1925	649	580

During 1926 the level of prices rose constantly and rapidly.

At the same time the destruction of the Italian Trade Union Movement has enabled employers to impose worse conditions in every respect, a task in which they have been aided by the Government. The law to increase the working day by one hour has been brought into universal operation. Even the tame Fascist trade unions were driven by working-class pressure to revolt against this iniquitous burden, and several strikes took place, only to be suppressed in blood and fire.

The spirit of the Italian workers is still not broken, and sporadic outbreaks in protest against Fascism still occur. The agricultural workers of Molinella put up a magnificent fight against worsened conditions, and were rewarded with a dose of Fascist repression of unparalleled brutality.

The Molinella affair is of great importance because of its reaction to the Italian working class as a whole. The General Confederation of Labour (*Confederazione Generale del Lavoro*) still exists, though its leadership is feeble and its policy supine. The terrific repression at Molinella forced the Confederation to take some action, and a collection in aid of the terrorised workers was set up under the joint auspices of a number of Labour organisations. It was rapidly intimated to the reformist leaders that this course was not approved by the Fascists, and the matter was promptly dropped by all sections except the Italian Communist Party.

In the conditions of to-day the Communist Party is the only one which can function at all. In spite of bitter persecution, the beating, imprisonment, murder, or exile of its members, the party continues its work of explaining to the workers in the factories the class character of Fascism and of rallying them on every issue where a fight is possible. It has succeeded in establishing workers' committees in all the industrial centres of the country, and these bodies are taking the lead in infusing a new spirit into working-class resistance to Fascism. Neither the old unions nor the General Confederation are being superseded, but the active elements are using their efforts to re-galvanise the former in order that they may become fitted to lead the workers in the fight against Fascism.

THE NEW BRITISH DELUSION

An American View

[At the present time the propaganda of American conditions and methods as a model for this country is in full swing. How this propaganda is viewed in America is strikingly illustrated in this article from the American liberal progressive weekly, "The New Republic," which we reproduce with acknowledgments as of interest to English readers.—ED., LABOUR MONTHLY.]

A RECENT article by Philip Kerr in the London *Nation* formulates more precisely than we have seen it formulated elsewhere a theory of American prosperity which is rapidly becoming accepted in England and is not without its counterpart in this country. This theory seems to be the outcome of a number of unofficial visits which have been made recently by British observers to a few of our large employers and bankers, of a reading of the works of Henry Ford, and, more deeply, of the disposition of those in serious trouble to grasp at panaceas which seem easier than facing unpleasant facts. The theory is, in our opinion, a dangerous delusion—all the more dangerous in that it systematises certain well-known and universally admitted facts. Englishmen who entertain it will merely postpone the amelioration of British conditions.

Mr. Kerr answers his own question, "Can we learn from America?" by the assertion that Britain can prosper by imitating the attitudes of American capital and labour toward industry and toward each other. "The root of Great Britain's economic difficulties is not the conditions created by the War, for these are passing away, but the irreconcilable conflict of idealism and conviction between capital and labour about the fundamental principles upon which industry itself should be conducted. The foundation of the prosperity of the United States is not its natural resources, though these are of great importance, but the fact that there is almost complete agreement between capital and labour as to the basic economic principles which must be followed

if the whole community is to enjoy full employment at a steadily rising standard of living."

This universal agreement consists in the acceptance of three principles, according to Mr. Kerr : first, that it is beneficial to adopt as rapidly as practical "every new scientific discovery, every new invention, every labour-saving device"; second, on the part of employers and capitalists, that the highest wages possible should be paid "which are warranted by the skill of the individual workman," and that a steadily rising standard of living should be provided to the workers so that they can consume the increasing product of industry; and third, on the part of labour, that labour will benefit most if capital earns good profits, and hence should co-operate with the employer to secure the most efficient work by every man and machine.

There are two chief difficulties with this theory: first, that it is not an accurate picture of the industrial scene in the United States; second, that it would not, even if practised, be sufficient to restore prosperity to Great Britain or to maintain it in the United States without important additions.

Anyone who had the least acquaintance with the economic history of this country before the year 1923 would see at once that the theory does not fit the facts. Let us take, for instance, the one item of wages and standards of living. All the good statistical evidence goes to show that there was no improvement in the average real wages of American wage-earners in the twenty-three years between 1896 and 1919, and that during that period real wages were sometimes below the level of 1896. While the principle of wages referred to by Mr. Kerr was during this period occasionally set forth, in primitive forms, by labour, it was not accepted by employers or anyone else except possibly politicians who, in defending the protective tariff, talked of a mythical prosperity of the working man. There was, to be sure, a generally accepted belief that standards of living should rise, but it was a corollary of this belief that they should rise by the ascent of the individual in the economic and social scale. "Opportunity" was the watchword of American meliorism.

During the War, with the rapid rise of prices, the activity of industry and the shortage in the labour market, certain readjust-

ments became at once necessary and possible. Two wage principles were urged by the more liberal-minded and practised perforce by others. One was that a drop in real wages should be prevented by increasing money wages as rapidly as the cost of living rose. This, of course, involved no improvement in standards of living and brought about for the most part only a tardy adjustment of wages to prices. The other principle was that those workers having the lower standards should be raised to a certain minimum—not much above the “minimum of subsistence.” The hesitating and partial application of these moderate principles brought an outcry from employers and many others, which sought to put the blame for the rising cost of living on high wages.

When deflation began, there was a concerted and powerful movement on the part of employers and financiers to “deflate” wages as prices fell. The justice and necessity of thus denying to labour any advance in real wages was thought by the economically ruling classes to be self-evident. It was freely predicted that prosperity could not return as long as wages and prices were “out of line.” Only a happy combination of circumstances, not any general intention on the part of employers, brought it about that in the depression period wages fell less than retail prices. One of the reasons for this result certainly was the determination of organised labour to resist wage reductions to the utmost, coupled with the determination of many employers to avoid unionisation or destroy unions already in their establishments. Where unions controlled, they were able to mitigate the wage reductions, where they did not control, the employers feared to reduce too drastically while preaching the advantage to labour of a non-union policy. It was during this deflation period that the greater part of the post-war increase of real wages occurred.

Further increases in the wage average came with the industrial revival of 1922 and 1923—a period in which stabilised prices accompanied a tightening labour market. The rise of the average in this period was chiefly a matter of the more highly skilled and unionised trades consolidating for themselves the same percentage gains over pre-war levels that had previously been won by the less skilled. Since 1923 there has been no marked increase in real wages.

We believe this jump of wages to be a real factor in our present prosperity, but we do not believe it is likely to continue indefinitely.

Organised labour, Henry Ford and a few other liberal employers genuinely believe in the economy of high wages. Organised labour does not believe, however, that high wages come automatically with improved productivity or by universal goodwill of employers. Its bitter experience has taught it otherwise. It has accepted the principle that improved productivity, invention and the rest of the modern industrial technique make higher wages *possible*—though not inevitable. It has experimented with specific co-operative agreements between trade unions and employers. But it fears with good reason that the present era of apparent goodwill is but a lull in a never-ending struggle for the division of the proceeds of industry. Most of the spokesmen of the employers who now preach the economy of high wages are simply making a virtue of a necessity. In a period of generally good profits it is easy to be generous. Since relatively high wages exist, employers like to take the credit. The test will come either when labour becomes strong enough to demand another forward jump in real wages or when another industrial depression enables employers to call for reductions.

But if Mr. Kerr's genial observations were based on reality, should we not be protected against future trouble? Hardly, because the basic conditions under which productivity can be progressively increased, and wages along with it, do not universally or automatically come into being. It was easy for Henry Ford to practise his philosophy, for the automobile industry was capable of rapid expansion to fill a new want—a want which will some day become stabilised at least to the growth of population. Has Mr. Kerr carefully examined our shoe industry, our cotton and woollen industries, our coal industry? These all show signs of illness—of illness which cannot be cured merely by technical improvements in productive processes, of illness which persists regardless of the degree of organisation of labour and its philosophy. It merely happens that the sickness of such industries does not affect our body economic as much as similar ailments in Great Britain, because of our greater and more varied resources

and the earlier stage which we occupy in their exploitation. We are rich enough and young enough to be able to ignore such things for a while; Great Britain is so no longer.

The industrial history of both nations reveals, in the long view, a rapid and careless exploitation of natural resources by the new techniques based on the physical sciences. In the earlier period of such exploitation enterprise runs wild, and perhaps can be allowed to do so without much permanent damage. In the later stages a strategy in the direction of industry for the benefit of the whole community must be devised. In case this strategy can be applied soon enough serious disaster may be avoided. The danger is that industry will become top-heavy with insoluble problems before its development is adequately controlled. We are not certain but that this is the case in England, and that it is too late for any measures except such heroic ones that they might kill the patient. We heartily approve of good industrial management, increase of productivity, high wages. But does any informed person seriously believe, for instance, that these specifics could have been successfully applied to the British coal industry without a fundamental reorganisation of ownership and control? It is just because coal management is not and cannot be efficient under present circumstances that labour feels the necessity for a revolutionary change. Hence the "class conflict" which Mr. Kerr deplures. In saying that the Socialistic philosophy of British labour is largely responsible for the plight of British industry Mr. Kerr is putting the cart before the horse. Unless American labour can over a period of years gain such influence in the control of American industry, and such wisdom in controlling it that our industrial managements are able to avoid the pits of private enterprise, our labour is likely to become equally revolutionary. Certainly the danger cannot be avoided by refusing to take seriously such projects for national efficiency as the British Labour Party has espoused.

JOSEPH DIETZGEN

By N. LENIN

[This article, which is here translated from the Russian for the first time, was written for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Dietzgen, and was published in "Pravda," No. 102 (306), on May 5, 1913.]

IT is twenty-five years since the death, in 1888, of the leather-worker Joseph Dietzgen, one of the most outstanding social democratic philosopher-writers of Germany. Joseph Dietzgen wrote the following among other works: *The Nature of Human Brain Work* (first published in 1869), *The Excursion of the Socialist in the Domain of the Theory of Knowledge*, and *The Positive Outcome of Philosophy*. The most correct valuation of Dietzgen and his place in the history of philosophy and the working-class movement has been given already by Marx, in a letter to Kugelmann on December 5, 1868:—

"Already long ago," wrote Marx, "Dietzgen sent me an extract from his manuscript *The Faculties of Thinking*, which, in spite of some confusion in conceptions and the too frequent repetitions, contains in itself many excellent thoughts, surprising for a worker to have reached by his independent thinking."

The significance of Dietzgen is the independent attainment by a worker to dialectical materialism, *i.e.*, to the philosophy of Marx. A very valuable sidelight on the characteristics of the worker Dietzgen is that he did not claim to be the founder of the school.

Joseph Dietzgen spoke of Marx as the head of the school already in 1873, when only a few understood Marx. Dietzgen emphasised that Marx and Engels "had their own philosophical school." And in 1886, long after the appearance of Engel's *Anti-Dühring*, one of the principal philosophical works of Marxism, Dietzgen wrote about Marx and Engels as "the recognised founders" of the school.

This is necessary to bear in mind, in order to estimate all kinds of followers of bourgeois philosophy, *i.e.*, idealism and agnosticism (including also Machism), who attempt to seize on this "some confusion" of Dietzgen. Dietzgen would himself have ridiculed and driven away such admirers.

In order to reach understanding, workers must read Dietzgen ; but they must not forget for a minute that he is not always giving the right interpretation of the teaching of Marx and Engels, from whom alone one can learn philosophy.

Dietzgen wrote in an epoch of shallow and insipid materialism. Therefore Dietzgen laid special stress upon the historical transformations of materialism, on the *dialectical* character of materialism, that is, on the necessity to view things from the standpoint of development, to understand the relativity of all human knowledge, to understand the manifold relations and inter-relations of all phenomena of the world and to carry physical evolutionary materialism forward to the materialist conception of history.

Basing himself on the relativity of human knowledge, Dietzgen often falls into confusion by giving incorrect concessions to idealism and agnosticism. Idealism in philosophy is more or less a crafty defence of clericalism, a doctrine which puts faith higher than science, or on a level with science, or which in general allots a place to faith. Agnosticism (from the Greek *a*—negative—and *gnosis*—knowledge) is a vacillation between materialism and idealism, *i.e.*, in practice vacillation between materialist science and clericalism. To the agnostics belong the followers of Kant (Kantians), of Hume (the positivists, realists and others) and present-day "Machists." Therefore, some of the most reactionary bourgeois philosophers, notorious princes of darkness and defenders of clericalism, have tried to exploit the mistakes of Dietzgen.

But in general, and as a whole, Dietzgen is a materialist. Dietzgen is an enemy of clericalism and agnosticism. "With the previous materialists," wrote Dietzgen, "we have only this in common: that we recognise matter as antecedent or as a primary notion." The "only" is the essence of philosophical materialism.

"The essence of the materialist theory of knowledge," wrote Dietzgen, "is the recognition that the human organ of knowledge is not itself a source of any metaphysical light, but that it is a piece of nature reflecting other pieces of nature." This is the materialist theory of the *reflection* in man's consciousness of the ever-moving and changing matter, that is, the theory which evokes hatred and terror, calumny and distortion, from all official professorial philosophy. And with what a deep passion of a true revolutionary

did he whip and brand the "certificated lackeys of clericalism," professors, idealists, realists, &c. "Of all parties"—Dietzgen wrote rightly of philosophical "parties," *i.e.*, of materialism and idealism—"the most vile is the party of the centre."

To this "vile party" belong the editorial board of *Luch* and Mr. S. Semkovsky (*Luch*, No. 92). The editorial board in this issue printed an article of Mr. Semkovsky on Dietzgen with the following note of reservation: "We do not share the general philosophical point of view," but the exposition of Dietzgen is "correct and clear."

This is a glaring untruth. Mr. Semkovsky shamelessly mutilated and distorted Dietzgen by using just his "confusion" and completely suppressed Marx's valuation of Dietzgen. Meanwhile even Plechanoff, the most widely versed Socialist in the philosophy of Marxism, and the best Marxists in Europe have completely recognised this valuation.

Mr. Semkovsky distorts both philosophical materialism and Dietzgen. He speaks nonsense both on the question of "one or two worlds" (as if this were the "fundamental question"!) Really you should study a little, dear sir, and read at least Engels' *Feuerbach*) and on the question of the world and phenomena (Dietzgen is said to have reduced the real world only to phenomena, this is a clerical and professorial calumny of Dietzgen).

It is impossible to recount all the distortions of Mr. Semkovsky. Let the workers, who are interested in Marxism, know that the editorial board of *Luch* is an alliance of liquidators of Marxism. Some liquidate the illegality, *i.e.*, the party of the proletariat (Mayevsky, Sedoff, F. D., &c.), others the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat (Potressoff, Koltsoff and others), others the philosophical materialism of Marx (Mr. Semkovsky and Co.), others again the internationalism of proletarian Socialism (members of the Bund, Kossovsky, Medem and others—supporters of the so-called "cultural national autonomy"), others the economic theory of Marx (Mr. Maslov with his theory of rent and a "new sociology"), &c., &c.

The glaring distortion of Marxism by Mr. Semkovsky and Co. is only one activity of this literary "League of Liquidators."

CROW'S NEST PASS

By SCOTT NEARING

MANY a British miner has left the Old Country during the past six years and made his way into the coal-fields of Canada. The stories of wealth and prosperity in the New World were alluring. The mines were slack at home, so they made the break by thousands and settled in the Canadian fields.

Crow's Nest Pass is one of the Canadian coal-fields—located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, almost down to the United States boundary line. The pass is a long, narrow valley that runs from east to west, winding among the great hills that tower three or four thousand feet above the valley bottom.

Part of the hill-slopes are forested. Elsewhere they consist of bare rock, sheer and stark.

Folded under these hills there are coal veins from nine to twenty feet in thickness. At the bottom of the folds the veins lie horizontal, but on the sides of the folds they are often inclined at an angle of from 32 to 45 degrees.

Coal mines are scattered at intervals of two or three miles along the valley. Some of the older mines have already been worked out and abandoned. Others are down as much as six thousand feet. The mines have been in operation only about thirty years, but with the vast coal deposits in Alberta it does not pay to work them too carefully.

About six thousand miners are at work in the valley—that is, they are at work when they are wanted, which, at the moment, is about twice a week. There has been a slacking off in the demand for Crow's Nest coal. The Canadian Pacific is the chief customer, but the railroad does only a small business in this sparsely settled province, and the capacity of the mines is far in excess of the Canadian Pacific needs. So the miners wonder and hope.

The change to water-power is having its effect. Even the mines themselves are installing hydro-electric equipment. The movement was begun in 1923, and it is gaining headway. Free water is cheaper than even home-made coal.

In the "old days" (before 1919) when the unions were strong, there was a minimum wage, and the hours and working conditions were among the most favourable to be met with anywhere in North America, but there was a long strike in that year; the unions lost out, and they have been losing ever since.

A minimum wage rate is still in existence, but the employers pay it only when they feel that the contract miners have "earned" it. In some of the workings, where the digging is hard, it is difficult to make the minimum.

Since the strike of 1919 the miners in the Crow's Nest have suffered one wage cut after another. During recent years there have been two cuts. One followed the 1924 strike. The other caused a lock-out in 1925. The two cuts totalled between 40 and 45 per cent.

Until 1919 the miners were organised under the United Mine Workers of America. In that year, however, many of them joined the One Big Union. At the present time there are five separate unions contending for the support of the workers. No one of the organisations is really strong, and in the east end of the Pass, in the five leading mines, the companies have succeeded in making a separate agreement for each mine. These agreements are not made with the union, but with the "employees" of that particular company.

These local unions are not "company unions" in the strict sense of the word, but one of the agreements, which I have before me, reads: "Contract entered into between the West Canadian Collieries, Ltd., and the employees of Greenhill Mine (or their association)." The first clause, headed "Management of Mine," is as follows: "The right to hire and discharge, the management of the mine and the direction of the working forces are vested exclusively in the company, and the employees (or their association) shall not abridge this right." The contract runs for three years from April 7, 1925.

Wage rates are fixed under the contract, but the minimum wages are being paid to contract miners only in case the company is satisfied that the men have done "a fair day's work." The workers have no means of enforcing the contract when it is broken, as their union is a strictly local one, officered entirely by local men.

Last year a Commission appointed by the Provincial Government made a study of the cost of living in the Pass, and came to the conclusion that it required \$1,800 to provide a minimum living for a man, wife, and three children. During that same year the average earnings of the men were about \$900. Recently there have been a number of cases where miners have been forced to move because of their inability to get enough work to support their families. Investigations of these cases indicate that the families of these miners were from \$400 to \$1,100 in debt—to the landlord, the storekeepers, &c.

Men are all well known through the Pass. The black list is in full bloom. The moment a man gets a reputation as an agitator he is doomed as far as making a living in the mines is concerned, and there are no other industries in the neighbourhood that provide work that the miners are able to do.

"Are there members of the Communist Party of Canada in the Pass?" I asked again and again.

The answers were always the same: "Not if they get caught at it!" "Not a man who knows when he is well off!" "Find them if you can!" "Yes, in clink with Kid Burns!" The answers came bitterly as a rule, but the men have no alternative and no defence. They are wholly at the mercy of the mineowners.

Working conditions are bad in many cases. The coal is full of gas. In some workings this gas accumulates so rapidly that the workings become dangerous within a very short time. There have been two explosions in the Hillcrest Mine. One occurred in June, 1914. There were 235 men in the mine at the time; 189 were killed, and of these 187 were buried in a special cemetery opened for the purpose. This graveyard stands on the hill just below the mine as a grim reminder.

The second explosion came on September 19, 1926. By lucky chance it occurred at ten o'clock in the evening, just before the night-shift went down. There were two men in the mine at the time. One of them was smothered by gas; the other had his head blown off.

The force of this latter explosion was so terrific that it crushed in the cement wall of a hoisting room which stood about 100 feet from the entrance to the mine.

There are few Labour papers taken in the Pass. No Labour education is being carried on by the unions. The children grow up anyway—spending their time out of school roaming through the town or over the hills. Several of the churches are trying to do something toward the organisation of the boys. Apparently nothing is being done for the girls. When they reach the age of sixteen or seventeen, they drift off into some other part of the country looking for work. The girls go into restaurants and factories. The boys try for anything outside of the mines.

A sullen, helpless, resentful, inert mass of workers being slowly worn down and crushed by the "system"—that is the net impression of Crow's Nest Pass.

Perhaps the nature of the forces at work is best symbolised by the story of what happened on the night of April 19, 1903.

In the eastern end of the Pass stands the Turtle, four thousand feet of towering grey rocks. When the mines were first opened, one mine was located near this mountain, and the mine camp nestled against its base. The peak of the mountain was divided into two by a great cleft, where a sulphur dyke had been weathered away. The frosts were coming out of the ground in April, 1903, and at three o'clock on the morning of the 19th, without a sound of warning, the section of the Turtle that overhung the little mining camp of Frank broke from the mountain, slipping and crashing, burying camp, road and railroad and throwing a spray of huge rocks a mile and a quarter across the valley. That pile of rocks still lies where it fell. When the new road was run through, the workmen found some bones, which were duly buried in a respectable cemetery. As for the mining camp, with its 190 workers, and a lumber camp which had just been set up below it, they are still buried under the thousands of tons of debris that blanket the valley.

The miners are not vanquished. Far from it. Sooner or later they will stage a come-back. The unions will be reorganised and reaffiliated. The lost wages and working conditions will be regained. In the meantime, however, they lie crushed under an economic system that cannot pay them a living because there is too much coal (and too much of the other necessities of life) being produced by means of the modern machine industry.

The World of Labour

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF UNEMPLOYED IN GERMANY

THE First National Congress of Unemployed Workers in Germany opened in Berlin on December 1. The delegates numbered 429, of whom 299 were organised in the General Federation of Trade Unions, 107 were not industrially organised and the rest were members of the Christian and independent Trade Unions. Each delegate represented from 1,000 to 3,000 workers.

The opening address reviewed the general position of unemployment in the principal countries, and dealt in particular with unemployment in Germany. Of the post-war industrial crises in Germany the present had given rise to most unemployment, and the development of the process of rationalisation intensified the problem of unemployment and the poverty of the working class.

In spite of its promise to "create work" the rationalisation of German industry had resulted in longer hours for those employed and an increase in the number of workless. At the present time the number of those actually unemployed was well over two millions, and added to this more than a million workers were on short time to such an extent that they might be considered as unemployed.

The immediate demands of the unemployed must, therefore, include the establishment of the eight-hour day and the forty-two-hour week. Such demands necessitated a united front and a common fight of workers, both employed and unemployed, and a resolution to this effect was carried unanimously.

Speaker after speaker emphasised the fact that the demands of the unemployed could not be attained without a united struggle of all working-class organisations, and the following resolution was passed by the Congress :—

In recognition of the necessity for Trade Union organisation, the Congress demands of the General Federation of Trade Unions that its affiliated Trade Unions accept for membership unorganised unemployed workers paying an entrance fee of 10 pfennings and weekly contributions of the same amount.

The Social Democratic fraction, numbering thirty-three, issued a statement condemning the class-collaboration policy of their leaders in the National and State parliaments, and appealing to all Social Democrats in the country to agitate for the return to a fighting working-class policy.

The following day, *Vorwärts*, the organ of the Social Democratic Party, contained an article characterising the Unemployed Congress as a "Communist Theatre," and accusing the Communists of using the unemployed as "political capital" and mocking at their misery.

The same day the Social Democratic fraction issued an indignant protest against this statement, pointing out that the Congress was the expression and outbreak of the misery of the unemployed, of whatever party, and an effort in the struggle to satisfy their demands, "which, in our opinion, have not been energetically enough fought for by our parliamentary representatives of the Social Democratic Party."

Greetings were sent to the functionaries of the Congress of Workers, to take place in Berlin a few days later, and, as the result of a deputation being sent, the delegates to the Unemployed Congress were enrolled as delegates to the Workers' Congress with a deliberative voice.

Delegations from the Congress to the General Federation of Trade Unions and to the Minister of Labour received neither satisfaction nor recognition, but in spite of this the Congress concluded with an appeal for a united front and a common fight of employed and unemployed workers.

THE REVOLUTIONARY STUDENTS' MOVEMENT IN JAPAN

DURING the last five or six years, largely under the influence of Marxian and Leninist thought, a strong revolutionary movement has grown up among Japanese students.

In 1920 May Day Demonstrations were organised for the first time, and shortly afterwards the Federation of Japanese Students was formed, supported mostly by students—but this organisation was suppressed by the Government. The next year a Communist Group was formed in the Waseda University, in Tokio. This also was suppressed, but the movement in the university continued to develop, and in 1923 there occurred the famous trial of the Communist Professor of Economics at Waseda, Manabu Sano. The movement had already spread to the other colleges, and on November 7, 1922, the Students' Federation was started. By 1924, when the name of the organisation had been changed to the Japanese Students' Federation of Social Science, they had over fifty branches in the colleges and a membership of over 2,000. The Students' Federation is Communist in outlook and aims at spreading a knowledge of Marxian theory and economics among the young workers and university students.

The student organisations have met with constant persecution on the part of the Government, and in the spring of 1926 the arrest of forty-two students in the universities of Tokio and Kyoto aroused great excitement in Japan.

The growth of the revolutionary students' movement has helped to strengthen the Left Wing trade unions, which are increasing their membership more rapidly than the Conservative unions. In 1925 the membership of the National Council of Trade Unions (the organisation of the Left Wing unions) had a membership of 18,700, which increased to 38,000 in 1926. The General Confederation of Labour, on the other hand, has increased from 23,000 in 1925 to 43,000 in 1926. The Peasants' Union, which is the most important of the Left Wing unions, has developed more rapidly than any other union, and now has 961 branches and a membership of 73,000.

BOOK REVIEW

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARXIAN ANALYSIS

Selected Essays. By Karl Marx. (Translated by H. J. Stenning.) Published by Leonard Parsons, London.

THE book contains seven essays, written by Karl Marx between the years 1843 and 1850, the majority of them, however, in the years 1845-46. They deal with the following subjects: Hegelian Philosophy of Law, Jewish question, the State and Social Reform, Democracy and Communism, Proudhon, French Materialism, the English Revolution.

The essays exhibit Marx's advance from the standpoint of humanitarianism, on which he placed himself after leaving the university (1841), to that of socialism based on the materialist conception of history, which he reached in 1844-45, and to which he gave fairly complete expression in *Misery of Philosophy* (1847) and the *Communist Manifesto* (1848).

The earliest and least socialist essay is that on the *Jewish Question*. It was written in 1843 in the form of a review of a book dealing with Jewish emancipation or granting political rights to the Jews in Germany. Here we see Marx as a critical humanitarian, believing that man in the abstract is free from all religious and racial prejudices and economic selfishness and striving for social righteousness. The work of the philosopher and true statesman is to make society approach to the ideal man. The greatest obstacle in the way to the ideal is commercialism, or the economic system of selfishness which pervades present-day bourgeois society. Since, however, the Jewry is the embodiment of bourgeois commercialism, the whole question of Jewish emancipation resolves itself into the question of emancipating society from commercialism. In this essay we catch the first glimpse of Marx's progress from Radical politics to social economics. The problem of political rights for a section of the community is turned into the greatest economic problem of society.

The second essay in point of time and importance is that on *Hegelian Philosophy of Law* (1844). Marx writes already as a social revolutionary who attempts to get a clear notion of the classes which compose bourgeois society, and the part they play in it. Although the essay deals with Germany and with the meaning which Hegelian philosophy has for that country, it is applicable to society in general. We find in that essay, for the first time, the term proletariat and, moreover, the idea of the revolutionary rôle of the proletariat. Marx has got far beyond the humanitarian point of view which "declares man to be the supreme being of mankind." He attains to the conviction that as soon as the proletariat is inspired with the revolutionary philosophy, which is nothing else but the theoretic expression of its movements and struggles, it will bring about its own emancipation and at the same time the emancipation of the whole society from every kind of serfdom.

In the third essay, the *State and Social Reform* (1845), Marx is quite free from all deification of the State, which, one would have supposed, he might have adhered to as a follower of Hegel. The essay arose from a criticism of a Prussian Radical who asked for nothing less than that the State should abolish

pauperism by means of more rational administration. Marx tells him plainly no State can do that, since it does not look for the cause of social evils in society, except either in the inferior morality of the poor or of the rich, that is, either in the laziness of the poor or in the greed of the rich. Even the Radical politicians see the cause of poverty not in the arrangements of society, but in a specific form of the State, which they aim at replacing by another form. Moreover, even the revolutionary who strives for a violent overthrow of the State is no better than they, since his act would not affect the arrangements of society. A political revolution is only important in so far as it is turned into an instrument for dissolving the old conditions of society. The political revolution or the overthrow of a form of government is but the necessary preliminary to the introduction of socialism. To ask a bourgeois government or an oligarchic State to abolish poverty is really to ask it to abolish itself and the old order of society into the bargain, which is an absurd demand.

The essay on democracy and communism, which is headed *Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality* (1846), deals trenchantly with the difference between political democracy and economic communist thinking. This is one of the most important and topical essays in the book. It is a fine piece of polemical writing against the middle-class democrat and republican. Karl Heinzen, who severely reproaches the Communists with promoting reaction by fighting the Liberals and democrats, by emphasising the precedence of economics over politics, by expatiating on the economic transformation of society as against political democracy and republicanism. Heinzen argues that "the injustice in the property relations" is only maintained by regal or oligarchic force; hence, given democratic institutions, economic injustice will disappear. To these reasonings Marx replies that "the injustice in the present property relations" does not proceed from political force, but, on the contrary, the modern arrangements of production, division of labour, free competition, concentration, &c., are the sources of the present political arrangements; the political rule of the bourgeoisie proceeds from those relations of production which are proclaimed by bourgeois economists to be necessary and eternal laws. The existing bourgeois property relations are maintained by the agencies of State power, police and military, which the bourgeoisie has organised for the protection of its property relations. "The property question, according to the successive stages in the development of industry, has always been the vital question of a particular class. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the point at issue was the abolition of feudal property relations, the property question was the vital question of the middle class. In the nineteenth century, when the point at issue is the abolition of bourgeois property relations, the property question is a life question for the working class." The essay is a long one, containing a good deal of history and politics; it may be regarded as a forerunner of the "Communist Manifesto."

The remarks on Proudhon are taken from Marx-Engel's book against the German Liberal writers, the three brothers Bauer. The title of the book is *Holy Family* (1845). In the chapter on Proudhon we see the interpretation which Marx gives to Hegelian dialectics. Without some knowledge of this, the essay on Proudhon will be difficult reading. In the introduction to my booklet, *Karl Marx: his Life and Work*, I made an attempt at popularising it.

Most of the sixth essay on *French Materialism* (1845) I translated some years ago for the LABOUR MONTHLY. It shows Marx as an historian of philosophy, and it can only be appreciated by students of philosophy.

The last essay on the *English Revolution* is a review of Guizot's pamphlet, *Pourquoi la révolution d'Angleterre a-t-elle réussi* (1850). Guizot was a French statesman of much experience and learning. As a young man he understood the rôle of the classes in the French Revolution, but later on he fell back on the political and even religious interpretations of history. Indeed, to the question, why the English Revolution was more successful than the French Revolution, Guizot gives the answer, first, the English Revolution bore a thoroughly religious character and therefore broke in no way with the traditions of the past ; secondly, the English Revolution did not wear a destructive but a constructive aspect, Parliament defending the old laws against the encroachments of the Crown ; thirdly, the victorious revolution concentrated its energies on stabilising the Parliamentary regime, and promoting trade.

Marx makes short work of Guizot's explanations. Guizot fails to see that the free thought of the French Revolution was imported to France from England. Locke, Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke were the masters of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot. With regard to the second point, Guizot forgets that at the outset the French Revolution was quite as conservative as the English ; the third estate demanded the revival of the Estates General which had been extinct since Henry IV and Louis XIII. And as the third point, the concentration on Parliamentary government and the promotion of trade and commerce, was the inevitable consequence of the Revolution which arose not from a struggle between the Crown and the commercial class for political privileges, but from the Stuarts interfering with the free development of trade and commerce ; the concentration on Parliamentary government meant nothing else than the subjection of the Crown to the interests of trade and commerce. For the rest, the essay must be read as it was written by Marx, who really explains the problem why the English Revolution was more homogeneous and suffered less from internecine struggles than the French Revolution. The English Revolution was borne by the continuous alliance of the middle class with the largest section of the great landowners, "an alliance that essentially distinguishes the English Revolution from the French Revolution, which destroyed large landed property by parcelling out the soil. The English class of large landowners, which had originated under Henry VIII, unlike the French feudal landowners, did not find itself in conflict, but rather in harmony, with the material conditions of life of the bourgeoisie. It placed at the disposal of the middle class the necessary population to carry on manufactures and it was able to develop agriculture to a degree which corresponded to the state of industry and commerce. Hence its common interests with the middle class, hence its alliance with the latter."

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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
W.C.1*

W13675

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

March, 1927

Number 3

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Published at
162 Buckingham Palace Road
London
S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : SLOANE 5412.

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One year 8/- or \$2.00 Six months 4/- or \$1.00

American Subscription Representative :—Philip Novick, 2710 Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

Advertisement Rates on application.

Volume VIII (January to December, 1926) is now ready and can be supplied for 10s. 6d. post free, or these numbers can be bound and returned post free for 4s. 6d.

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NOTES of the MONTH

*New Capitalist Offensive — Preparations — Peace Offensive —
Military Acts—Single Imperialist Policy—Imperialism versus
Nationalism—Sham Offers—Policy of Force—Responsi-
bilities—Foreign Office Touts—Smoothing Way for
War — “ Left ” Imperialism — Labour and
China, 1924, 1925-1926 — Mediation
and Neutrality—Pacifism—Working
Class Policy—The Chinese Re-
volution—Unity with the
Chinese Revolution.*

THE Conservative Government is calculating in 1927 to repeat on a world scale the victory which it achieved in the British home field in 1926. With the aid of the favouring international situation, with the partial success of the Locarno policy in Europe, and of the encirclement of the Soviet Union, while the United States is primarily concerned in its own imperialistic designs in Central America and seeming prepared to leave British Imperialism a free hand in its campaign, and while the resistance of the workers at home is believed to be broken for the time being by the victory of the previous year and by the abject servility and industrial peace propaganda of the reformist leadership, British capitalism hopes to be able to strike a smashing blow at the forces of liberation all over the world, directly at the Chinese struggle for freedom, the foremost representative of the colonial peoples, and indirectly—perhaps also directly—at the Soviet Union, the leader of the workers, of all the oppressed masses and of the fight for Socialism all over the world. The struggle that hangs over 1927 threatens to eclipse even the struggle of 1926. And it is preceded by the same ominous signs. As in 1926, so in 1927 the Government precedes its attack by a diplomatic peace offensive in words. As in 1926, so in 1927 the Government combines its diplomatic peace offensive in words with the most visible war preparations in deeds. And as in 1926, so in 1927 the official Labour movement meets the Government's open offensive with the same professions of trust in the

Government's words of peace, with the same open co-operation with the Government by the Right Wing and the same verbal and barren passive opposition on the part of the reformist Left, with the same confusing of the issues and attempts to chloroform the action of the workers in the face of the threatened fight. The vigorous campaign begun by the revolutionary Left (which has already shown the strength of its agitation in the compelling of the Parliamentary Labour Party to adopt an attitude of partial opposition) needs all the strength that can be summoned behind it to enable the British working class to meet and counter this new and more dangerous capitalist offensive of 1927.

THE offensive of 1927 is the sequel of the campaign of 1926. Already at Locarno in 1925, in the Communist trials and in the coal subsidy the preparations were laid. At the time Locarno was treated by the Labour Party as a "stage to peace," and acclaimed by the Second International as "a partial success in the fight of the working class against methods of violence." The actual meaning of Locarno should now be beginning to be clearer. The Conservative Minister's statement at the time that it represented "the solidarity of Christian civilisation" against "the most sinister growth that has arisen in European history" should now be less mysterious; the reported joke of Briand and Chamberlain that they had founded the "Fourth International" to counter the Third should now be clear enough. It is obvious to all to-day that Britain counts on having squared France, Germany, and Italy, and by a series of *coups d'état* established its influence in all the Border States so as to be able to bring a direct menace to bear on the Soviet Union. In this the reformist leadership and the Second International have helped by their support of the Pact, and by their campaign of incitement to intervention against the Soviet Union (the Kautsky memorandum). In the same way the defeat of the working class at home was a no less necessary part of preparation: and here again the reformist leadership has assisted, not only by their direct betrayal of the struggle last year, but by their inculcation of the spirit of defeat and impotence and the impossibility of further struggle thereafter and at the present time.

ALTHOUGH Baldwin's "Peace In Our Time" speech in the spring of 1925, which was hailed by the Labour Party as a "wonderful appeal" and the beginning of a "new spirit," was only the prelude and diplomatic preparation of the attack that culminated in Red Friday; although the Samuel Report in 1926, which was again hailed by the Labour leaders as an epoch-making document and the beginning of a new era in industry, was only the prelude and diplomatic preparation of the attack that came in May; yet once again in 1927 the Chamberlain Christmas Memorandum and January offer to the Chinese Nationalist Government is acclaimed by the official Labour Movement as a herald of a new spirit, the triumph of peace and conciliation, "cannot be sufficiently admired and approved" (Labour Party Executive Manifesto, quoting Vander-velde), "sagacious and tolerant . . . plainly the right course" (Brailsford), "admirable . . . admirable . . . excellent" (MacDonald), and the rest of it. Once again the policy of Conservative Imperialism on the eve of its offensive has been held up by this "Labour" opposition for the admiration of the workers.

IT was only when the accompanying movement of ships, troops, and guns, which had in one form or another been going on for months, became so blatant and obvious, and the consequent working-class agitation so insistent that it could not be denied, it was only then that a change of front was adopted, simple-hearted bewilderment was expressed at the "contradiction" of the Government's policy and the theory was evolved that the Government was pursuing two conflicting policies, and that the admirable policy of the Foreign Office was being interfered with by the jingo policy of the War Office. "Which is the true policy of the Government?" asked the troubled *Daily Herald* leader-writer. "I sniff," declared the sharp-nosed MacDonald, "in these communiqués of military preparations an air quite different from that of the Foreign Office communiqués." Yet even so it was not the military measures that were complained of, but only the excessive and over-conspicuous manner of them. The National Joint Council, in its telegram to Chen, "deplores the flaunted military demonstrations . . . likely to thwart the policy of

negotiation and amicable settlement which our Foreign Office appeared to be pursuing." So the hypocrisy is maintained to the end, to the very edge of war.

YET never was any policy so obviously single and uncontradictory in all essentials as the policy of British Imperialism in China. There may be differences and controversies in tactics, as in all wars and class struggles, differences of endeavouring to trick and break up the enemies' ranks by bogus offers of compromise, or to smash them outright by superior strength, differences dependent on the situation and on the grouping of forces in the enemy's camp. But the policy, the war aim, remains obviously one and the same throughout—to maintain the British Imperialist hold on the Chinese masses by every possible means, to maintain the exploiters' stranglehold through whatever political mechanism can guarantee secure functioning and secure dividends. Hitherto this process has required an elaborate military despotic apparatus—foreign law courts, foreign garrisons, foreign enclosures and supra-legal rights, foreign warships, guns and troops for bullying purposes, foreign punitive expeditions, massacres and atrocities at regular intervals, and foreign-subsidised war lords to repress popular movements and prevent the emergence of national consciousness. But if the same purposes can be achieved more cheaply through the recognition of a "sane" Nationalism, whether through a reactionary single ruler of the type of Yuan Shih Kai, or through the upper-class administration of a foreign-enslaved "republic," they will be prepared to do so and even gradually to remove the extraordinary military and supra-legal buttresses, in proportion as the position is seen to be secure without them, that is, as the extraction of dividends and sweating and squeezing of the people is securely protected under the "national" administration.

BUT with a genuine Nationalism, with a Nationalism based on the masses, on the workers and peasants, with what they call a "bolshevistic" Nationalism, Imperialism can never make peace: the only relationship of Imperialism to genuine Chinese Nationalism is war, open or concealed. And,

therefore, because they suspect that the Chinese Nationalism with which they have to deal, the Nationalism of the Kuomintang, of Canton, of Sun Yat Sen, the Nationalism which has swept over half China and whose people's armies are received everywhere by the masses as their deliverers, is a genuine popular Nationalism, they fear and suspect and hate it, and, even at the same time as they send their polite smooth-spoken emissaries and spurious offers in the hope of drawing off the Right Wing upper-class elements, they send their warships and their troops for the real fight.

BUT in fact the British offer is not even the most limited pretence of an offer of formal national rights. The actual text is so hollow and threadbare that it is amazing that the Foreign Office and its Conservative-Liberal-Labour spokesmen have been able to get away with the myth that it offers the essence of the national demands or even meets the Nationalists "half-way." None of the British extraordinary rights and privileges is in reality surrendered; the essence of all is jealously maintained. The two outstanding types of question may be taken: the concessions and extra-territoriality. There is no offer to abandon the concessions. Instead it is proposed that they should be administered by joint Chinese-British authorities, and it is pointed out that this does not apply to Shanghai. What is the effect of this? The offer applies to two concessions of importance, Hankow and Tientsin. Of these the latter is in the territories of the foreign-subsidised Chang, so that this part of the offer is only a gift to the enemies of the Nationalists. The other is in the hands of the Nationalists already. Thus the "generous offer" amounts in practice to the cool proposal that the Nationalists should hand back the concession which they have won, and at present control alone, to be jointly controlled with the British. If this is Mr. Chamberlain's idea of "generosity," it is fortunate that he did not decide to be exacting. With regard to extra-territoriality, it is not even proposed to abolish the British law courts. It is suggested that in civil and commercial cases, where a Chinese is the defendant, the Chinese law courts may be recognised which apply the modern type of civil and commercial code. And that is all. This is another true bagman's "bargain." And this is the

sort of stuff that is hawked round for propaganda purposes in England as "the limit of concession," "generous recognition of Chinese Nationalism" and the rest of it, and accepted as such by the Labour shoddy-merchants.

THE fact that British Imperialism is not even prepared, despite all its loudly-boomed policy of conciliation and recognition of "reasonable" national demands, to grant even the barest appearance of formal national rights shows how completely the real weight of the policy lies in the guns, with the diplomacy as a manœuvring adjunct and conscious sham. British Imperialism has shown by this how completely it is hostile to Chinese Nationalism, how completely it is conscious that the iniquitous privileges and monopolies, shameless robberies and exactions of its existing regime in China will not be able to maintain themselves under any healthy Nationalist rule where there is the slightest possibility of expression of the popular will, but can only be maintained as they have been maintained for the past three-quarters of a century, by bloody violence. And the British reformist Labour leaders, by their support of the decoy policy of Chamberlain, which has not even one-tenth of the plausibility of the Samuel Report sham, by their crying up the pacific character of this policy, lulling the workers, throwing doubts on Chinese Nationalism as the only obstacle to peace, fulsome praise of every British diplomatist, venomous references to every Chinese leader and above all to the Chinese workers, and endeavour actually to damp down and suppress independent agitation in Britain, have not only made themselves the adjuncts and abettors of the Foreign Office and of Conservatism, but have in fact made themselves the adjuncts and smoothers of the way of the policy of bloody violence.

WHATEVER lives are lost in China through the sending of the British troops (in addition to the tens of thousands of Chinese already killed by British guns), whatever lives Chinese or British are lost, will lie at the door of every Labour leader and journalist, Right or "Left," who has endorsed the Chamberlain Memorandum, who has

given his guarantee of the pacific character of British policy and who has sought to lull the necessary agitation in Britain until after the troops had got safely away. On January 21, five days after the decisive military conferences of the heads of the forces and the Imperial General Staff and the Cabinet decisions, when the marines were already embarking at Portsmouth and the cruisers and troopships were under orders, MacDonald took on himself to declare to the readers of the *Daily Herald*, that is, directly to the Labour Movement: "It may be assumed that there is no intention whatever of any Western or foreign Eastern Power fighting the Canton army. It is not there the danger lies." Thus at the very same time as British Imperialism is letting loose all the instruments of war and death against the Chinese masses, the leader of the British Labour Movement is engaged in giving fictitious paper "guarantees" to the British workers that all is well and there is no danger. Only when the troops have been safely got away, then come the fictitious paper "protests," the "disillusionment" and the rest of the ancient and ugly game, and even so with safeguarding clauses that the decision must rest with the Government, that British lives must be protected, that "if war comes," "we" must see it through, and the rest of it. Thus the rôle of reformism in relation to imperialism and war is played over and over again.

IT is not only a question of the Right Wing leaders who, like MacDonald and Thomas, are obviously nothing but Foreign Office touts, receiving their daily instructions from official headquarters, and repeating them like gramophones—all the time with a more or less anxious eye (more, in the case of MacDonald, less, in the case of Thomas) on how the movement will take it. The official Labour leadership has in the present crisis followed the Foreign Office with such slavish closeness as to raise something near revolt in their following. They did not even profess to recognise the claims of Chinese Nationalism and Canton until the Foreign Office gave the cue. It was on December 3 that Lampson arrived in China and proclaimed the "new" policy. On December 4 Lloyd George came out with his Bradford speech. On December 5 the *Observer* rang in the new regime with noisy peals: "No

Gunboat Policy "; " the southern armies embody the idea of real national unity and sovereignty "; " probably a sweeping majority of the whole population is already on their side "; " there is no way out but conciliatory compromise with the Chinese people." And then at last on December 7 MacDonald gave his interview on New China to the *Daily Herald*: " The time has come when the Powers ought frankly to recognise that a New China has been born "; " the Canton Government has reached a point when we can recognise it." Has reached a point ? When " we " can recognise it ? And why not earlier ? Why not in 1924, when " we " sent gunboats instead to Canton ? Why not in 1925, when the Second International was warning the Chinese against the dangers of " Asiatic Nationalism " ? In what sense had the Kuomintang and Canton changed in December, 1926, that the justice of their claims could suddenly be discovered ? In one sense only. Their guns had reached the Yang-Tse. Like a true pacifist, MacDonald as a faithful pupil of the Foreign Office can always discover the justice of claims—as soon as they are backed by guns. (Indians, who suffered from the knout of MacDonald in 1924, will note the point.)

WHAT has followed ? A consistent praising of Conservative Imperialist diplomacy. A consistent attack on the Chinese mass struggle. " The Canton Government is in a truculent mood." " A mere scuttle " is out of the question. During negotiations " ordinary precautions for safety must be taken." " Anti-British hatred." " What is any Government to do under those circumstances ? " " Is the jackboot to be applied to us alone ? " " Does the Canton Government want an amicable settlement ? " " If you cannot control mobs, no efforts of ours can prevent trouble." No wonder that the Imperialist *Daily Telegraph's* correspondent in Peking was able to report that MacDonald's efforts " earn approbation here," or that their leader writer could declare: " We are able to quote Mr. MacDonald with satisfaction." Even when the pressure of the movement compelled the demand for the withdrawal of troops, how do we find it expressed ? " All that his honourable friends who had acted with him had done was to doubt whether as a matter of

fact they had increased the risk or on the other hand increased the security of our people in Shanghai." There is no question of the Chinese millions at issue; there is no question of the crime of sending guns and troops against the Chinese masses, who are seeking nothing but their own freedom; all this would be nothing in the scale if "the security of our people in Shanghai" (numbering 9,300) were really increased; the only question at issue, in the definition of the Labour leader, is the correct measures to be taken for the benefit of "our people in Shanghai"—the handful of agents of the exploiters and sharks engaged in maintaining the apparatus for squeezing the blood and life out of the Chinese workers, women and children.

BUT it is not simply a question of the Right Wing leaders. Throughout the upper strata of the movement the same basic outlook recurs in a hundred forms, the same disguised imperialist superiority which is at the root of reformism, the same identification of the interests of the British workers with their masters, the same credulous trust in the British Foreign Office, the same patronising distrust of foreign coloured masses. It is not merely that a journal like *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* preaches docility to the workers to follow in the wake of "the united movement" "led by MacDonald" (where to? into the Foreign Office back garden?); "if you want an embargo" (the journal has no opinion on the question; it is a matter of taste) "you will only get it through pressure on your Executives" (that should stop any danger of action all right until three years after the war is over; everybody knows that the "Jolly George" was stopped by "pressure on your Executives"). This is so far only the usual sheepish interpretation of "discipline." But when it comes to the editorial treatment of such a typical incident as the Hankow incident, the viewpoint is exactly the same as MacDonald and the same as the imperialists and the Foreign Office. The Chinese revolutionary demonstration is "a Chinese mob." For the British marines obeying their orders "we owe a vote of congratulations to our comrades in the navy." Let us transpose the situation. The miners on strike hold a demonstration with speeches: there is a good deal of anger with blacklegs, though

not a hair of any is hurt. Troops are called out with fixed bayonets against the unarmed miners; they kill three and wound others (the Foreign Office denies the killed, while admitting the wounded: as the Chinese authorities give the names of those killed, and conducted their funerals with a mass demonstration, while the veracity of the Foreign Office in such matters is notorious, it is natural to believe the Chinese): the indignation of the miners is terrific, nevertheless their discipline is such that they do not fall into a senseless conflict. And then a "Labour" paper comes out with a description of the miners as a "mob"; "our congratulations to our comrades in the army" ! It is filthy that it should be necessary to transpose this situation into English terms in order to show what this kind of conduct means.

BUT indeed this goes much further. It is only necessary to turn to the situation immediately preceding the present crisis to see the typical treatment of the Chinese struggle—the greatest and most significant revolutionary world struggle since the Russian Revolution. The record of the Labour Government to China in 1924 is a gunboat record paralleling its record in India.¹ In 1925 the Shanghai shootings produced from the Amsterdam International and from *Vorwaerts* a declaration on "The Disturbances in China" to the effect that the imperialists "have contributed not a little to the culture and economic progress of the Far East"; "it is doubtful whether the Chinese authorities could at the present moment be unreservedly trusted to protect foreigners." Is there any suggestion—in 1925—of recognising Chinese independence or withdrawing the troops? Not at all. "The Powers will be wise to provide better and more civilised conditions of labour." Otherwise "the movement will get out of control." What typical upper-servants' advice to the slaveowners ! Or take the Labour Party and General Council resolution of

¹ It is remarkable that the Independent Labour Party journal *Forward* should at the present moment, at the height of the British Imperialist attack on China, devote columns of its space—constituting the greater part of its space devoted to the Chinese question—to an endeavour to whitewash the notorious record of the Labour Government in China, which the innocent Editor, with the simplicity of a new-born babe, professes never to have heard of before.

June, 1925. Is there any suggestion of recognising Chinese independence and withdrawing the troops and warships? Not at all; the "point" had not yet "been reached" (that is, the Nationalist armies had not advanced sufficiently). Only two proposals are made: (1) to carry out the recommendations of the Shanghai Child Labour Commission (for a twelve-hour day for ten-year-old children); (2) to hold an "international conference on British initiative" for ending the extra-territorial regimes "as soon as possible," utilising for this the Tariff Conference under the Washington Treaty (this chimed in with Foreign Office policy at the time). Thus Chinese independence has to be won at the point of the bayonet, not only from British Imperialism, but also from the reformist British Labour leaders who are the only polite mouthpiece of their own imperialism.

IN 1926, when Chinese Nationalism was fighting for life against the foreign-subsidised and largely British-subsidised counter-revolutionary armies, supported by the direct aid of foreign and British warships, we find a journal such as the *New Leader* coming out with a complacent article of amused and puzzled indifference at the whole meaningless fighting. "Ah Sin at War with Himself." "For months and years past various hosts of armed men have been trampling to and fro over China. Sometimes they have swept from the north, sometimes from the south, with the wandering uncertainty of locusts, and apparently with a similar aim." "Why do living men combine to live or die for Chang or Wu or Feng? . . . Why should any human soul among the indistinguishable millions of China care to risk life and all for one of them?" And the writer maunders along to the conclusion that it is probably like "our weary old Wars of the Roses." It would be difficult to find an expression more completely revealing the utter boorish self-centred indifference to every living human struggle, that is the heart and soul of the imperialist psychology in the labour aristocracy and the petty bourgeoisie, regarding every event as sensation material in the newspapers, completely unconscious of its own objective world position and responsibility, looking on with contemptuous indifference at the curious incomprehensible inferior races, "Chinks"

(yes, the article, true to type, speaks of "Chinks") and the like, "indistinguishable millions." It only remains to add that in the same period of desperate struggle of Chinese Nationalism, when the National armies were having temporarily to yield ground, and the imperialist attempted combination of Chang and Wu was in preparation, and Otto Bauer was already writing with crocodile tears of "China's 1849," the "left" journal, *Lansbury's Labour Weekly*, came out with an article denouncing Feng, the head of the National armies in the north, who had publicly proclaimed for a policy of unity with the international working class against imperialism, as an "adventurer," and—praising Wu as the best of the bunch: Wu, the chosen representative of British imperialism, subsidised with British money and fighting under cover of British warships, whom the British Consul-General at Hankow, according to Colonel Malone, spoke of as "in his pocket." (It would be interesting to know what led *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* to insert this piece of British imperialist propaganda, equivalent to boosting Kolchak during the Russian revolutionary wars, or whether it was done through the simple stupidity of blind anti-Communism.)

EVEN at the present moment, when the unmasked war-preparations of British imperialism and the intensity of working-class agitation have compelled a show of recognition of the Chinese struggle, the whole policy and treatment and expression still remains far removed from the realities of the Chinese revolution and the tasks it throws upon us. Instead, we find "sympathy" in plenty with the national movement of the Chinese; but alongside that sympathy, continual distrust of and warnings against the Chinese "mob," the "crowds"—thus showing a completely liberal upper-class interpretation of the "national" movement and complete failure to understand the character of the mass-struggle against imperialism. We find the continual conception of neutrality, of mediation between British imperialism and Chinese nationalism, of alternate "warnings" to either side (MacDonald), of holding the scales between "Chinese dare-devils and British die-hards" (*Lansbury's Labour Weekly*) or "mischief-makers on either side" (Independent Labour Party

manifesto), as one might hold the scales between the mineowners and the miners, the exploiters and the exploited, instead of the only possible relation of alliance in a common fight.

BEHIND all this "sympathy" and "warnings" of the reformist leadership to the Chinese fighters there is no suggestion of action to help, no suggestion of preventing the sending out of the troops and guns and ships to kill the Chinese national struggle. On the contrary, the moment the crisis reaches its most intense point, the whole agitation, the whole world-important issue of imperialism and revolution at the very fighting point, is sunk and forgotten and submerged in an emotional wave of senseless self-indulgent passive pacifism—"we won't serve," "thousands of us will never go to the front or make munitions," &c. As if that were the issue! As if that will stop the guns and the troops slaughtering Chinese freedom. The British forces are there. The British war on China is in fact already there, even though the guns should never be fired. This is the issue that has to be faced. British imperialism is exerting the whole weight of its power to coerce the Chinese into submission. This can only be met by the counter-weight of the power of the British working class. Personal abstention will no more help the Chinese than it would have helped the miners in 1926 to suggest that the other workers should vow not to become special constables. If this is the only policy, it would be better to confess honestly and without further hypocrisy that there is no policy, that there is complete indifference to the fate of China and the world struggle, that there is nothing but the lowest self-centred religious individualism in place of international socialism and working-class policy. Personal abstention, like all religion, passivism, quietism, is the tool of reaction, the counterpart of aggressive imperialism, the enemy of the workers. The struggle in China, which is in every sense our own struggle, will be decided by the action of the masses in China and in Britain; for this purpose only is agitation useful.

ALL this confusion and distortion of the plain issue of the fight against imperialism in China, under a maze of pacifism, mediation, neutrality, League-of-Nations-inter-

vention, peace-by-negotiation, war-resistance and the rest of it, is as direct a repudiation of a great international working-class duty and playing into the hands of imperialist aggression as the open, unconcealed Foreign Office service of MacDonald and Thomas. It means a complete failure to understand the real character of the struggle in China, which if it were once clearly understood, pacifism and neutrality would be as out of the question as in an industrial dispute. It means a failure to understand the character of the struggle against imperialism, which is vital to the future of the British working class. For the Chinese national struggle is not a nineteenth-century type of national-democratic struggle to which the working class may extend a benevolent sympathy. The Chinese national struggle is in its own sphere as direct a part of the international working-class struggle as the Russian revolution.

WHAT is imperialism in China? Does it consist simply in a system of extra-territoriality, concessions, unequal treaties and other privileges of foreigners, incompatible with national sovereignty and independence? The essence of the matter does not at all lie there. This is no more than the apparatus, the outward forms and signs and protective framework of imperialism. Imperialism in China consists in the monopoly of the financial and industrial life of the country, the ownership and control of the principal revenues, railways, mines, industries, banks, shipping and trading depots, the subjection of the country to a weight of foreign loans and concessions, and on the basis of all this the increasing exploitation of the whole mass of workers and peasants in the country. The struggle of the masses against this oppression must necessarily first take the form of a struggle for national independence against the special privileges and garrisons of the imperialists which are the immediate instruments of subjection. But this is only the first stage. Emancipation from imperialism can only be achieved through the overthrow of the economic monopoly, through the conquest of the banks, mines, railways and industries by the masses, and their wresting from imperialist hands. Thus the Chinese struggle against imperialism is necessarily a revolutionary struggle, is necessarily a struggle of the masses in the direction of socialism. The growing realisation of this was the

final outcome of the life's experience, thought and struggle of Sun Yat Sen, bringing him through all the stages of honourable national revolutionary struggle to his final appreciation of the teachings of Leninism. As Lenin declared : " While formerly prior to the epoch of world revolution movements for national liberation were a part of the general democratic movements, now, however, after the victory of the Soviet revolution in Russia and the opening of the period of world revolution, *the movement for national liberation is part of the world proletarian revolution.*"

FOR this reason our approach to the Chinese revolution is not the approach of pacifism and mediation, but the approach of alliance in a common struggle. We say with them : War on British Imperialism ! The same financial monopolist class that preys on them preys on us also. The class that attacked the miners, starved their children and is now turning its offensive on the whole of trade unionism is the same class that sweats the Chinese workers, their women and children, and now turns its guns upon them to maintain its spoils and robbery. So far from concerning ourselves with the " protection of British interests in China," we declare that there are no British interests at stake in China, but only the interests of the exploiters ; and so far from repudiating Chinese " extremists " and " crowds " and " mobs," we say that if only the Chinese could succeed in driving every exploiter out of the country and seizing and confiscating by mass action all the concessions, buildings, banks, mines, railways and factories, we would welcome their victory and strain every nerve to support them in the maintenance of their conquest. No Socialist or class-conscious worker could take any other position. We are at unity with the fight of the Chinese revolution at every stage, and we recognise the correctness of the concentration of the fight against British imperialism as the key position at the present stage. We recognise with shame the part that British money, British munitions and British troops are able to play, owing to our weakness, in hampering the heroic Chinese fight ; and we pledge ourselves to do all in our power to paralyse the action of this intervention and bring it to an end. This is the only position that any Socialist and working-class fighter can take up in relation to the Chinese revolution.

R. P. D.

THE NEED FOR ONE MINEWORKERS' UNION

By ARTHUR HORNER

THE thirty weeks' stoppage in the mining industry terminated, in practically all districts, on or about December 1, 1926. The Agreements then entered into provide for longer hours, lower wages and worsened local working and payment customs, and are intended to be binding for varying periods. Certain of these Agreements, whilst they are alleged to stabilise wage and working conditions for the period of their duration, merely set up machinery for further sacrifices, if and when the coalowners can persuade an independent chairman that the economic conditions within the industry show a case for still further reductions and/or worsened working conditions.

Let us take as an example of this the South Wales Agreement, Clause II:—

The wages payable during the period subsequent to the 31st day of May, 1927, shall be the 1915 Standard Base rates applicable to the different classes of workmen employed, plus a percentage upon such rates to be determined in accordance with Clauses 12, 13, 14 and 15 hereof, subject to a minimum of 28 per cent. added to such Standard Base rates. *Provided that either Party to this Agreement shall have the right to apply for a review of the said minimum of 28 per cent. upon the 31st day of December, 1927, and the 31st day of December, 1928, upon giving to the other party one calendar month's notice in writing of their proposals for review.* The said parties shall meet to discuss and settle such proposals for review within seven days of the receipt of such notice, and failing agreement at such meeting, the Independent Chairman shall be summoned to an adjourned meeting of the parties to be held within ten days thereafter, and he shall preside thereat, when the proposals for review shall again be discussed, and in the event of the parties failing to agree, the Chairman either at such meeting or within five days thereafter shall give his casting vote thereon, and the parties shall be bound thereby. The decision upon such review to be operative as from the 1st day of January following the giving of such notice of review.

It will be seen from the above that there is no final level below which wages cannot fall under the Agreements. On May 21, 1927, there is to be a reduction to 28 per cent. from 42.22 per cent.

On December 31, 1927, and December 31, 1928, further and unlimited reductions can be enforced under the machinery of the Agreement, which will, of course, be applicable only to a minority of districts at a particular time.

Clauses 18 and 19 of the same Agreement determine that an exactly similar process is to be followed in relation to the subsistence wage, which is at present in South Wales fixed at 8s. 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per shift.

It can of course be argued that equal facilities are given the men to put forward a case for a revision upwards, and that the independent chairman will, if the economic condition allows, at a particular time award such an improvement as is economically possible. It is, however, even assuming such an improvement in trade as to render such an improvement possible, very problematical whether such a person would give such an award. Even if he could be persuaded to do so, it would be of no value, because the ascertainments would automatically give the increases without reference to the board or independent chairman, whilst a falling economic condition would not find an outlet below the minimum, were such minimum fixed for the whole period of the Agreement. There can only be one explanation for the inclusion and enforcement of such an arrangement, and that is to be found in the coal-owners' firm belief and intention that wages must be brought down to a level even lower than anyone as yet has dared to think of.

Therefore, we have to face a situation in which hours are to be increased and wages lowered to an indefinite extent, and local customs given up; all of which are enforceable under Agreements of varying durations, entered into by the separate district associations affiliated to the M.F.G.B. As a part of these Agreements, we have the further complication that, although they may not themselves terminate, still worsened conditions are operable under the terms, notwithstanding that the Agreements may be binding upon the workmen, in the sense that no resistance will be possible, unless it is offered within a district, in opposition to the terms of such Agreements, or undertaken by a district fighting alone at the date of the termination of their particular Agreement; as, for instance, in Durham, &c., where the Agreement is only for a twelve months' period.

The prospects are therefore such as to demand from every active fighter inside the Miners' Federation the most thoughtful examination of all proposals calculated to defend the miner against further attacks. These attacks, it is true, will depend very largely upon the economics of the mining industry in this country, and the areas over which such attacks will be launched, and the severity with which they will be conducted will have relation to this all-determining factor.

The Economic Prospects of Mining in Britain

The general idea now prevailing amongst those who permit wishes to father thought is that, the mining crisis having passed, we may now expect a period of relative prosperity as a consequence of trade recovery. It is expected to be a period which will allow of stabilisation of living standards, and which will make interference with wage rates unnecessary, and in which such degree of struggle as may actually obtain will be the outcome of the acts of diehards, on either side, who voluntarily seek to create causes for trouble where none exist, and to exaggerate them where they do, with the object of serving ulterior persons or movements.

It is therefore essential to understand whether there has been any fundamental and determining change in the condition of the mining industry, and, if any, to what extent it has removed the causes of further friction and class conflict. The Coal Commission, when examining the situation of the mining industry, eliminated all such superficial reasoning as attributed its deplorable condition to personal acts, divorced from economic causes, either on the part of the men or of the owners, and made it perfectly clear, whether they intended to do so or not, that all such acts were reflexes of underlying economic urgings forced upon both sections by the exigencies of maintaining existence under certain conditions inside the prevailing economy.

I am not concerned for the time being with the remedies suggested by the Commission, but only with its diagnosis. Pages 13 and 14 are as follows :—

Export Trade.—(1) The depression in the British coal export trade is, in the main, part of a general depression, affecting almost all European coal-producing countries: an excess of supply over

demand, caused partly by the impoverishment of customers, partly by the development of new coalfields and partly by the increased use of substitutes.

(2) To a lesser extent it is due to competition of foreign countries with us in the coal export trade, especially that of Germany.

(3) The extent to which the German export trade has been assisted by the Reparations provisions of the Treaty of Versailles is obscure, and the opinions of our witnesses differ. We can only express our conclusion that the British Coal Trade does not regard them as a serious danger.

(4) The substantial fall in British export prices during the latter part of 1925 has been followed by an appreciable recovery of the position in some, though not all, of the competitive markets; and the fall in price has been checked by a restoration of the balance between supply and demand.

Bunker Trade.—(5) In so far as the decrease in coal used in foreign bunkers is the natural consequence of the decrease in the export trade, it is obvious the quantity will increase if the export trade increases. But in so far as it is due to the use of oil instead of coal, the reduction is likely to be progressive, especially if any change in the present relative positions of coal and oil as regards price takes place to the disadvantage of coal.

Home Trade.—(6) No substantial recovery in the home trade can be looked for except from a recovery of the heavy industries.

The situation, as described by the report, is not, as is often supposed, a merely temporary condition, nor does it prevail only in coal production, but is a completely normal and general condition in every phase of capitalist production at a certain stage of its development. The significance of the recent coal settlements lies in the complete immunity which the coalowners have obtained from the financial effects of maladministration within the industry, and pressure from without for cheap coal to save costs in other industries, in which the coalowners are probably interested.

The present situation, notwithstanding the long stoppage, shows that markets are well supplied, and if this is so when scores of pits have not yet come back into production, owing to the damage done during that period, what is likely to be the case in future? The eight-hour day will give a tremendously increased quantity of coal with less men, and the disease of over-production will be aggravated to that extent. The assumption that such an extended working day would give the British coal industry a bigger market is not founded on fact or experience, for by similar and

other rationalising processes an equalisation is always sought, and invariably secured, by competitors abroad.

Customers are still impoverished, principally by the reparation and debt demands of British and American finance capitalism. New coalfields are still being developed by slave labour in India, China, &c., under the shadow of British guns, and war appears imminent in consequence of capitalism's anxiety for the safety of mining and other investments there.

Oil from Mesopotamia, Persia, &c., is still, with other alternative fuels, being utilised, and for this purpose armies are in the fields as a guarantee for its continued production. The heavy industries lie shaken by forces of a like kind to those which have destroyed the prosperity of the mining industry, and the consumption of coal purchased is rapidly diminishing in consequence of the reduced purchasing power of the workers suffering under the burden of low wages and unemployment.

There is, therefore, no prospect of the coalowners resting content with their recent thefts; they will be driven forward to endeavour to secure more and more out of the already miserably low standard of living the miners have. The people who cry out for industrial peace, and advocate working-class disarmament in the hope that capitalist pressure will relax in answer to their futile cries, must show a basis in experience and economic prospect for their fond hopes; for to abandon preparations for the exercise of might through organisation of the workers is to succumb beforehand to the coming attacks. Capitalism must and will make preparations for the launching of further offensives, in order to stave off the effects of its own unescapable and disastrous economy.

The Miners must Equip and Organise for Resistance

There is no leader inside the Miners' Federation who is prepared openly to advocate stabilisation of hours and wages at the present level. What then are we to say if the time comes when still more is demanded from us? The degree of resistance will be limited only by the capacity to resist. Fight we shall, all must agree: the only question we really have to deal with is that which has to do with preparations for effective resistance. Can we calmly contemplate allowing the existing Agreements to wend

their way to their several terminations, and permit under new Agreements periods of duration to be determined which will overlap others expiring later? If not, by what means are we to lend aid to a district such as Durham at the end of one year? Are districts such as South Wales to be left to fight alone against the imposition of wage cuts under the terms of their Agreement? If the very idea is scouted, as it certainly should be, is the maximum strength of the Federation to be put on an issue local to a particular district at a particular time, and a process of exhaustion undergone in this hopeless and helpless fashion? If not, are we going to permit certain districts to fight these issues alone whilst the other districts of the same Federation produce Black Coal for our mutual destruction?

There is only one way and that is to base our preparations on the assumption that these agreements were never made, and, what is no assumption, that they are imposed terms for which we recognise no responsibility. The only legal way to terminate these pernicious documents is to liquidate one of the parties to the Agreements. This does not mean that the existing district organisations must immediately eliminate themselves; rather they must strengthen themselves for the purpose of securing a complete absorption in a new and more effective body, which shall have no ties with the past and be better fitted to undertake the tasks of the future.

This is no new idea, for when the coalowners decided to finish making national agreements, prior to May last, the first step they took was to dissolve the National Mineowners' Association as a negotiating body acting on behalf of the British mineowners as a whole. Thus, when our representatives sought to approach them nationally, they were informed that this body no longer existed. Why should not we obtain the result we seek, "One Agreement for all British mineworkers," by means of the reverse process, namely, the dissolution of the District Associations which are at present affiliated to the M.F.G.B. by and through their absorption in one National Mineworkers' Union? This is not, of course, as simple as it may appear on the surface, for in addition to the negative task of destroying the old Agreements, there is

also the much bigger one of building up a machine to take the place of the old.

I am not proposing to outline a possible constitution for the one mineworkers' union in this article, but I do wish to state that our attitude is not simply destructive of the old, with a slogan as a substitute, because we have prepared in the Miners' Minority Movement a very elaborate suggested set of rules and a constitution which is now in the press, and will probably be on sale when this issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY is read. To all sections of the Miners' Federation we would appeal for fair consideration of the proposals outlined, and we wish to state that such amendments as can be shown to be of benefit to the work of building up an effective machine of struggle for our people should be freely put forward. The contents of the rules and constitution have been framed by miners by a process of selection and elimination from the rules of other organisations outside the Miners' Federation, but mainly it has been got together by co-ordination of, and elimination from, the existing rules of the District Associations of the Miners' Federation, which have thus been given a national application.

There is, of course, bound to be considerable sacrifice in district autonomy; centralisation is by its very nature the negation of such unit control. This obnoxious necessity has been forced upon us by the logic of events, which have made it clear to all that district fighting is inseparable from defeat when great issues affecting the welfare of the mineworkers are at stake. We regret that we are forced to anticipate considerable opposition to our proposals from persons who would rather retain an old but futile machine than risk association with an improvement, because of its newness. Such an attitude can only be the outcome of a desire to keep the organisation small enough to permit those of small stature to maintain dominance, whereas every honest fighter will be concerned to exercise to become big enough to work in the bigger and more effective machine.

Our destinies in the different districts are too interwoven and interdependent to permit such personal considerations or silly prejudices to stay the mineworkers from getting together for mutual assistance. Sabotage of unity can only impede and

make the task more difficult of realisation; the intensification of the coalowners' attacks upon us will ultimately render a single mineworkers' union imperative. The next task, therefore, is to secure discussion of a set of proposals calculated to achieve organisational unity, as a preliminary to the holding of a National Conference to decide upon recommending the liquidation of the old and the introduction of the new. There should, however, be great care exercised to avoid finding in this proposal an excuse to avoid winning back to the district federations all the old members. Those who seek to justify their non-unionism by declaring dissatisfaction with the present form of organisation can only be treated seriously if and when they participate in the task of forcing improvement by coming inside, and so obtaining the right to join in the task. Meantime scab unions, craft unions, company unions, and community unions, such as the "General and Municipal Workers," must not be allowed to grow up to do tremendous harm immediately and to make final unity much more difficult than it otherwise would be. All steps taken from now onward must be in the direction of the elimination of poaching and redundant unions, and aiming at the setting up of one mineworkers' union.

The recent defeat has demonstrated, too, that even the maximum of unity in the Miners' Federation will not necessarily ensure victory, and that allies are an essential part of any programme of action seeking success in the struggle with centralised capitalism, directed by the cabinet of the British Parliament.

The Conference of Executives, regrettable as was its conclusion and its condonation of treachery, must not be allowed to inculcate separatist tendencies in the ranks of the miners. Disgust there must be amongst us, and when we look at the suffering women and children, hatred overwhelms us, but let us not confuse the issues, and forget in doing so to keep clear and apart from the atmosphere of betrayal the memory of those wonderful nine days of unsurpassed loyalty of our comrades of the railways, mills and factories. Having seen that, all things should now be possible. The masses are capable of effective struggle over the whole front. That is more than enough to kill all ideas of separation coming as a consequence of leaders' actions. Leaders can and must be changed, where and when they fail.

The Miners' Federation must permeate the other unions with the idea of all power to the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, and advocate the introduction of a leadership that will conduct struggle against all the forces of capitalism, including the Class State. Not less unity in consequence of our recent setback, but more. We are suffering, not because of too much unity, but because we are not organisationally and otherwise united enough. The Conference of Executives has not killed the General Strike; on the contrary, it has demonstrated more than ever who and what are the allies of capitalism, who and which did prevent and will if they can prevent in future such struggles reaching a successful conclusion.

The miners' fight is not over; it is becoming more bitter than ever. The miners must build up a better machine of struggle, and prepare for its effective utilisation. The big struggles of the near future will be class struggles affecting the whole mass of Britain's workers. Therefore we must work harder than ever to bring the workers of all industries at home and abroad together around a programme of common struggle for agreed demands and mutual protection. To do this we must have an all-inclusive working-class organisation capable of effective fighting. The Trades Union Congress must become the framework of this machine, and men possessing a greater degree of class loyalty must be charged with its direction.

SIR AUSTEN VON HINDENBURG

By W. N. EWER

THERE are two estimates of the Chinese situation—both rather stupid, both exceedingly short-sighted—which are very prevalent just now in the British Labour movement.

The one, which you are apt to find in Communist and Left Wing quarters, is that British Imperialism has been well and truly beaten by the victorious Chinese revolution, that it is in full retreat, and that it is only a question of time before it disappears "bag and baggage" from China. The other estimate is to be met with in the Right Wing. It is that at any rate a large and important section of the British ruling class, a section typified by the Foreign Office, has seen the error of its past ways, has passed through all the religious processes of contrition and conversion, and is now generously and sincerely attempting to make reparation to the Chinese people and to surrender all ill-gotten gains, of privilege and the like, as rapidly as peaceful and orderly arrangements can be made.

Now these views are both as silly as would have been comparable military views expressed in the spring of 1917 when the Germans fell back from the bloody fastnesses of the Somme to the Hindenburg line. Anyone who had deduced from that retreat either that the German armies were breaking for the Rhine in headlong rout, or that, on the other hand, the Kaiser and his camarilla had been suddenly converted to Tolstoyan pacifism would have been manifestly and demonstrably an idiot.

Yet the parallel is exceedingly close. Certainly, Great Britain in China is in full retreat, just as were von Hindenburg's troops in 1917. But equally certain her movement is, precisely as was von Hindenburg's, a tactical one, indicating, indeed, a slight strain, but emphatically not indicating either surrender or a kind of Pauline conversion.

Great Britain in China is undefeated, for defeat only comes when the will and the power to resist are broken; and neither the will nor the power is as yet even seriously bent.

It is a fatal folly not to recognise that, a fatal folly to believe that to have won a round is to have won the fight—quite as fatal as that other foolishness which believes that a lost round means a lost fight.

This struggle that has opened in China is a long story, of which only the opening chapters have as yet been written. The easy triumph of Hankow is the prelude not to victory but to the struggle itself.

The optimism which believes that there has been in the Government of this country a "change of heart" which may bring a speedy peace is as unthinking as the optimism which believes that there is a realisation of defeat which will bring a speedy victory for Chinese nationality. Each optimism is born of the same confusion of desire with fact, of the same flinching from reality. Belief springs from the will to believe. But such beliefs are always the most dangerous of illusions.

Let us take first the illusion of the change of heart—the belief that Sir Austen, albeit somewhat hampered by malevolent or clumsy gentlemen in other offices in Whitehall, is now really doing his best to reach a settlement with the Chinese and is prepared, for the sake of such a settlement, to make "liberal and generous" concessions. The adjectives, one may note, are Sir Austen's own valuation of his proposals, solemnly set down in his own note to Mr. Chen, wherein he further paid tribute to the "fair and conciliatory spirit with which they are animated"—surely an example of bad taste and self-righteousness without parallel in diplomatic history.

Now the first and essential point to be noted about Sir Austen's "liberal and generous" concessions is, to employ a necessary Hibernicism, that he has not made any.

The acid test of his intentions may be found precisely here, for if he had indeed seen the light on the road to Damascus; if he had indeed had a vision of the China asking "Austen, Austen, why persecutest thou me?"; if he had sincerely repented of the days when he denounced the Cantonese leaders as "lawless

extremists": then he would have marked his conversion by a free-will offering which would have been in fact—though he would have blushed to call it in words—"liberal and generous."

But there have been no free-will offerings, only acquiescent surrenders of untenable or already lost positions. And, moreover, this is the second important point: none of them is a key position or of any vital importance. Hankow, the very word has been much used in the Government's private discussions, is an outpost. To hold it would call for an effort out of all proportion to its value—an effort which might even prejudice the defence of the main position; so, too, with the surtaxes. To have refused to allow their collection would have been to restart in intenser form the trade boycott, and to stake on the issue of that struggle not only the surtaxes but the whole of the customs, both their limitation and their foreign control. Clearly the wise move was to abandon the 22 per cent. without fighting.

Abandonment of "outposts" which—for geographical reasons, as Hankow, or for economic reasons, as the surtaxes—would become untenable or only perilously tenable, and which are not of vital importance; concentrate the forces and dig in, both diplomatically and militarily, on a position which will safeguard all the most important and valuable privileges. So long as our capitalists in China are able to exploit cheap labour without annoyance by trade unions or Labour laws; so long as there are important areas in which they have their own courts and their own police, in which they may kick coolies to their heart's content without fear of reprisal; so long as they can live the lives of a privileged sahib-caste, protected by the whole armed force of the British Empire against the retribution that comes to sahib-castes. As long as this is secured to them—and the consequential big dividends to their shareholders—why should one worry unduly about "outposts"?

They *will* worry, of course. There was never a retreat in history that was not loudly denounced as a policy of scuttle by idiots who would not see the game. I have no doubt that the younger Norman knights at Senlac were furious in denunciation of their duke's weakness when he ordered them to turn their backs on Harold's huscarls.

But the young gentlemen in the Shanghai Club bar, who are tumultuously demanding that a British army shall march to the recapture of the Hankow concession and return with Mr. Chen's head on a charger, don't matter twopence.

The Government's policy—and Sir Austen is perfectly accurate when he says that it is the policy of the Government as a whole—is the policy of the Hindenburg line. And to Sir Austen and to the Foreign Office has been confided the delicate and ticklish job of conducting the retreat with a minimum of loss, a maximum of prestige, and as much consumption of time as is necessary to get the line itself properly prepared.

That operation they have really performed admirably well. They have been rather hampered now and then by the embarrassing activities of gentlemen in other departments, who failed to realise the delicacy of the operation that was going on. They have been annoyed by the, to them, excessive publicity given to the Shanghai defence force—annoyed for precisely the same reason that von Hindenburg would have been annoyed by special editions with splash stories telling the world of the construction of his famous line. How much pleasanter if all the preparations could have been made without anybody, either here or in China, realising what was going on.

However, it looks, at the moment when I am writing, as if, in spite of one or two awkward moments, the retreat is going to get itself successfully accomplished. What then?

First, and very certainly, not peace. One does not sign peace on the Hindenburg line.

The issues at stake between the British "garrison" in China and the Kuomintang are indeed quite incapable of settlement under existing circumstances. To dream of "peace" on the basis of the Chamberlain memorandum or the O'Malley note is to indulge in the most foolish, if the most comfortable, of self-deceptions. With a Government of the old Peking type, with one of the modern war lords, it would be very easy. A concession to "face" here, a little—direct or indirect—bribery there, a balancing of "concession" and "compensation" (at the expense of the masses), a sort of revised agreement of partnership in exploitation, and the thing would be done. Canton

of course could have had a settlement long ago on these terms—a settlement which would have given the Kuomintang Government recognition and a big loan. The only condition was that it should abandon its trade union activities and behave like an ordinary Chinese Government. Canton could have a settlement now with Chang Tso-lin which would give its leaders illimitable opportunities for “squeeze,” but the condition again is that they must get rid of Borodin and drop their “Bolshevist ideas.” But to the enormous surprise of the tempters Canton has turned a deaf ear and has refused to be bribed into deserting the workers. Wherefore much grave shaking of heads and pained regret that “extremist influences” should be so strong (common honesty naturally appearing to some minds as the most outrageous of extremisms) and that peace should thereby be endangered.

Not “extremist influences” but hard fact forbids peace between a caste determined to cling to its privileges and to its power of exploitation, and an aroused working class determined to abolish that privilege and to free itself from that exploitation. Precisely because the struggle in China is not a mere squabble over loot-division, but is a phase of the class-struggle itself, it must inevitably go forward to a definite decision. Only when either the exploiting class has been coerced (by physical, economic, or moral intimidation) into abandonment of its power, or the working-class has been coerced (equally by intimidation) into a new period of submission can the struggle cease, for even a while.

In short, Shanghai and Canton are irreconcilable opposites. The struggle between them will go on until one or the other is broken.

Therefore (and whether Sir Austen realises it or not, the more powerful men behind him certainly do) the new Hindenburg line is—and indeed must be—a base from which new offensive action against the Kuomintang can be planned. Sir Austen may talk much of the strictness of his neutrality. Like Sir William Joynson-Hicks he must keep up appearances. But Shanghai itself has no illusions, nor has Hong Kong, nor have the big British interests. They realise perfectly clearly that the job now is to smash the Kuomintang, and that all the British Government’s movements (withdrawal from the Upper Yangtse, military con-

centration at Hong Kong and Shanghai, etc.) have been singularly well adapted to helping on that good work.

It is not in the least a coincidence that just as the Defence Force began to arrive Sun Chuan-Fang took the offensive in Chekiang, and the two Changs began their long-delayed march south on Hankow. For to that twin movement the British—for all that, they might never fire a shot—were worth many army corps to the War Lords. Within twenty-four hours of the arrival of the first Brigade at Shanghai it was reported that Sun had moved every soldier out of the town to the Hangchow front. The result of that Hangchow battle I do not know as I write : but that the British troops have in fact acted as a valuable reinforcement to Sun is very plain.

Nor is it possible to mistake the purpose of the simultaneous military demonstration at Kowloon. A big concentration of troops, a few threatening marches and counter-marches, a few sharp notes about anything or nothing to Canton, and the result will be that the Cantonese Government would be bound to keep a substantial "Canton Defence Force" in the south to guard against a possible menace to their capital. That again is worth many, many troops to the Northern War Lords.

So, while preserving its formal neutrality, the British Government is contriving to give very effective though indirect aid and comfort to the enemies of the Kuomintang. Is any more direct aid being given?

Now that is a question to which it is obviously not possible to give a detailed and demonstrative answer. But there is no room for doubt that Chang Tso-lin has, within the last few weeks, received from some foreign source very substantial financial aid.

Consider the sequence of events. Last month he was, admittedly, pressing Sir Miles Lampson for a loan. His military adviser, "General" Sutton, had publicly stated that without a loan it would be impossible to take the field against the Cantonese. The finances of Mukden are in hopeless confusion : Chang's money is rapidly going the way of paper money when the presses run unstintingly : even the famous Mukden Arsenal was forced to shut down. Chang was threatening to take his armies back to Manchuria.

That was the situation towards the end of January. With the change of the month the situation changed completely. The *Daily Telegraph* correspondent was able to wire that Chang had been "dissuaded" from going home. There is only one argument which could have dissuaded him. Ten days later he issued his orders to his troops for the campaign which Sutton had admitted to be impossible without a foreign subsidy.

It is as clear as daylight that a subsidy, or a loan, came just in time, and that the donors of that subsidy are the real authors of the new attack on the Cantonese.

Who were they? Not the Japanese, for they have been for a long time urging on Chang that his right policy is to consolidate his power in Manchuria, and not to go running risks in China proper. The British Government? I am by no means so sure. Officially, the Foreign Office is probably as guiltless as it declares; it has small resources any way. But the Colonial Office has curious uncontrolled and easily mobilisable funds, as we saw when the loan of £3,000,000 was granted to Hong Kong last year (one would, by the way, like detailed information as to the expenditure of the £3,000,000). The India Office—or the Government of India—has big resources. I would not care to go bail that the British Government, as a whole, has had no hand in the financing of Chang.

And then there is private enterprise. There are among the Anglo-Chinese firms some of the richest corporations in the world, headed by men whose hatred of the new China and the new Russia is so passionate that they would (quite apart from the business aspect of the deal) gladly pay big money to aid in its overthrow—particularly if the money were in the form of a loan giving them a further stranglehold on China's finances. Colonel Malone was told last May by a business man of the highest standing, that "at a meeting when several members of the British Chamber of Commerce at Hankow were present the chairman had said that the time had come when they should come out into the open as the supporters of Wu Pei-fu, instead of supplying arms secretly. And that an Anglo-American cigarette company had arranged a loan of £400,000 for Wu." If for Wu in 1926, why not for Chang in 1927? And indeed for Wu as well; for

his threatened opposition to Chang's march southward dissolved with an almost ludicrous suddenness ; the nature of the solvent is not hard to divine.

One may therefore regard it as morally certain that Chang is being financed from British sources of some kind ; that he is—in the picturesque Chinese phrase—a British hunting dog ; and that his offensive is in the last analysis a British offensive.

That in fact appears to be the strategy of the present movement. There is a tripartite division of function, based on the conception of a temporary concentration on a Hindenburg line.

Sir Austen's job has been to conduct an orderly and not too hasty retreat from the untenable outposts of the line. General Duncan has to hold the line itself (and in so doing to contain a goodly portion of the enemy forces). Chang Tso-lin and the minor mercenaries (Wu Pei-fu, Chang Tsung-chang and the rest of them) are to conduct the counter-offensive. And if that counter-offensive fails—as it is likely to fail?

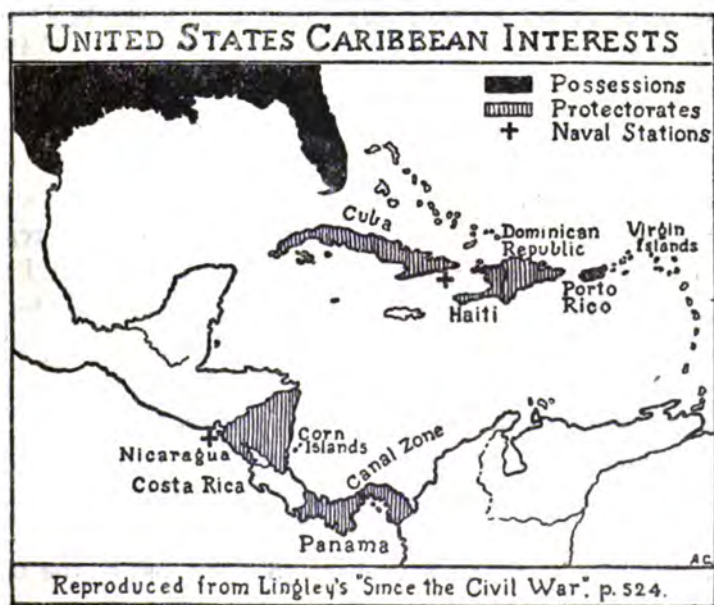
Then will come the real danger of war. For the Shanghai interests will clamour that we must “do the job ourselves” ; there will be an army and a considerable fleet on the spot ; the spring would have come ; there will be water in the Yang-tse.

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM IN THE CARIBBEAN

By SCOTT NEARING

BETWEEN the Mexican War of 1846-48 and the Spanish War of 1898, the ruling class in the United States practised no aggression against neighbouring territory. Instead, it spent its surplus wealth in building capitalist organisation within its own boundaries—opening mines and factories, constructing railroads, &c. It was during this period that the United States gained its reputation for “splendid isolation” and for “peaceful, law-abiding progress.” The other great capitalist countries were grabbing territory in Africa and partitioning Asia. The United States was “non-aggressive.”

With the Spanish-American War (1898), however, a new era set in. At this juncture the United States became a capital exporting nation. During the following years, and particularly after 1915, the United States spread its influence rapidly into neighbouring territories. On the north the United States pene-



trated Canada. On the south it rapidly extended its control over the countries bordering the Caribbean.

The whole Caribbean area is strategically important to the United States, and since the construction of the Panama Canal in the years following 1903 (the date of the seizure of Panama) control of the Caribbean has meant the control and protection of the canal. Haiti and Santo Domingo, for example, are an essential link in this control. Furthermore, they are very rich in tropical products, of which the United States is a large importer, and they have correspondingly attracted United States capital.

The U.S.A. and Haiti

In 1910 the National City Bank of New York (the largest commercial bank in the United States) became interested in the National Bank of Haiti. Shortly after the outbreak of the war of 1914 negotiations were begun to have the National City Bank acquire control of the Haitian Bank. This control was finally established in 1919.

Throughout these transactions, the United States State Department played a prominent rôle. On six occasions during 1914 and 1915, when Bryan was Secretary of State (Wilson was President) the State Department made overtures to Haiti to obtain control of the customs, in order that the bankers' investments might be securely guaranteed. The movement was begun in October, 1914, by strengthening the naval forces detailed to Haitian waters.

In December, 1914, after the proposal to turn over the control of the Haitian customs to the United States had twice been rejected a force of United States marines was landed at Port au Prince. The marines proceeded to the Haitian National Bank; forcibly seized \$500,000 in cash and carried it aboard the gunboat "Machias." This money was the property of the Haitian Government and had been deposited for the redemption of paper currency. The money was taken to New York and deposited in the vaults of the National City Bank. No explanation was ever given for the act.

Now the idea seems to have been that the loss of the money would break down the financial system of Haiti and compel that

country to turn over the control of its customs to the United States.

The position of the United States State Department was clearly indicated by the telegram sent by Secretary Bryan on January 28, 1915, via the Navy Department, to the American commander in Haitian waters:—

You will issue to that Government a warning that any attempt that might be made to remove the funds of the bank will compel you to take into consideration means to prevent such violation of foreign stockholders' rights.

The "foreign stockholders" were the National City Bank.

While the United States Government was negotiating for the control of Haitian customs, in July, 1915, a revolution broke out in Port au Prince, and the President of Haiti was killed. No American was injured, either in person or property. Nevertheless, marines were at once landed.

The Haitian legislature met to elect a president in place of the man who had lost his life in the revolution of July 27. Admiral Caperton, in charge of the United States forces, compelled the legislature to delay the election until the United States naval officers could look over the situation and decide on an acceptable candidate. The chief object of the State Department at this juncture was the acceptance, by Haiti, of a treaty prepared by the State Department, under which the control of Haitian customs passed to the United States.

If the State Department treaty, giving the United States control over the customs, was to be passed, it was necessary to find the right man for the presidency of Haiti. The man finally decided upon was Dartiguenave. The Navy Department then wired that:

Admiral Caperton might allow election of president to take place whenever Haitians wish. The United States prefers election of Dartiguenave . . . United States will insist that the Haitian Government will grant no territorial concessions to any foreign governments. The Government of the United States will take up the question of the cession of Mole St. Nicholas later.

Mole St. Nicholas was needed for a United States Naval Station.

On the same day the Secretary of State wired his instructions to the United States minister in Port au Prince:—

It should be made perfectly clear to candidates, as soon as possible, and in advance of their election, that the United States expects to be

entrusted with the practical control of the customs and such financial control over the affairs of the Republic of Haiti as the United States may deem necessary for efficient administration.

"Efficient administration" meant, of course, an administration that would pay the interest on the investments controlled by the National City Bank—the foreign stockholders.

On the day of the election United States marines guarded the doors of the auditorium where the delegates were in session, and a United States officer circulated among the delegates. The United States candidate was elected.

Two days after the election, the United States Chargé at Port au Prince submitted the draft of a new treaty, more drastic than the previous one, under which the United States should not only control Haitian customs and finances, but should officer the constabulary of Haiti. The Haitian Congress refused to accept the terms. The United States naval forces, under orders from the State Department, then seized the ten principal custom houses of Haiti, collected the customs, organised a constabulary, and set up a department of public works.

Between August 21 and September 2 the United States navy took possession of the capital, and occupied the custom houses in the ten chief ports of Haiti. Since the customs were the principal source of revenue, this left the Haitian Government without income. Still the treaty was not ratified. On September 3, martial law was declared. The Haitian Senate held out obdurately.

On November 10, the Secretary of the Navy cabled to Admiral Caperton, directing him to have a cabinet meeting called and to state to the cabinet that "if the treaty fails of ratification that my Government has the intention to retain control in Haiti until the desired end is accomplished." As a result of this threat, the Haitian Senate ratified the treaty on November 11, 1915.

Under the treaty the President of the United States appointed the receiver of the customs, who was responsible for the fiscal policy of Haiti. The President of the United States also appointed the officers of the Haitian constabulary, who were to be Americans. Haiti could not increase her debt, change her customs or alienate any of her territory without the consent of the United States. ¶

Under the guns of the United States marines the Haitians

adopted a new constitution on June 18, 1918, by which all acts of the Government of the United States "during its military occupation in Haiti are ratified and confirmed." The new constitution also abolished one of the oldest safeguards of the Republic by permitting foreigners to hold land.

During the military occupation, according to the report of the United States Marine Corps, 3,250 Haitians were killed either by the marines or the gendarmerie.

The Haitian Treaty of 1915 was modified in 1917, and in 1919 a new loan was floated, which went, of course, to the National City Bank. The bids for this Haitian loan were sent, not to Haiti, but to the State Department at Washington.

It is significant that most of these transactions occurred under the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, and at a time when he was vigorously proclaiming the rights of small nations. However, when the next president, Harding, was inaugurated, he appointed a brigadier-general as high commissioner in Haiti. Acting under Navy Department orders, General Russell established a court martial, and issued a proclamation under which speeches and writings "that reflected adversely upon the United States forces in Haiti" or that tended "to stir up agitation against the United States officials" subjected the offender to court martial. In August, 1921, three Haitian journalists were arrested and court-martialled for criticising the American occupation in violation of this order.

The story of the relations between the United States and Santo Domingo is essentially the same as that of the relations with Haiti. The economic interests were different, but the procedure towards military occupation and political subjugation was parallel.

Historically, the United States Government has been establishing a technique of dealing with very weak countries like Haiti. Marines are sent in and "law and order" are established. Another technique, equally well developed, is the cultivation of revolutions in neighbouring countries. There was a revolution in Hawaii (1893) just before the treaty of annexation to the United States was written. There was a revolution in Panama (1903) just before the United States began digging the Panama Canal. There were revolutions in Mexico, financed by United States

capital, and backed by the United States State Department after the development of Mexican oil. Economically and politically the United States was involved in all of these revolutions.

The U.S.A. and Mexico

Mexico was ripe for revolution in 1910. President Diaz, who had been in power since 1876, was surrounded by a group of men whose business it was to sell Mexican concessions to foreign capitalists. The Diaz Government was financed, in part, on that basis.

The selling of concessions meant the establishment of mines, smelters, factories, railways, and other forms of modern industrial enterprise—meant the rise of a business class to challenge the power of the landed aristocracy that was represented by Diaz. The farmers were hungry. The city workers were unorganised, underpaid, and bitterly exploited.

Mexico was rich, but the Mexicans were poor. The bulk of Mexican resources was owned by foreigners, and the Mexican land was in the hands of a few great land holders.

Oil had been discovered in Mexico in 1900. In quantity it was unbelievably abundant. One well, which began to flow on September 10, 1910, produced 70,000 barrels per day. By 1919 this well alone had produced 100,000,000 barrels of oil.

American oil interests first discovered the richness of the Mexican fields. The British were not slow to come into the field, however, and by 1908 the British interests were getting special concessions from Diaz, who was always careful not to let the capitalists from one nation get a monopoly on Mexican concessions that would endanger the Mexican Government.

At the election in 1910 Diaz was elected for the eighth time. His rival, Madero, a banker and business man, representing the rapidly developing business class in Mexico, declared that the election had been unfairly conducted, and demanded that Diaz either resign or permit a fair election. On the refusal of Diaz to do either, Madero began a revolution.

From the outset Madero had the support of the United States interests and the United States Government. Diaz was openly favouring the British oil interests, and the whole weight of United

States influence was thrown against him. Madero was officially recognised by the United States Government in 1911, although he was never really in control of Mexico. But by the prohibition of the export of arms and ammunition to Mexico, President Taft cut off the source from which the revolutionists in the northern part of Mexico had been drawing their military supplies.

Despite the support which the United States interests had given Madero he was overthrown in 1913 by Victoriano Huerta, an avowed representative of the British oil interests. Papers on both sides of the Atlantic frankly talked about the struggle for Mexican oil as a struggle between the British and United States capitalist interests. President Wilson and Secretary of State Bryan were convinced that the British were backing Huerta, and that the United States must take the opposite side in the controversy for the purpose of protecting the American interests.

Britain and most of the other great capitalist states had already recognised Huerta. This Wilson refused to do. Instead, by public utterances, he led the anti-Huerta forces in Mexico to believe that they had every reason to expect support from the United States Government. Within three months of his accession to the presidency, Huerta was faced with a general uprising, headed by Carranza, Villa, and other generals, who felt confident that they could secure the support of the United States.

President Wilson recalled the United States ambassador, who had been urging recognition for Huerta, and in his place sent a confidential agent, John Lind. Lind offered Huerta peace, provided he would agree to withdraw from the presidency and to give up fighting. He also promised the Mexican Government a loan if the terms were complied with.

Upon the rejection of these terms, and the election of Huerta as interim president, the United States Government removed the embargo on the shipment of arms into Mexico, and thus enabled the anti-Huerta groups in the north to equip themselves from the United States. The United States Press was meanwhile clamouring for intervention. But the Wilson Administration evidently felt that intervention was unnecessary. The anti-Huerta forces were winning anyway.

After nearly a year of manipulation, however, Huerta was still in power. It became necessary to take more drastic action. Several minor incidents were magnified and utilised as a basis for armed intervention.

One of these incidents arose out of the temporary arrest of some United States marines who had landed for gasoline at a Tampico wharf that had just sustained an attack. The marines were released with an apology after a short detention.

The other incident involved a quarrel between a United States and a Mexican mail orderly in the Vera Cruz post office. In this case also the Mexican authorities apologised.

At 2.30 a.m., on April 21, 1914, President Wilson was called on the telephone and informed that the German ship "Ypirango" was approaching Vera Cruz with a load of arms and ammunition destined for the Huerta forces. The arrival of these arms would have gone far toward strengthening the Huerta cause. After a consultation, Wilson said: "Take Vera Cruz at once." At eight o'clock, on April 22, the United States marines and sailors landed at Vera Cruz; seized the principal buildings; took possession of the "Ypirango," and advancing under the guns of the fleet, captured the town. Seventeen United States sailors and about 200 Mexicans lost their lives in the struggle. The loss of Vera Cruz cost Huerta \$500,000 per month in Vera Cruz customs taxes. Two months later Huerta left Mexico and the Constitutionists under Carranza were installed.

United States officials were responsible for the overthrow of Huerta. They were opposed to him because of his advocacy of British oil interests. United States oil interests took the same stand. They refused to pay taxes to the Huerta regime and supplied the Carranza forces with very large advances of cash and oil.

E. L. Doheny, the chief of the United States oil men in Mexico, made this quite plain in the testimony which he gave before a Senate Committee of Inquiry in 1919.

It was a well-known fact that the British assisted in the sale of a large amount of Huerta bonds, and they were distinctly favourable to the Huerta Government at that time. Our Government had shown its animosity to Huerta and its desire to support his opponents. So that our action was in line with our own Government and that of

the British was in line with the supposed sympathies of the British Government.

The Doheny interests, according to the testimony of Mr. Doheny, turned over \$100,000 in cash to a Carranza agent. Later, the same interests supplied Carranza with \$685,000 worth of oil credit.

The United States and Nicaragua

One more brief illustration of the effectiveness with which revolutions are used by the United States to further its interests in the Caribbean area. United States bankers held many Nicaraguan bonds. The United States navy wanted a canal across Nicaragua. The combination of economic and strategic considerations led to the establishment of a United States protectorate over Nicaragua.

In 1909 a revolution broke out against President Zelaya of Nicaragua. The revolution was financed by Adolfo Diaz, an employee of an American mining corporation, who advanced \$600,000 to support the cause. Diaz's salary was \$1,000 per year.

Zelaya was driven out of the country and a successor was elected. Nevertheless the United States continued its support of the revolutionists. The Nicaraguan Government officially protested to the United States. But the Washington Government compelled the Nicaraguan Government to allow American ships carrying arms and munitions to the rebels to pass the blockade which the Government had established.

In August, 1910, the Government troops had surrounded the rebels and attempted to destroy them in Bluefields. The United States fleet landed marines and prevented the Government from carrying out the campaign.

During October, 1910, the State Department sent an agent to Nicaragua with instructions to arrange for a loan that would be secured by a lien on the customs. At the same time Brown Brothers (bankers) arranged to make the loan. On October 27, 1910, aboard an American battleship, the leaders of the revolutionists agreed that they would, as soon as they came to power, negotiate a loan under the guidance of the State Department, and would secure the loan by a lien on customs. A month later

the Assembly elected Estrada president and Diaz vice-president. Within three weeks this Government was recognised by the State Department. Subsequently, the agreement under which Estrada had been elevated to power was discovered and published by his opponents. Its terms united the masses of Nicaraguans against the Estrada Government.

In the spring of 1911 the National Assembly adopted a constitution which was directed against foreign loans. The constitution was opposed by the State Department. After its adoption Estrada dissolved the Assembly. The resulting conflict led to Estrada's resignation.

Diaz succeeded no better than Estrada had done. Bitter opposition developed, and the United States minister wired Washington:—

“The Assembly will confirm Diaz in the presidency according to any one of the . . . plans which the Department may indicate . . . A war vessel is necessary for the moral effect.” On May 25, 1911, he wired that: “The Liberals were organising all over the country to defeat the loan, and because of their large majority over the Diaz faction, he advised that a war vessel be stationed in Nicaraguan waters at least until the loan has been put through.”

While this struggle was in progress in Nicaragua, the representative of the Diaz Government in Washington signed a series of agreements under which the New York bankers made a loan to Nicaragua, and under which the State Department appointed a collector of customs for Nicaragua who had the “confidence” of the New York bankers.

The Nicaraguan Assembly, still in revolt against the loans and the customs control, adopted and promulgated a new constitution on January 12, 1912, against the express protests of the United States minister. The Assembly bitterly resented this interference with their sovereignty.

So unpopular had Diaz become that in July, 1912, the whole country rose against him. The State Department countered by sending in 412 United States marines, half of whom were quartered in Brown Brothers' bank. On September 4, 1912, the State Department notified the United States minister at Managua that “the American bankers who have made investments in relation to railroads and steamships in Nicaragua . . . have

asked for protection." The United States Navy gave it. Eight war vessels, and 2,725 sailors and marines participated in the war on the revolutionists. Managua was bombarded and the United States forces took part in several land engagements. Finally the leader of the revolution surrendered to the United States forces and was exiled to Panama on board the United States war vessel "Cleveland."

The expenses incurred during the revolution led Diaz to apply for another loan. The loan was made in 1913. Under the agreement railroad and bank property were pledged as collateral by the Nicaraguan Government. The bank and railroad were each to have nine directors of whom six were to be named by the bankers, one by the United States Secretary of State and two by Nicaragua. At the same time the State Department was negotiating for a canal route through Nicaragua for which the United States would pay \$3,000,000. This arrangement was concluded under the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty of 1913, which provided for the canal, for the United States control of Great Corn and Little Corn Island, and for a United States naval base on the Gulf of Fonseca.

After 1913 the conservative elements in Nicaragua enjoyed the protection of the United States State Department and of the United States Navy. United States marines remained in Nicaragua from 1912 to 1925.

At the election in 1924 Solorzano, Liberal, received 48,072 votes against 28,760 for Chamorro, Conservative. This placed the Liberal Party in power and gave the Administration a definitely anti-United States slant.

In August, 1925, United States marines were withdrawn from Nicaragua. Two months later General Chamorro, defeated candidate in the 1924 election, engineered a *coup d'etat* and forced President Solorzano to appoint him minister of war and chief of the army. He also had himself elected senator, and forced Congress to unseat nineteen Liberals and to replace them with candidates who had been defeated in the 1924 election. The Congress, remodelled to Chamorro's taste, then banished the Vice-President, Sacasa, and put Chamorro in his place. When President Solorzano resigned on January 17, 1926, General Chamorro therefore assumed executive power.

In May, 1926, the Liberals began a revolution and captured Bluefields. United States marines immediately landed and declared the port a neutral zone. In the subsequent fighting the Liberals had all the best of it. In October, 1926, Adolfo Diaz, Conservative, was chosen President by the National Assembly, and immediately launched a publicity campaign in which he charged Mexico with carrying on Bolshevik propaganda in Nicaragua and with supplying arms to the Liberals. Diaz was promptly recognised by the United States; was supplied with marines and airplanes; was backed by a dozen United States battleships, and by a United States admiral who took possession of the Liberal capital and ordered the Liberal army to surrender its arms or get out.

As early as 1917 United States histories began to appear with Cuba, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, and Panama listed as "protectorates" of the United States. In legal theory each was still a sovereign state. Each had a constitution and a governmental machine. Each was eligible to join the League of Nations. But all five of these countries had imported capital from the United States, and all five of them under the pressure of the State Department and of the United States Navy had signed treaties or adopted constitutions which placed the control of customs, of the financial system or of some other aspect of local government under the political domination of Washington.

The method varied from one case to another. The result was the same. In the first instance capital was invested by United States business houses in some of the natural resources, in railroads, in plantations, or in some other business enterprise. From these investments political control followed. When it did not follow fast enough, it was usually assisted by the United States Navy.

Most of this imperialist development of the United States in the Caribbean took place after 1900. After 1914, and especially after the conclusion of the World War it went on at an accelerated pace. Surplus was accumulating rapidly in the hands of United States bankers; the demand for Caribbean products was growing; the need for a second canal across the Isthmus was becoming evident; the expansion of the American Empire across the Caribbean was a matter of course.

LABOUR CONDITIONS IN WESTERN CANADA

By A. MILLER

WESTERN CANADA has a labour situation peculiar to itself: in no other civilised country are the workers so heavily handicapped in their efforts to build organisations for their own protection. To the west is a vast reservoir of cheap labour (China and Japan) which Canada can practically tap at will; from the east come annually hundreds of thousands of Northern Europeans, pouring into the country as fast as ship can take them—different nationalities, with different ideas, different trade technique, the great majority of them thrown on a common market to sell their labour-power as best they may.

The bulk of this stream flows beyond Winnipeg to points west, and, though partially absorbed in the various farming districts, it mainly merges into the large floating population, continually on the move, between Winnipeg and Vancouver.

The new-comer's first step is to look up some of his own people, speaking his own language, with a view to getting the ever-necessary job. As a rule jobs are scarce, and being a stranger in a strange land, among people whose ways and language he does not understand, he is invariably forced by economic conditions to take anything in the way of work that he can get, usually at a few cents an hour less than average. Generally in periods of "prosperity" he and his fellows remain above the poverty line; but in times of depression—between seed-time and harvest, harvest and seed-time—many of them drift into the ranks of Canada's huge army of migratory labour, hopelessly begging their way from one casual job to another.

* * * *

In British Columbia the Chinese and Japanese workers for years have laboured for a much lower scale of wages than the whites. So long as they were satisfied to be exploited, all was well. As time passed, however, many of them started into business for themselves, and, with the keen Oriental methods of developing

any industry they may engage in, are now gradually forcing the small white trader—who cannot hold his own against big business—into the ranks of the unemployed.

These small traders raised a cry of “unfair competition” and “Oriental menace,” and made such a fuss “lobbying” at Victoria that they induced the Provincial Government to promulgate a minimum-wage law (forty cents per hour for all males employed in the lumber industry), supposed to take effect from November 1, 1926, with the intention of eliminating the Oriental from the lumber industry.

For many generations the white population of the world has exploited, wholesale, the coloured people: not only by using them as a source of cheap labour, but also indirectly by means of trading machine-made products against hand-made products on the world's market (the products of dead labour-power congealed in machinery, the products resulting from the released energies of oil, water-power, &c., traded for the products of hand-labour, foodstuffs, rice, raw rubber, &c.). The benefits of this exploitation are enjoyed by the white workers as well as the capitalists. This is quite evident in Britain, the head office of a great colonial empire. It is a well-established fact that British labour receives a fraction more than its rightful share of the world's variable capital; this fraction is filched from the rice-bowl of the coloured coolie.

In British Columbia the same applies: owing to the low wages of the Chinese, Japanese, and Hindu workers, the local millowners could, and did, pay a higher wage to their white workers than the labour market warranted (reserve of white labour).

Since the Provincial Government insists on enforcing this minimum-wage law, the employers in various sawmills, in order to meet this increase, have reduced the wages of the white workers, forcing a strike. The white workers in their extremity seek the co-operation of the Asiatic workers; but these same Asiatic workers have had dealings with the whites before, and have found them—in labour disputes between Orientals and employers—wanting. So far (November 28) the Orientals have refused to take action.

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The problem is interesting from a sociological and economic view-point: either the Oriental worker must rise to the white workers' standard of living or the white worker must sink to a bare subsistence level.

Some years ago, when workers' councils were springing up all over the country, many representatives of Chinese and Japanese labour bodies sat in these councils, but when they saw the chaotic state of the white workers' organisations they regretfully withdrew. Since then the view-point of both Oriental and white has been broadened and there is a more tolerant and sympathetic understanding between them. The Chinese and Japanese labour associations are very strong, and are ready—on any issue affecting their own workers—to take action at a moment's notice. The local white labour groups are lamentably weak, and though possessing a fairly virile Left Wing, this minority has not sufficient backing to enforce its ideas. Therefore, instead of white labour taking control of the situation and demanding the same wage scale for all men doing the same class of work, irrespective of nationality or colour, they have left this brilliant move for the "boss" to flounder on. The Provincial Government does not yet see its "mistake": the Oriental is a far better union man than the white, and in certain industries more steady and reliable. From now on he will demand, and get, all the wages the traffic will bear.

* * * *

Though the Pacific Coast will see the last dying flurries of the system, at present the capitalist machine is racing, to use a mechanical expression, with the governor off (production has doubled within the last ten years), yet the labouring population appears to be entirely indifferent to its own welfare. The small farmers, the largest body of workers in the country, are just beginning to feel the need of a union. There is little cohesion between the organised labour groups, very often an exaggerated friction over the merest trifles. At present there is a temporary harmony in the heavy industries (railroads) over the prospective fight for a wage increase.

At their forty-second annual convention the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada made an interesting discovery. A

resolution submitted set forth that the employers of the Dominion "are solidly united, being bound together by a solidarity of interest and organisation," and further stated that the principal weakness of the Canadian trade union movement "is the fact that our organisations are divided along sectional, national, international, independent, and even religious denominational lines." They might have added that the bulk of the workers do not hold a card in any labour organisation.

The strongest body of Canadian labour is the American Federation of Labour. Its branches are composed, particularly in the west, of small, gradually decreasing craft unions, whose officials busy themselves with petty co-operation schemes for the benefit of the employers and sedulously strangle any progressive move of the rank and file. Some of the units are only a step removed from job-monopoly trusts: their programmes range perilously near to those of company unions. The bureaucratic machines are strong, and are aided in their machinations against the advancing minority in the various local bodies by the main organisation on the American side, creating a chaotic and indifferent attitude towards unionism in the minds of the few workers who are organised.

Weak though this section of Canadian labour is, it is far more aggressive than the parent body to the south. In many places there is a tendency to break away; throughout the country there is a strong feeling that autonomy for Canadian labour would do much to energise and rebuild the movement.

Undoubtedly a break will occur in the near future; many of the advanced workers are concentrating their energies on the rebuilding of this almost reactionary organisation, with the intention of changing the constitution to include workers of all nationalities, to break down the barriers of race prejudice, to forge the various units into a weapon of defence against the eternal greed of the masters, and ultimately to use it as a battering-ram to shatter the outposts of capitalism.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

The League against Imperialism and for National Independence

THE Foundation Congress of the *League against Imperialism and for National Independence* was held in Brussels, February 10 to 15.

It was attended by 175 delegates representing organisations in thirty-seven countries. More than 100 of the delegates came from Eastern countries, no less than twenty-one coming from China alone. The organisations directly represented by mandated delegates included the National Revolutionary Army of China, the Chinese Trade Union Congress, the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang, the All-India National Congress, the Egyptian Nationalist Party, the South African Trade Union Congress, the Persian Revolutionary Republican Party, the Syrian Revolutionary Party, the African Committee for the Defence of the Negro Race, the Nationalist Movement of Indonesia, the American Civil Liberties Union, &c.

During the sessions of the Congress a number of important and stirring speeches, dealing with the position of the oppressed peoples in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and the practical tasks of the world-wide struggle against imperialism and for national independence, were made by prominent leaders of the movements in the countries represented.

The Agenda of the Conference comprised the following items :—

- (1) Opening address.
- (2) Imperialism and its consequences in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.
- (3) Imperialism and the danger of wars.
- (4) Co-operation between the national liberation movements in oppressed countries and the Labour and anti-imperialist movements in the imperialist countries.
- (5) Co-ordination of the national emancipation movements with the Labour Movements of all countries, colonial as well as imperialist.
- (6) Establishment of a permanent world-wide organisation linking up all forces against imperialism and colonial oppression.

The Congress issued a lengthy manifesto on the world situation which made necessary the formation of the League against Imperialism. It concludes with the declaration ;—

We announce to all oppressed peoples and all oppressed classes of the dominating nations the foundation of this League. We appeal to all who do not profit from the oppression of others, and who do not live on the fruits of the oppression, and to all who hate modern slavery and are longing for their own freedom and the freedom of their fellow men, to affiliate to us and to support us.

The Resolution on Imperialism

One of the most important resolutions adopted by the Congress was that defining its attitude and general policy towards imperialism. The main portion of this resolution is as follows :—

The Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism is of the opinion that capitalist foreign policy, by its very essence, can only end in the enslavement, forced labour, and extermination of the native population of the Colonial territories.

Imperialism is not an accidental phenomena, from which capitalism can rid itself of its own volition, it is the logical sequence of historical development. But finance capitalism which is economically and politically dominant in the capitalist mother countries is attaining direct profits through the exploitation of the native workers on the one hand and colossal profits through its domination of the sources of raw materials on the other.

The overwhelming majority of the working class in the imperialist countries do not participate in these extra profits, only small portions are thrown away by the capitalists to corrupt a small section of the working class. The situation of the working class in the mother countries is tremendously affected by the unlimited exploitation of colonial territories.

At present we are faced with two principal kinds of exploited colonial territories :—

- (1) Completely subjected countries which are governed by the motherland through its colonial bureaucracy.
- (2) Nominally independent countries, but which have been brought into actual dependence upon the imperialist powers through treaties forced upon them, and which represent a state of equal exploitation.

In direct opposition to the various forms of colonial suppression and exploitation, this congress demands that the national right of self-determination, which is only piously professed by the so-called League of Nations, should be realised through the complete liberation of all colonial nations and the immediate abrogation of all treaties not founded on the basis of equal rights.

In support of this demand the Congress also rejects any new acquisition of colonial countries by imperialist states as well as any new distribution of colonial mandates amongst States which at present do not possess any colonies, and amongst States which have lost their colonies; neither can any State or private capitalist derive special rights out of the fact that the capitalists of a foreign State have invested capital in the countries which are nominally still independent.

The most eminent representatives of the progressive European and American colonial world support this demand.

The Congress Against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism is called upon to cement the alliance of the struggling workers, peasants, small proprietors and intellectuals on the one hand, and a more comprehensive alliance between these sections of society and the class-conscious workers of the whole world on the other.

The representatives of working-class organisations participating in this Congress declare that they will not limit themselves to declarations of sympathy for the colonial fighters for liberty nor to resolutions of protest against the violence of the imperialist oppressors. We must organise our forces to prepare to take mass action. In the event of an imperialist state attempting to overthrow by force the liberation movement of colonial or dependent nations the representatives of organisations who are supporting this resolution must take the initiative and organise strikes, especially of transport workers against the despatch of troops and war material to the countries which have been compelled to resist the onslaught of the imperialist powers.

If such means are not sufficient to attain our objective, the working class must use the weapon of the General Strike to help liberate the subject nation. The representatives of colonial and dependent nations declare that they will transform the struggle against imperialism into mass action of the working class of their country. Further, they declare that in the event of an army intervening on behalf of an imperialist power, they will boycott them politically and economically and will intervene in favour of the menaced brother nation, which is struggling to defend itself.

This resolution applies at present especially to China. Our cry to all enemies of imperialist and capitalist exploitation is: "Join us and help transform our demands into action."

A further resolution on the united front in the struggle for emancipation of the oppressed nations deals with the alliance of the various national and working-class movements in the joint struggle against imperialism. It declares that the aim of every national emancipation movement worthy of the name must be to attain full political, economic, cultural and military autonomy.

Organisation of the League

The following statutes for the organisation of the League were adopted by the Congress :—

(1) The organisations and delegations united in the Brussels Congress against Imperialism and for National Independence decide to found an International Union against Imperialism and for National Independence.

(2) The name of the International union shall be the *League against Imperialism and for National Independence*.

(3) All organisations, all parties, trade-unions and persons who lead an earnest struggle against capitalist imperialist domination for the self-determination of all nations, for the national liberty of all peoples, for the equal rights of all classes and all men, shall be allowed to affiliate to the "League against Imperialism and for National Independence."

(4) The Congress Presidium which has been elected as the Provisional Executive Committee until the next Congress is charged with the working out of a Programme and Statutes for the "League against Imperialism and for National Independence." Both drafts must be submitted to all affiliated organisations for discussion at least three months before the new Congress.

(5) The Congress Presidium, constituted as Provisional Executive Committee, will be charged with the administration of the "League Against Imperialism and for National Independence."

(6) The Executive Committee will elect a Bureau consisting of seven members, of whom three will act as secretaries. The three secretaries as well as the whole Bureau are under the control of the Executive Committee and will

be elected at every Congress. In consideration of the importance of the Chinese-Indian struggle for emancipation and in consideration of the importance of the British Empire in connection with these movements, the Executive Committee decides that until the next Congress these secretaries shall be: one Chinese, one Indian, and a British representative. The other four members of the Bureau shall represent other groups of countries.

(7) The residence of the Bureau shall be decided by the Bureau and shall be the nearest to the greatest national movements for emancipation and in a country which guarantees the smoothest possible working of the Bureau. It is proposed that the headquarters shall next be situated at Paris.

(8) The Congress charges the Executive Committee and the Bureau with the organisation and conduct of agitation and propaganda on a broad scale against all forms of oppression of nations and mankind.

(9) The Bureau shall collect materials on the results of imperialist oppression in the different countries and it shall, by lectures, manifestoes and exhibitions in the capitalist countries, awaken the will among the manual and intellectual workers to support national and social struggles for emancipation of the oppressed peoples.

(10) The Bureau shall create in the most important centres of the imperialist movement—Latin-America, China, India, South and North Africa, and Egypt—branches which are to maintain permanent relations with the headquarters, and after agreement will lead their work of agitation and organisation for the "League against Imperialism and for National Independence." The branches shall be formed of members chosen according to the same principle as the members of the headquarters.

(11) At the beginning, the Executive Committee and the Bureau will rely in their activities upon the individual members until branches of the League have been formed and can undertake the function of such organisations. The Executive and the Bureau are charged with the undertaking of all necessary steps to create in all countries branches of the "League against Imperialism and for National Independence." The aim shall be to unite all similar organisations already in existence, for instance, the "Hands off China" Committee, the "Hands off Russia" committees, "Committees for Syria," "Committees for Morocco" the "League against Colonial Exploitation" and the "Anti-imperialist League," in the newly-created "League against Imperialism and for National Independence."

(12) All organisations or unions affiliated to the "International League against Imperialism and for National Independence," pledge themselves to support the League with all their power and to make a yearly contribution to the Bureau, according to their membership and financial strength.

(13) The Executive Committee is empowered to extend its membership by co-opting representatives of newly-formed sections of the League, as well as of representatives of working-class organisations and unions which have newly entered the League and recognised the decisions of the Brussels Congress.

(14) If in connection with the national movements for freedom, war complications should arise, or if imperialist States should attempt to suppress by force efforts to attain national freedom, the Executive Committee will, in view of the special circumstances, determine the extent and the methods of the action of solidarity in order to bring effective support to the threatened organisations. In such cases of imminent danger the Executive Committee shall be empowered to place itself in communication with trade unions and with political workers' Internationals in order to bring about mass-action of solidarity embracing all workers and peasants.

The following persons were elected as members of the Executive Committee : George Lansbury, M.P., president (Great Britain) ; H. Liao (China) ; Jawarlal Nehru (India) ; Mohamed Hatta (Indonesia) ; Lamine Senghor (Negro race) ; W. Munzenberg (Germany) ; Marteaux (Belgium) ; Edo Fimmen (Holland) ; Manuel Ugarte (Latin America) ; Henri Barbusse (France). Roger Baldwin (U.S.A.), R. Bridgman (Britain), and Gibarti (Germany) were elected as supplementary members.

Joint Declaration of British India and Chinese Delegates

Apart from the resolutions passed by the whole Congress (including those dealing with the national movements in particular countries, such as China, India, Indonesia, &c.), there were two especially important declarations issued by groups of delegates at the Congress. The first of these was a joint declaration of the British, Indian, and Chinese delegates in the following form :—

We, the undersigned members of the British, Indian and Chinese delegations, consider that the task of all working-class forces in imperialist countries is

- (1) To fight for full emancipation side by side with the national forces in oppressed countries in order to secure complete independence wherever such national forces so desire.
- (2) To oppose all forms of coercion against colonial peoples.
- (3) To vote against all credits, naval, military, and air, for the maintenance of armed force to be used against oppressed nations.
- (4) To expose the horrors of imperialism to the civil and military populations.
- (5) To expose imperialistic policy in the light of the working-class struggle for freedom.

In Relation to the Immediate Situation in China

- (1) We demand the immediate withdrawal of all armed forces from Chinese territory and waters.
- (2) We urge the need of direct action, including strikes and the imposition of the embargo to prevent movements of munitions and troops either to India or China and from India to China.
- (3) That estimates relating either to warlike preparations or to war shall be voted against.
- (4) That in the event of armed intervention or open war, every effort shall be made within the Labour Movement to use every weapon possible in the working-class struggle to prevent hostilities.
- (5) We demand the unconditional recognition of the Nationalist Government, the abolition of the unequal treaties and of extra-territorial rights and the surrender of foreign concessions.
- (6) Finally, in the interests of the Trade Union and Labour Movements in Britain, India and China, we pledge ourselves to work for their immediate close and active co-operation.

G. LANSBURY, M.P.
ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.
JOHN BECKETT, M.P.
FENNER BROCKWAY (I.L.P.)
JOHN STOKES, J.P.
HARRY POLLITT.
A. McMANUS.
W. RUST.

H. LIAU (E.C. of Kuomintang.)
LU CHUNG LING (General of Canton Army).
JAWARLAL NEHRU (Indian National Congress).
S. O. DAVIES.
R. BRIDGMAN.
HELEN CRAWFORD.

Resolution of the Trade Union Delegates

The second important declaration was that of the Trade Union delegates in favour of trade-union Unity and calling for strike action against war on China. The resolution declared :—

The undersigned delegates representing seventeen trade union organisations with 7,962,000 members of all races and taking part in the International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism held in Brussels from February 10 to 15, hereby declare their complete solidarity with all the oppressed people of the world struggling for their liberation from the yoke of imperialism, and pledge themselves to support them with all their strength and with all the means in their power.

At the moment when British imperialists are daily increasing the dispatch and the transport of arms, ammunition, war material and troops to China, at a moment when they are sending out their airplanes and battleships to crush the Chinese revolution, the undersigned representatives affirm that the only effective means for the people of the oppressing countries to prevent the imperialist war which is being prepared, is the preparation and the international organisation of the boycott against the transport of arms and ammunition, and of the general strike.

To this end it is necessary to undertake in each country an active campaign for popularising the adoption of partial strikes and of the General Strike. The decisions taken and resolutions passed by the Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism should be published in the Trade Union Press of the whole world and widely circulated among the workers in the towns and in the country.

In view of the permanent threat of wars created by the rivalries of the great imperialist powers in the world, and in order to give effective support to the struggle of the peoples for the right of free self-determination, the trade-union delegates to the Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism declare that International trade-union solidarity is more indispensable now than ever. They appeal to the Federation of Trade Unions of Amsterdam, to the Red International of Trade Unions of Moscow as well as to all the other organisations not affiliated to the existing Internationals, and demand, in the name of the 7,962,000 trade unionists whom they represent, that an agreement be rapidly arrived at for the creation of a single trade-union International embracing the unions of the five continents and the workers of all races and of all colours.

A single trade-union International alone can constitute a solid dam against which all the attempts to organise imperialist war will be destroyed.

The undersigned representatives urgently call upon the Trade Unions of all countries to put an end definitely to the distinction that still exists between the white and the coloured workers. All workers without distinction should be grouped locally, nationally and internationally in the same trade-union organisations.

The trade-union right of coalition, of assembly, of strike, of freedom of speech, and of the Press must be obtained for all the workers of colonial and semi-colonial countries.

While the workers of the countries under the domination of imperialism should not forget that the right of union has to be won by severe struggle, the workers and unions of the imperialist countries must also fight energetically to wrest this right from their respective capitalists for the workers and peasants of the colonies.

The division into races, colours, and categories of workers, the divisions between trade-union organisations nationally and internationally, merely serve the interests of the capitalists and imperialists, who are enabled to continue their domination solely by reason of this division and of the unorganised condition of far too large a number of workers.

The General Council of the I.F.T.U.

THE last meeting of the General Council of the I.F.T.U. was held at Amsterdam on January 12-14. The chief subject discussed was that of relations with the Russian unions, which had previously been raised in February and December, 1925.¹ This discussion followed the controversy of the previous week in the *Daily Herald* started by Mr. Citrine's attack on Losovsky. Mr. Citrine, though not a delegate, was present at the meetings.

The proposal of the British delegates, moved by Mr. Geo. Hicks, was that:—

The General Council of the I.F.T.U., having regard to the repeated and earnest request of the British T.U.C. and the imperative need for a united international trade union movement, agrees to the convening of a conference, without preliminary conditions being laid down by either side, it being distinctly understood that such a conference would be confined to representatives of the I.F.T.U. and of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions.

Mr. Hicks, in moving the resolution, gave three chief reasons:—

- (1) That it was the policy of the I.F.T.U. to promote world trade union unity.
- (2) That unity is necessary to overcome the difficulty of getting in the Australian, South African, and Indian unions.
- (3) That unity is necessary in resisting the attack on labour standards and to prevent war.

Immediately after this speech M. Stenhuis (Dutch) moved the closure and the vote was taken without further discussion. The motion was lost by six votes to twelve.

Through the President, Mr. A. A. Purcell, the I.F.T.U. was thanked for financial help to the British miners during the lock-out.

On the question of Mexico, the General Council passed the following resolution:—

The General Council of the I.F.T.U. is watching with keen interest events in Mexico. Our sympathies are with the Mexican people and their Government. We assure the Mexican people of the support of the international organised Labour Movement in resisting acts of foreign aggression and interference.

The application for affiliation of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of South Africa, covering 40,000 coloured workers, was accepted, with the provision that if a joint centre of white and coloured workers was set up in South Africa the union could affiliate to that centre. The affiliation of the International Amalgamated Workers' Association of South Africa was ended, as the union has not paid dues for some years. Also affiliation of the newly created Lithuanian centre, covering 18,486 members, was accepted, and the I.L.O. is to be asked to make an inquiry into conditions in Lithuania

¹ See LABOUR MONTHLY, April, 1925, p. 234, and January, 1926, p. 59.

BOOK REVIEW

THE GENERAL STRIKE AGAIN

The British Public and the General Strike. By Kingsley Martin. (The Hogarth Press, 3s. 6d.)

A Workers' History of the General Strike. By R. W. Postgate, Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., and J. F. Horrabin. (Plebs League, 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, 1s.)

A PART from a book on road transport by Mr. George Glasgow, Mr. Kingsley Martin's book on the General Strike is the first to be published by an author having no ostensible connection with any section of the Labour Movement.

It is rather a book about certain aspects of the General Strike than about the Strike itself, and as such is packed with acute and witty observations. The book commences with a reference to the columns of self-congratulations which appeared in the capitalist Press at the end of the General Strike. As the author says:—

There was general agreement that the end of the General Strike was a proper moment for a mutual exchange of bouquets. The newspapers agreed that there had been a fight, but many of them insisted that owing to the peculiarities of the British national character there had not been any combatants who could be specified or any victory that was wise to mention. . . . Mr. Baldwin declared that the end of the strike was a victory not for any part of the nation, but for "common sense," while Mr. Thomas was glad to find that, although both sides had "shown themselves warriors," there had been no vanquished and no victors.

Mr. Martin goes on to discuss the "common sense of the British people" which is alleged to have brought the General Strike to a satisfactory conclusion without undesirable incidents.

Frequently we boast of being "illogical" and of possessing a practical instinct amounting to genius. "This appears to be that English people prefer to face a problem rather in terms of power than in terms of philosophy. . . . English social history is the history of gradual concessions, extorted from the ruling classes after protracted struggles, usually fought on irrelevant issues."

The question has to be answered, however, how the General Strike came at all in face of the highly developed machinery for conciliation which the employing class had built up in the course of a century, and the explanation offered by Mr. Martin certainly suggests that he has a keener insight into social realities than many people posing as leaders of the Labour Movement. He says:—

Under these circumstances how are we to explain the fact that in 1926, as one Cabinet Minister has said, England found itself nearer to civil war than at any time since the seventeenth century? A complete answer would be a very complex one. The nineteenth century was a period of "increasing returns" in England; national prosperity increased even faster than population, because England's place in the commerce of the world was a supreme one. . . . In the twentieth century England no longer holds this proud position. Our population

is dependent upon an export trade which is not likely altogether to recover. The war, and still more the peace, have accelerated a decline already noticeable before 1914, and to-day great organisations struggle for decreasing profits. Capitalism, the vague word we use for an unorganised method of supplying the goods and services of society, seems progressively incapable of satisfying our needs. The problem that arises cannot be settled by common sense; a concession here or a strike defeated there does nothing to solve it.

That betrays at least a reasonably clear understanding of the background of the General Strike, which must be grasped if the place of the General Strike in the political development of Great Britain is to be understood.

The question of the nature of the Strike itself has, of course, been widely discussed in the Labour Movement, and Mr. Martin's opinion is given as follows:—

The difference between the sympathetic and the peaceful General Strike and the revolutionary strike is not that one is political and the other industrial. In a highly organised community every large strike affects the "community as a whole," and may necessitate Government interference. . . . The distinction lies not in the scope of the strike, but in the intentions of the strikers. If those who control the strike have a limited objective, the strike is not revolutionary, whether it happens to conform exactly to legal requirements or not. If the objective is to overthrow the constituted method of government and the existing form of social structure, the strike is revolutionary.

The objection to this distinction is that it is entirely static and does not take into consideration the possibility of the development of the first form of the General Strike into the second. In any great revolutionary movement the intention of the mass of participants is often limited at the outset, but the development of the struggle often carries the movement much further than the majority of those participating in it had originally intended, and we are afraid that Mr. Martin somewhat spoils his definitions by trying to erect a Chinese Wall between the one form of the General Strike and the other. In any case both involve a struggle against the capitalist State.

In discussing the situation leading up to the Strike, Mr. Martin divides the working class and the capitalists into roughly four groups—the class-conscious capitalists, the reformist capitalists, the Labour reformists, and the class-conscious workers.

That there are superficial grounds for the distinctions here noted is doubtless true, but Mr. Martin's analysis of the tendencies of those groups is the most unsatisfactory feature of the book. It is true that there are differences in the capitalist ranks, between, say, Mr. Evan Williams and Sir Herbert Samuel. It does not follow, however, that Sir Herbert Samuel is less class-conscious than Mr. Williams; it only means that he represents a slightly different grouping of economic interests.

Nor do we think that Mr. Martin's description of the aims of the Labour reformists—the peaceful attainment of Socialism, &c.—is quite accurate. If the classification is worth making at all on the basis of our General Strike experiences, it would justify us linking the Labour reformist leaders and the capitalist reformists in the one group, for the whole experience of the General Strike showed that on essential questions—the Coal Commission, the Samuel

Memorandum, the Bishops' Proposals—there was little difference between those groups.

The chapter on the General Strike and the Constitution is well worth reading, although space forbids us to quote it.

The last chapter deals with the questions of the future and indicates that, in the opinion of the author, at the present moment—

the omens are all in favour of a revolutionary future for England. . . . At present, it must be admitted, the upper classes are doing their best to fulfil Communist prophecies, and make the revolutionary future for England possible.

Mr. Martin does not like that future. He believes that it may mean "the destruction of civilisation," &c., but he does not seem to be able to indicate any way in which the struggle can be avoided, except perhaps a change of heart. Here obviously the author's sentiments rebel against his reason.

* * * * *

The Plebs text-book has already aroused some controversy, which is likely to develop. This is all to the good: if differences of opinion exist with regard to the General Strike they should be hammered out. What the Labour Movement has to fear is not controversy but the attitude of refusing to discuss our experiences on the plea of letting bygones be bygones.

The book is divided into four parts. Parts 1 and 3 are written by J. F. Horrabin and Ellen Wilkinson, and Parts 2 and 4 by R. W. Postgate. To our mind, the book, while containing new material, is an unsatisfactory production. No attempt is made to indicate the economic and political developments which led up to the General Strike, and what features created the outlook among the workers which made their response to the Strike so great as it was. This is a mistake. One must examine the General Strike in relation to the previous developments or one can neither understand the General Strike nor the controversies which have arisen out of it.

The first chapter of the book deals with the period of the truce between Red Friday and the Strike itself. The Government's preparations are specified, as is also the refusal of the T.U.C. to consider the question of preparations as an urgent one. The Coal Commission is mentioned, but no indication is given of the rôle of that body in the Government's campaign of preparations. Was it one of the weapons of the Government's attack upon the miners or was it an impartial body? The Plebs book does not tell us what in the opinion of the authors was its purpose. This is a very important point, as will be seen when we come to deal with the question of the Samuel Memorandum.

In regard to the T.U.C.'s refusal to prepare, this is explained as being due to the reinforcement of the right wing on the General Council and "a not unnatural spirit of optimism of the left leaders on the General Council due to the all-too-easy victory of July."

It is difficult to accept this explanation of the attitude of the left leaders. A few days after Red Friday, Baldwin definitely threatened the T.U. Movement in the House of Commons. His threats were replied to both by Bromley and Purcell. The Government's preparations were perfectly obvious to those leaders, and it is difficult to see how they could have acquired their optimism as to the possibilities of an easy victory for the workers in a future

struggle. To our mind, the truth is that immediately the Government began preparations to defeat the workers if they supported the miners, the left leaders, like the right, showed themselves in many cases anxious to avoid a conflict by inducing the miners to surrender.

Part 3 is a continuation of the narrative, so far as negotiations are concerned, by the same authors. The story of the negotiations is told, and then comes the following passage which appears to us to be nothing less than a defence of the attitude of the General Council :—

Nothing is easier than to be wise after the event, but no one who reads the terms of this Memorandum in the light of all that has happened since can help doubting whether the miners were wise in their rejection of it. If anything, it was more favourable to them than the draft proposal which their own officials signed at the House of Commons on May 3 (although their Executive Committee afterwards did not endorse their action). However loyal they might be to them, the organised workers in non-blackleg-proof industries were not in a position to fight as long as the miners. While it was true that the General Council could give no written guarantee that the Government would accept these terms, yet had the miners accepted them in good faith, the General Strike could have terminated in such a way as to leave the miners' supporters full of enthusiasm, and it is doubtful whether any Government could have faced, *at this time*, the consequences of rejecting them.

The only meaning of this is that the miners should have accepted unspecified reductions in wages—for such was the meaning of the Samuel Memorandum—and gone back to work. The defeat of the General Strike in these circumstances would have been more complete than it was. The employers, having smashed the miners, could have smashed the rest of the working class quite easily, and reduced the Trade Union Movement to impotence in a very quick time. It was the miners' continuance of the struggle which exhausted the capitalist class to a considerable extent, and has for the moment gained a breathing space for other sections of workers.

The view expressed in the above quotation is substantially the same as that of the General Council, and one wonders how the authors bring this view in harmony with the passages in other parts of the book. For instance, on page 87, Mr. Postgate in describing the calling off of the General Strike says :—

There was a dramatic scene in many strike committee rooms, as at Nottingham, where the committee members, while they could hear their sellers selling their own "victory bulletins" in the street, slowly realised that the true story was one of ignominious defeat.

If, however, the terms of the Samuel Memorandum were worthy of acceptance, and if it was a satisfactory termination to the General Strike, then the question of ignominious defeat does not arise. Ignominious defeat has only meaning provided one regards the Samuel Memorandum itself as a document in which were embodied terms of defeat.

The defence of the Samuel Memorandum reads strangely when one comes to the end of the book and reads the summing-up :—

Two main issues which must be faced, and faced forthwith, by the working class movement remain after all discussion. Both the General Council and the miners made a serious blunder in not defining exactly the terms and

conditions on which the miners handed over the conduct of their dispute to the General Council when the General Strike was called. Secondly, and this is of far deeper significance than any questions of tactics or of organisation, the outlook of many of the most influential trade union leaders does not take into account the realities of the post-war struggle. It is not a question of "incapacity," still less of "treachery"; it is the refusal to realise that the whole working class is engaged in a bitter struggle for its standards of life in which no quarter will be given by the other side.

If, however, the terms of the Samuel Memorandum on which the Strike was called off are such that "no one can help doubting . . . whether the miners were wise in their rejection of it," one cannot also help doubting whether the strictures on the General Council are justified, because any defence of the Samuel Memorandum is a defence of the leadership of the General Council, and if the Samuel Memorandum was a worthy document the General Council was a worthy leadership.

The Plebs text-book, like a good W.E.A. publication, is facing both ways, and trying to please everybody. It is impartial, but it is not candid.

Nor is it clear in its conclusions which we have just quoted as to the leadership. Too much is made of the failure of the miners and the General Council to define the terms and conditions on which the miners handed over the conduct of the dispute. The fundamental difference between the General Council and the miners was not that they were confused as to the rights of their respective bodies in the conduct of the dispute, but that the General Council stood definitely on the side of the capitalists and the Government for a reduction of miners' wages, while the miners were determined to resist any encroachments on their standard of life.

To regard the issue as a mere muddle between two trade union bodies as to their rights and functions is to obscure the deeper divergences of policy between the miners and the General Council. The General Council, like the Government and the mine-owners, favoured reductions in wages. The miners did not. The book recognises this fact, but does not recognise that this divergence of aim was the real cause of the division between the miners and the General Council, and not any question of the respective functions of the General Council and the miners in the Strike.

Nor do we understand what is meant by saying that the outlook of the trade union leaders "does not take into account the realities of the post-war struggle" and then adding, "It is not a question of incapacity." Surely the inability of a leadership to take into account the realities of a struggle is itself a classic example of incapacity!

To argue otherwise, as the book does, is like saying, "During the great war, Sir John French was not incapable; he merely thought that the Germans ought to have been fought on the same lines as were the Boers."

What is "the refusal to realise that the whole working class is engaged in a bitter struggle" but treachery?

One must agree, however, with the subsequent remarks of this chapter that "the corpse at the inquest was not the theory of the General Strike, but the nineteenth-century trade union leadership, which refused to face up to the class issues involved in the miners' struggle."

It is therefore unfortunate that the disembodied spirit of this corpse has influenced the Plebs text-book as it has done.

Parts 2 and 4 of the book deal with the developments of the Strike itself, and are well done, although now and then Mr. Postgate goes out of his way to have a malicious dig at the Communist Party, as in the assertion that the headquarters of the Communist Party were an exception to the discipline of the workers in that they attacked the General Council.

This is a sheer confusion of thought. The Communist Party did nothing to injure the discipline of the workers on strike, but did everything possible to maintain that discipline. It, however, saw that the leaders were preparing to betray the strike, and endeavoured to warn the workers in time. The breach of discipline—if one can call treachery by so soft a name—was on the part of the General Council and not on the part of the Communist Party.

There is, however, interesting material in this portion of the book, although why a book to which an eminent authority on geography has contributed should place the Vale of Leven in Fife we do not know.

In the bibliography attached to the book most of the previous books on the General Strike are slighted. Mr. Burns' book "is prefaced by the author's comments and his instructions for the next General Strike." Mr. J. T. Murphy's book "is devoted to proving the correctness of the Communist Party, facts being selected in accordance with this aim."

Mr. R. P. Arnot's book "is biased by a desire to enhance the part played by the Communist Party." Mr. A. J. Cook's pamphlet "is written under stress of deep emotion against the General Council."

The Plebs book is issued after all these others, and might have avoided the defects that its authors noticed elsewhere. We cannot say that it has done so, or that a book worthy of the theme and of the material has been written. Certain parts of the book will doubtless be found useful, but it is as well for the reputation of the Plebs League that it does not accept responsibility for the book.

J.R.C.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Nationalise the Railways.* By F. E. Lawley, B.A. (I.L.P. Lit. Dept., 16 pp., 2d.)
- Art and Culture in Relation to Socialism.* By Arthur Bourchier. (I.L.P. Lit. Dept., 16 pp., 3d.)
- The Coming Time and other Poems.* By Bardie McPhee. (Arthur H. Stockwell, Ltd., 20 pp., 1s.)
- Hundred Per Cent. Indian.* By C. G. Shah. (C. G. Shah, New Era Series No. 1, 57 pp., 6 annas.)
- Strike Strategy.* By Wm. Z. Foster. (T.U. Educational League, 88 pp., 25 cents.)
- The Indian Problem and its Solution.* A Letter by the Head of the Ahmadyeja Community to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India. (31 pp.)
- British Imperialism in China.* By Elinor Burns. (Labour Research Department, Colonial Series No. 3, 64 pp., 6d.)
- The General Strike.* By R. Page Arnot. (Labour Research Department, 245 pp., 23s.)

- Information on the Problem of Security (1917-1926).* By J. W. Wheeler-Bennett and F. E. Langermann. With an Introduction by the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 10s.)
- Thomas Spence and His Connections.* By Olive D. Rudkin. (Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.)
- A Worker's History of the Great Strike.* By R. W. Postgate, Ellen Wilkinson, M.P. and J. F. Horrabin. (The Plebs League, 110 pp., 1s.)
- Jesus.* By Henri Barbusse. (Flammarian, 249 pp., 12 francs.)
- Under Fire.* By Henri Barbusse. Trans. by Fitzwater Wray. (J. M. Dent & Sons, Everyman, cloth, 298 pp., 2s.)
- Background of the Plymouth Trial.* By Bartholomeo Vanzetti. (Road to Freedom Group, Boston, 38 pp., 25 cents.)
- Bolshevist Russia.* By Anton Karlgren. Trans. by Anna Barwell. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, 311 pp., 12s. 6d.)
- Thomas More and His Utopia.* By Karl Kautsky. Trans. by H. J. Stenning. (A. & C. Black, Ltd., 250 pp., 6s.)
- Labour Party, Ltd.* A Play of the Year after Next. By George E. Wilkinson. (Auckland Agenda Press, 24 pp., 1s.)
- Justice Among Nations.* By Horace G. Alexander, M.A. Marsten's Peace Lecture. (Hogarth Press, 58 pp., 1s.)
- Russia in 1926.* By R. F. and M. G. McWilliams. (J. M. Dent & Sons, 128 pp., 3s. 6d.)

Radek replies in the 'Socialist Review'

This month's *Socialist Review* contains a long article by Karl Radek on Russia's Eastern policy. He asks J. L. Garvin and the British war-mongers to drink a glass of cold water before they write about war with Russia!

Other articles by Ernst Toller, Wilfred Wellock, M.P., Shiuh-Pui She (Chinese Information Bureau).

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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
W.C.1*

w13919

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

April, 1927

Number 4

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THE LABOUR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

has just published two
new books on the General
Strike. These are

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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 9

APRIL, 1927

NUMBER 4

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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Published at
162 Buckingham Palace Road
London
S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

152 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : 5 LOANE 5412.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

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NOTES of the MONTH

Three Fronts—Troops in China—Offensive Plan—Imperialist Responsibility—The Soviet Note—Reasons for Delay—Chamberlain's War Aims—Die-Hards and Moderates—Plan of Campaign—United Front Against—Social Democracy's Rôle—Preparing the War—A French Testimony—A Swedish Example—MacDonald and Chamberlain—"Foreign" Interference—International Socialism—British "Interference" in India—The Soviet's Crime—"Soviet versus Civilisation"—The Home Fight—Making Communism Illegal—Splitting Campaign—Communism the Heart of the Fight—The Left Wing—The Single Front

THE British Government's offensive of 1927 is developing in a complicated situation. Three fronts are involved. The first is China. The second is the Soviet Union. The third is the British Labour Movement. It is the peculiarity of the present situation that the Conservative Government has formally proclaimed its offensive against all three at once. The provocative movement of the troops in China, the Note to the Soviet Union and the subsequent League Council proceedings, and the projected legislation against the Trade Unions are all developing simultaneously. What is the actual first point of attack and the line of campaign? This is the question of the moment. It is clear that the fullest vigilance of the working-class movement is needed to meet the attack in whatever forms it may further develop.

IN the forefront of immediate concentration is the already begun military offensive against China. The troops in Shanghai have been used, immediately on arrival, to shield a barbarous terror against the Shanghai Trade Unions, on a scale never attempted before the arrival of the British troops, and carried out with the open assistance and co-operation of the International

Settlement authorities and police. (This dropping of the thin veneer of civilisation by the Western Imperialist exploiters as soon as their interests are really threatened should open the eyes of the Western workers to the real character of the fight in front.) The stationing of the interventionist forces on a twenty-one-mile front in Chinese territory well beyond the Settlement area with explicit instructions to resist the advance of the Chinese National Army "by all means at their disposal" (what has happened to MacDonald's pledge of January 21 that there was "no intention whatever" of using the troops against the Canton Army under any circumstances, but only against the "danger of crowds"? —*Daily Herald*, January 21, 1927) is already the first expression of what is equivalent to an offensive military plan.

IT is significant that the other Powers, apart from Italy's fifty men, have so far ostentatiously refused to take part in the British line, and have publicly instructed their forces to confine their rôle to defence: the United States marines "will be used to protect American life and property, but not to resist the regular Chinese forces" (*The Times*, March 3). This division within imperialism may disappear if a crisis develops; but so far it is equivalent to a propagandist declaration by the other Powers in their own interests that they regard the British policy as an offensive policy. British Imperialism is determined to fight, if necessary, from the base of Shanghai; to hold Shanghai in effective control, under whatever form (even though the Nationalists should enter Shanghai), at all costs; and from this base either to force a settlement with Moderate Nationalism by mingled coercion and promises, or, if this fails, to enter on an aggressive campaign up the Yang-tse. In the words of *The Times* correspondent in the beginning of February:—

Let us stand by Shanghai, protect our own and the Chinese interests already centred there for security, and let us continue to make concessions to Nationalism, and hope that Shanghai will come to be the rallying point for those moderate elements through whom alone sanity can be restored to this country. (*The Times*, February 3, 1927.)

Here is as definite a counter-revolutionary policy as any Archangel or Kolchak intervention in Russia. And this policy is being

conducted by the British Conservative Government with armed forces, guns, tanks, and cruisers at the very same time as it is sending notes of protest to the Soviet Union against interference in the affairs of other countries! This is the actual aggressive action of imperialism all over the world which is condoned and defended by the Labour Front Benchers, who hold up their hands in horror at international Communist propaganda.

HAD it not been for the British "Defence Force" in Shanghai, it is manifest that the National forces would have already long ago been in peaceful occupation of the city, and the disorderly rout of bandit forces maintained by British subsidies (not least by the surtaxes so magnanimously conceded in the December Note) would have been completely dissolved. It is notorious that Chang, in the North, the final obstacle to Chinese unity and emancipation, has only been maintained by the subsidies and equipment of successive imperialist groups; and it is rumoured that he has only entered on his present campaign after very heavy inducement from British sources. The Conservative Press correspondents have themselves testified to the horror and hatred of the whole population for the mercenary anti-Nationalist forces with their looting and banditry. Every competent observer has confirmed the view that, if the imperialist maintenance and subsidising of these forces were removed, the National cause would overrun the whole of China without a struggle in a very short time. The civil war has been literally the creation of the imperialists, who since 1911 have fought the Chinese revolution and prevented Chinese unity by these means. The principal obstacle still to the final organisation of Chinese unity and freedom is British Imperialism with its guns and subsidies. This is the real meaning of the sending of the "Defence Force," under cover of talk of defending a handful of thousands of British lives, not one of which has even been in danger, to the complete exclusion of consideration of the four hundred million Chinese, whose lives and vital interests are endangered, and thousands upon thousands of whom have already in the last few years been massacred by British guns.

IN the midst of this Chinese campaign has come the complication of the Note to the Soviet Union. What is the object of this Note, and what action does it foreshadow? It is manifest that to engage a simultaneous full offensive against China and the Soviet Union at once, without any basis of certainty of the ground yet in either case so as to be able to concentrate on a single front, would be to commit an elementary error of strategy, of which British bourgeois policy, with its circuitous opportunism until the favourable striking moment arrives, is seldom guilty. It is therefore probable that there is some measure of correctness in the reports which attribute the Note to the pressure of the extreme Right "Die-Hard" elements upon the Government, and that the Note is a half-way concession to these elements. In so far as this is correct, it is a favourable sign, despite the immediate dangers raised. It means that an increasing section of the British bourgeoisie is losing its head at the dangers of Communism and revolution seen by them on every side—that is, at the growing dilemmas and crises of British capitalist decline—and is reaching the point of wishing to strike out blindly in every direction at once, without calculation of consequences. But it must always be remembered that the extreme "Anti-Red" "Die-Hards" are not yet the Government, which is pursuing a much more dangerous policy along the traditional lines of British diplomacy and imperialism. In this policy the Note to the Soviet Union is also able to have its place, as a propagandist preparation, foreshadowing future but not immediate action, and providing the occasion for any sudden rupture at a later point to give it the appearance of long-protracted preparation and "patience."

WHAT the Note to the Soviet Union clearly shows is that the will to strike is already fully present and unconcealed so soon as the favourable occasion presents itself. The Note is a Note of war-preparation, not of the diplomatic settlement of difficulties. It explicitly excludes discussion or negotiation. The charges are not practical issues, but bear the character of a compiled and unconvincing "case." But if this is the sentiment, what is the reason for postponing a break?

Pressed on this point by the "Die-Hards," Chamberlain could only answer that the "imponderables" of the international situation had to be taken into account. What these "imponderables" are is clear enough to all. In 1925, pressed on the same point for a rupture with the Soviet Union, Chamberlain answered that "it would complicate domestic issues." This was in June, 1925, on the eve of Red Friday, when the attack on the miners and the working class was due to come. Owing to the strength of the Left forces in the working class, this attack took longer than expected, and absorbed the main attention of the Government for a year and a half. During this period the Locarno policy had to hang fire and the China situation be left to develop. Only with the beginning of this year has the Government felt free again to concentrate on its international policy. And this time, in 1927, the loudly demanded rupture with the Soviet Union is again held up, this time by the "imponderables" of the international situation. In other words, the China crisis must be mastered first; and the anti-Soviet coalition in Europe has still to be completely built up.

WHAT Chamberlain said in detail even more clearly indicates the dominant policy of the Government. He said, answering the question of why no immediate action was proposed:—

A breach between us and Soviet Russia . . . *if taken suddenly* or before the world saw what was the provocation, what was the inevitability of it, and before the world was in a position to place the responsibility—*as the responsibility will lie whenever this comes about—* on the right shoulders . . . to act before we had given time for the evidence to become clear would have had a very disturbing effect upon the European situation.

This statement is the statement of a man solely concerned with the diplomatic preparation of a war. The coming war with the Soviet Union is assumed: the only problem is the correct preparation of "war-responsibility." The statement bears an ominously similar ring in its actual phrasing to the statements of Baldwin and Churchill in 1925 defending the subsidy and Red Friday as preparation for May 1 ("if they were going to embark on a struggle of this kind, let them be quite sure that decisive public opinion was behind them," "if such an issue should ever

have to be brought to a head, public opinion would have to be educated into a state of preparedness to accept the consequences," &c.). In the same tone Snowden, who had already been quoted by Chamberlain with complete approval in his own support, echoed Chamberlain when he said:—

Let him make another effort to try to settle the questions, and if he failed, then he would have a much stronger case than he had to-day to ask the House to break off relations.

The preparation of the "case" for the future war on the Soviet Union as completely obsesses the language and expression of the Foreign Office to-day as the building up of the anti-Soviet coalition dominates its diplomatic actions.

IT is solely from the complicated character of the situation that follows the division within the Conservative ranks between the "moderates" and the "Die-Hards." The division does not represent any division in class-hatred and enmity to the Soviet Union and to the working class, which is equally clear and conscious in either case. The difference is only the difference between a blind desire for immediate action, and a conscious, calculating policy, which endeavours to take all the factors into account and to prepare the ground for effective action. The change-over of Sir Robert Horne, the original negotiator of the Trade Agreement, from moderation to extremism illustrates this. Speaking in Glasgow, he explained that he had negotiated the Trade Agreement because "he felt that no Communistic organisation could ultimately prevail against the necessities of trading with individualistic nations, and he thought that the sooner commercial relations were established between Russia and the outside world the sooner would the Russian people appreciate the desirability of conforming to the ways of the rest of civilised mankind." That is to say, he consciously regarded the Trade Agreement as a means, direct armed intervention having failed, of undermining Communism in Russia by subtler weapons. But in this he had to confess himself disappointed: "there was probably no person in the island more disappointed than he." The power of the Communist Government in Russia, and the work of socialistic construction, has not been broken by the subtler weapons of foreign trade and capitalist hopes of pene-

tration any more than by direct armed intervention; against the Workers' State Monopoly as against an impenetrable wall the capitalist sappers have come to grief. Hence the return to the policy of direct rupture and armed war, as illustrated in Sir Robert Horne's conversion. But Sir Robert Horne's conversion and new war-propagandist zeal is no news for the Foreign Office. For the Foreign Office the question has already long been, not whether, but how.

IF the China crisis can be mastered—if, that is to say, either a settlement can be effected with Moderate Nationalism which will safeguard imperialism against the Left, that is, against the Chinese workers and peasants; or if at any rate a check can be established to the National advance and a definite partition of China between North and South established—then the full concentration on the Soviet Union is likely to follow. But even then the preparation in Europe has to be completed. Poland has been secured by the suitably engineered revolution of last May (the Conservatives have no hesitation at engineering revolutions in other countries when it suits their purpose), and Lithuania by the more recent coup. But the Baltic bloc is not yet stably secured, as the Soviet-Latvian Agreement has shown, short of further coups to cover Latvia and Finland; and while Germany has been slowly won over with liberal offers to recognise its obligations to take part in the future League of Nations' war for "civilisation," the elements of opposition, both Nationalist and working class, are very strong, representing the majority of the nation (the ratification of Locarno was opposed by party votes representing the majority of the electorate); and the German-Polish differences have still to be settled, a task to which the last League Council has been devoted. Finally, the reaction of the working class in Britain and Western Europe is still a doubtful factor, despite the zealous efforts of the Second International leaders to stir up anti-Russian feeling; and in particular, the opposition of the British working class may assume dangerous proportions, especially if an attack on Trade Union rights is taking place at the same time. For this reason it is likely that the home attack will be moderated, and every effort made to draw the leadership into "agreed"

reforms, or, failing this, then by withdrawal on some of the more aggressive issues and unexpected concessions and readiness to make changes on others, to create an atmosphere of "reasonableness."

IN this situation it is obviously the policy of the working class to maintain the maximum unity along the whole front. If only effective and unbreakable unity between the British working class, Chinese Nationalism, and the Soviet Union can be maintained, on the basis of a clear recognition of common interests, then the whole attack of British Imperialism must fall to the ground. The resistance of the miners to the British bourgeoisie facilitated the advance of Chinese Nationalism. To-day the advance of Chinese Nationalism is lessening the force of the otherwise inevitable attack on the Trade Unions in Britain. The support of the Soviet workers to the miners can and will receive no less solidarity from the British working class in the hour of common trial and attack on the Soviet Union. The ties which united the Soviet workers and the British workers against intervention in 1920 have grown a hundredfold stronger in the seven years' common experience since then. There could be no greater mistake than to suppose that the carefully prepared plans of the Imperialists must necessarily take their course. Just as their plans of intervention in the past were defeated, just as their plans of carving up China into concessions for the different powers have been wrecked, so to-day their plans can be checked and broken in the early stages by the strength of agitation and opposition, and by the solidarity of the forces against them. Even the limited opposition forced from below on to the Labour Party front bench leaders in relation to China has hampered the development of the full aggressive designs. If this limited opposition could be turned into active fraternisation with Chinese Nationalism and agitation of the whole force of the Labour Movement for the recall of the troops and the stoppage of further war supplies, it would not only check the designs on China, but it would also break the attack on the Soviet Union and break the whole force of the attack on the Trade Unions in view of the new crisis that would result in the Chinese situation. It is the whole

key to working-class policy in the present period to grasp the meaning of this single front.

THE aim of the Government is to divide the working-class and revolutionary forces arrayed against them. Just as on the home front they seek to divide the workers along sectional lines of craft or industry, so on the international front they seek to divide the workers along national lines, to appeal to common "British" interests "without distinction of class" against the Chinese, against the Russians, &c. And it is here that the rôle of the reformist leaders and of Social Democracy comes in—to break up the workers' ranks on behalf of the Government, to support the Government's pleas, to oppose class unity and international unity, to divide the British workers from the Soviet workers, to play on sectional feeling against common working-class needs at home, to play on national prejudice against international "interference" in world issues. An examination of the rôle of the Second International and the Amsterdam International since their inception will show that in every crisis which has taken place, throughout all their utterances and expressions (there are no actions to examine), this rôle has been the same, of dividing the workers, opposing international unity, and supporting imperialist diplomacy. This rôle now reaches its highest point in the preparation of the campaign against the Soviet Union.

THREE principal crises have dominated the present period since the closing of the era of pacifist-democratic illusions of 1924. The first has been the General Strike of last year, with its long preparation, and the now following attack on the Trade Unions and the Left Wing. The second is the Chinese struggle which is still in full swing. The third is the attack on the Soviet Union which is still in preparation. In all of these the rôle of the reformist leaders has been so clear that no worker can fail to see it. In the General Strike they opposed beforehand the long struggle for international unity and class unity in preparation; they opposed preparations; in the struggle itself they separated the miners from the other workers, and surrendered the working-class issue of no reductions for the Government policy of lower wages.

The Amsterdam International and the Miners' International prevented international unity of action and acted as blacklegs, in defiance of their pledges. (It is a grim commentary on the Miners' International under Hodges and the reformists that, while American coal was used to break the British miners, the American miners' own wage agreement and a new demand for a 20 per cent. wage cut now comes due on April 1, and British coal is busily being ordered by the American owners in preparation.) In the threatened attack on the Trade Unions we have seen how the reformist leaders have already broken the ranks by joining up with the capitalist industrial peace campaign, and throwing out the suggestion of a Government "inquiry," as well as by conducting their own campaign of splitting and disfranchisement in the local labour parties and the Trade Unions, thus clearing the way for the Government attack. On the issue of China we have seen last month how they have performed their rôle by crying up the Government policy of "peace," warning the British workers against Chinese "mobs" and "firebrands," preventing working-class action to check the dispatch of troops, and thus becoming accessories in practice of the whole military interventionist policy in China. The same process is now visible in the preparation of the attack on the Soviet Union, and it is so vital a part of the whole offensive that it needs special examination.

RECENTLY the well-known French Socialist writer Augustin Hamon (the translator of Shaw) has found himself compelled to comment on the extraordinary rôle of French and German Social Democracy in relation to the campaign against the Soviet Union. He writes :—

Everything that can be mobilised against the U.S.S.R. has been mobilised. And in this general mobilisation it is staggering to find German Social Democracy and the French Socialist Party.

So writes a Socialist witness. The surprise of M. Hamon need, however, have been less unbounded if the whole line of development of the so-called "Labour and Socialist International" since its foundation in 1923 is taken into consideration. The Kautsky Memorandum in favour of direct capitalist intervention, the

support of Protocol and Pact with the obvious turning of the whole spearpoint against Russia, the rejection of the English amendment to exclude a war against Russia from the scope of the war obligations of the Protocol, the Marseilles Congress resolution on the danger of war owing to Russian military ambitions and the consequent necessity of self-protection by the Border States—all these form a single line leading up to the present campaign.

AT the present time the significance of Locarno and the League, and of the rôle of Social Democracy in relation to them, is well understood. An example may be taken from one of the typical parties of the Second International, the Swedish Social Democratic Party. A Naval Commission appointed by the last Social Democratic Government has reported, with the unanimous agreement of its Social Democratic and extreme militarist members, in favour of an extensive new building programme for the Swedish Navy. Why? The Swedish Navy in the Baltic is already 111 ships strong, whereas the whole Soviet Baltic Navy is only 75 ships (Swedish naval statistics). Swedish armaments expenditure has increased between 1920 and 1925, in the years of Locarno "peace," from 119 to 148 million kronen, or 24 per cent. Against whom? There is no doubt of the answer. As one of the leading Swedish Social Democratic journals writes :—

If conflicts ensue in the East (*i.e.*, the Border States), the League of Nations and Russia will have occasion to measure their strength. In adhering to the Locarno policy Sweden has abandoned any possibility of maintaining its neutrality.

The meaning of the Locarno policy, and of the policy of Social Democracy, is here clearly set out, very much more clearly than in the British Labour Press, where pacifist dreams are still played with, despite the actual policy that is being conducted by the leaders of the movement. On this it is necessary to be absolutely clear. *The policy of Locarno and of the League of Nations is a policy of war. If the intended war on the Soviet Union takes place, it will be fought under the banner of the League of Nations, in the name of international obligations, in the name of "civilisation" and of "peace": and the whole machine of Social Democracy will be turned to its service. For this the workers need to be prepared.*

THE most conspicuous feature in the House of Commons debate on the Note to the Soviet Union was the fact that MacDonald, entrusted by the Labour Movement with the task of opposition to the Government's policy, not only came out in complete support of Chamberlain's policy and the Chamberlain Note, but endeavoured to underline his position of solidarity with the capitalist outlook by declaring that he would have sent a stronger Note. "I am glad that the Foreign Secretary sent a Note to Russia. I think the Note was two years out of date. . . . If I had been in office a Note would have been sent a good long time before 1927. . . . I think it would have been stiffer in substance. We all agree with the proposition that no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs." Here is expressed the unity of the Second International with the policy of Chamberlain. The blind hatred of Bolshevism leads to a complete ignoring of the most elementary requirements of policy of the working-class movement. Once again is revealed the old obsession of appearing more anti-Bolshevik than the bourgeoisie themselves ("If I had been in office . . . it would have been stiffer," &c.) which led to the fall of MacDonald in 1924, and his ruinous handling and gullibility over the Zinoviev forgery, when his anti-Bolshevism made him the easy prey of the experienced Foreign Office officials. To satisfy his hatred of Bolshevism he allows it to appear that the whole official Labour Movement is committed to the support of the Chamberlain Note, so that Chamberlain is able to claim the "fundamental agreement" of all parties in his support, and to find the way made plain to the now no longer concealed ultimate policy of war. This is an issue so serious as to require the action and control of the whole Labour Party in Parliament. It is not sufficient to determine a policy; it is necessary to ensure that speeches shall conform to that policy.

ON what grounds does MacDonald justify his unity with Chamberlain against the Soviet Union, that is to say, with the centre of capitalist reaction against the centre of the Socialist fight and the working-class movement? The ground that he puts forward is the ground of opposition to the "interference" of "foreigners" in the nation's "own affairs." "We

all agree that no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs." What is meant by this ? It is necessary to look into this plea with some care ; for it is common to all the Labour Party reformist leaders, as also to the General Council (refusal of the Russian workers' money, resentment at the Soviet Trade Union criticism, &c.). There is no question here of national independence against external coercion. There is no question of the Soviet Government proposing to send troops to establish Communism in Britain, as the British Government has in fact sent troops to endeavour to establish capitalism in Russia. What, then, is in question ? All that is in question is the propaganda activities of the Communist International, the propaganda, that is, of an international working-class organisation. The whole question at issue, in the words of every document, is a question of "propaganda." And the objection to this comes in the present case, not from the bourgeoisie (their objection is natural and understandable ; they object to all working-class propaganda of any kind ; and the right of working-class propaganda at home has only been won from them by the workers' own strength and sacrifice in the face of their stubborn opposition), but from a so-called representative of international Socialism ! It is disgraceful that it should even be attempted to raise a plea of this kind in the working-class movement.

IT is a long time since MacDonald, Snowden and their colleagues have ever had any contact with the propaganda and ideas of Socialism, and it may therefore be necessary to remind them of some of the elements of the Socialist Movement. In international Socialism there are no national barriers. There are no "foreigners" in the international working-class movement, but only workers in a common fight. Whatever contribution, discussion or criticism comes from any quarter within the working-class movement depends for its merit or demerit on its own worth to assist in the working-class fight, and not on whether it comes from a "foreign" source or otherwise. Three-quarters of a century ago these were the commonplaces of the Socialist Movement. At the present day, when international development and communications have advanced a hundredfold and interlocked the whole

of world economic and political life in a thousand directions, to attempt to throw back the international proletariat to a narrow basis of "national" propaganda and development is not merely a reactionary relapse into bourgeois national Philistinism and a complete denial of Socialism, but is in fact to fall a hundred miles behind the modern bourgeoisie themselves. It is the ironical character of the modern Labour and Socialist "International" that, in contrast to the seventy years older First International of Marx, it has set up the principle of the "autonomy" of the national movements (that is, the mutual excuses and irresponsibility of the opportunist traitors in each country) which inevitably means the denial of any principle of international Socialism at all.

BUT indeed let us look at the plea a little closer. "We all agree that no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs." Indeed! Are "we" really all so agreed of this? In that case, what of India? Britain is certainly "a foreign country" in relation to India. But even MacDonald would be hard put to it to argue that Britain is not conducting a very considerable "interference" in the internal affairs of India, an "interference" that goes markedly beyond the sending of a fraternal delegate and a few leaflets, an "interference" that extends to eighty thousand troops, guns, tanks, Press Acts, Special Ordinances, prisons, gallows, bombing aeroplanes, an occasional Amritsar and a despotic administrative machine. Nevertheless there is no evidence that "we"—that is, MacDonald and Chamberlain—have ever denounced this as an "intolerable" state of affairs and sent out "stiff" demands for its immediate cessation. On the contrary, MacDonald as Prime Minister seemed to tolerate this system of interference in the internal affairs of another country very well, and, so far from opposing it, added whips and scorpions to the system in the shape of the Special Ordinances for imprisoning political offenders without trial; and when some simple Indians endeavoured to propagate the principle that "no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs" in relation to India, they were promptly sentenced at Cawnpore to heavy terms of imprisonment, with MacDonald's explicit approval, for

"disloyalty to the King-Emperor." So much for the honesty even of Mr. MacDonald's "national" principles. It is clear that he will tolerate any amount of "interference" so long as it is by the imperialist class he serves; it is only when there is a question of working-class propaganda that his principles of national self-sufficiency rise up in him against it. *The gunboats of imperialism are approved; it is only the leaflets of working-class propaganda that raise his indignation.* In other words, the question is a simple class question behind all the "national" trappings, and MacDonald is on the side of the capitalist class.

IN the debate on the same question of the Note to the Soviet Union in the House of Lords Lord Grey came a great deal nearer than MacDonald to the root of the matter. He said :—

The Soviet Government was not in the ordinary sense a national Government at all. It was not a Russian Government in the sense in which the French Government was French or the German Government was German. The French and the German Governments, like our own Government, *existed to promote the interests of their own countries, and did not care about the interests of other countries except in so far as those interests might affect their own.*

The implication intended by Lord Grey that the Soviet Government "interferes" in other countries and the British and French Governments do not is of course completely false. The example of China shows clearly enough the difference between the gunboat policy of the imperialist Powers and the voluntary surrender of all imperialist rights and privileges by Soviet Russia, a difference that the Chinese have shown themselves quick to appreciate. But the essence of the matter is nevertheless unconsciously revealed in the illuminating expression of this typical exponent of the "civilised" bourgeois outlook. The British, &c., bourgeois Governments "existed to promote the interests of their own countries and *did not care about the interests of other countries.*" Here is the bourgeois outlook in a nutshell. This is the individualism, the "each-for-himself-and-devil-take-the-hindmost," which is the basis and foundation of bourgeois civilisation, and which, extended to the national sphere, inevitably leads to imperialism, to the oppression and exploitation of other nations, of which Britain is the outstanding world example ("did not care about the interests

of other countries"). And the crime of the Soviet Government is that it does not conform to this type, that it does care about the interests of other countries, that it thinks from a *world* point of view, that its citizens are ready to sacrifice themselves for other countries, that its statesmen are ready even in case of need to put the immediate interests of Russia second to world interests, knowing that the real interests of every part will best so be realised—this is the crime which bourgeois civilisation cannot forgive, and this is the first realisation in politics of that proletarian internationalism which is the basis of the future world civilisation. But all this is a closed book to the MacDonalds, Greys, and their like.

IN a recent publication of war propaganda against the Soviet Union, entitled *Soviet versus Civilisation*, the diplomatic writer "Augur" expresses very clearly the class character of the issue and the single character of the fight, as understood by the bourgeoisie. This book would have very little importance save as a sample of the more sensational war-propaganda literature for the attack on the Soviet Union were it not that its author, "Augur," is commonly supposed to stand very close to the Foreign Office and to express more or less its "unofficial" views. In that case the direct incitement to war which is the character of the book possesses more importance. It is prefaced by a quotation from Sir Eyre Crowe, a quotation from the famous minute of that old war-maker of the Foreign Office on July 31, 1914, when he was driving the confused and uncertain Grey to war: "The theory that England cannot engage in a big war means her abdication as an independent State." The implication of this quotation is clear. The principal interest of the book, however, lies in its unitary treatment of the war against the Soviet and China abroad and the war against the working class at home.

IN the first place the author declares frankly that the whole meaning of the Locarno Pact, European pacification, growth of the League of Nations, &c., is hostility to the Soviet Union as the decisive driving force behind the process. It is the "menace" of Bolshevism, he declares, which is "frightening Europe into unity." This testimony from an author who cannot at any rate

be accused of being Communist is always valuable. He declares equally frankly that Great Britain is behind this hardening of the European front against the Soviet Union. "It is the rigidity of the present British Government which builds up the wall of a united Europe against them." This admission is also valuable, even though it adds nothing to our information (and indeed the publishers' promise on the cover of "historical facts unknown to the public until now" is scarcely substantiated save for some details of interest on the Genoa Conference). But the author proceeds to show that the war against the Soviet Union cannot be successfully conducted unless it is accompanied by a parallel war against the enemy at home—by which he makes clear that he means Communism and the Left Wing that goes with Communism.

"**W**E hope," he declares, with reference to the "Turn-the-Bolsheviks-out" campaign, "that the leaders of the 'turn-them-out' movement see the full bearing of their demand. If they have in view merely the expulsion of a few diplomatic second-raters and Tcheka-ridden commercial experts, they deal with the least important side of a problem which has become intricate." The real problem is "to rid the country of the Communist incubus." And the measures for this are no less clearly indicated. "If the British Communist Party is the tool of the Russian Communists" (this is simply the bourgeois way of saying, "If the British Communist Party is part of a genuine international organisation, instead of a police-licensed 'International' of the London and Amsterdam type"). "it must be declared illegal. Other measures would not be effective." But how is this to be carried out? Here our Foreign Office expert reveals a really considerable piece of insight, based on the international police experience of the usefulness of Social Democracy. *Let the Labour Party, he says, be given the dirty job to do.* "We agree that it is more than difficult for a Conservative doctor to make the nation swallow this unusual pill, but there is the possibility of an exasperated Labour doctor forcing the pill down the throat of the patient." And he proceeds to quote from Snowden in his support.

SO here the wheel comes full circle. The Labour Party leaders, who have given their support to the campaign against the Soviet Union on the grounds of "national interest," are required on the same grounds to carry out the same fight against the forces of working-class struggle, the Communists and their sympathisers, at home. The class character of the issue is revealed in its nakedness. And this is precisely what they have been doing. This is precisely the steady splitting and sapping of the Labour Party and the Trade Unions, the driving out and dismembering of the healthiest and strongest local labour parties in the industrial areas, the disfranchising of Trade Union members and elected representatives and of whole branches, which the MacDonald-Clynes-Thomas leadership is busily engaged in doing as the sole means of preserving their position, and beginning in this country the process which Social Democracy has carried out in Germany and France, to the disastrous weakening and disintegration of the movement. This is the first stage in the process of making Communism and all honest working-class struggle *illegal*, which the direct police machine is too clumsy to perform and can only serve finally to register, and which can only be effectively carried out through the representatives of Scotland Yard *within* the movement, the Thomases, Morrisons, Wakes, &c. The expulsion of the Rhondda Labour Parties, the disfranchisement of the branches and district council members of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers—these are the latest examples of a process which is the greatest present danger to the British working-class movement, greater than any Baldwin offensive against the Trade Unions, and which is the effective counterpart of the war preparations against the Soviet Union.

IT must be clear to every serious worker that the fight here raised is a single fight all the way from his own local labour party and Trade Union branch to the world issues of the Soviet Union and the Chinese workers ; that it is a single attack on the Soviet workers, on the Chinese workers, on the British Labour Movement, and on the Communists and Left Wing within the British Labour Movement. And it must also be clear

that the heart of the fight, the centre of the attack from the point of view of the bourgeoisie, is international Communism. From this every worker worth his salt, whether connected with the Communists or not, whether politically agreeing with them or not, will recognise the absolute necessity of closing the ranks against the attack, and fighting hardest where the attack is thickest.

THIS applies with particular force to all those Left Wing elements who hesitate to unite their fight with that of the Communists, and endeavour to create a nebulous non-existent Left distinct from the Communists, failing to recognise that there can only be one fight, and that fight where the attack is. In particular these considerations may be recommended to such a body as the Independent Labour Party Conference, which meets this Easter ; which is seeking at present to attain a Left position by the false method of verbal programmes while avoiding the actual fight and daily issues, and while actually taking part in the process of disrupting the movement and expelling the Communists ; whose representatives are prepared to sign a united front with the Communists abroad for action to prevent the dispatch of troops to China, and refuse to form a united front with the same Communists on the same issue at home when it comes to practice : the seriousness of the situation should suggest to these representatives, or to the honest working-class delegates, that it is time to cease playing and begin work.

THE situation to-day demands absolute unity of the front, unity in action both at home and on the international field, unity against both the direct and the indirect capitalist attack. Shoulder to shoulder, British workers, Soviet workers, Chinese and Indian workers, the whole international movement, we shall drive back and break up the imperialist offensive, and learn in the unity of the fight to draw closer for the growing solidarity and common advance of the future. Let every force now pull its weight in the fight in the decisive issues that are coming.

R. P. D.

TRADE UNIONS AND THE LAW

By W. H. HUTCHINSON

THE attack on the trade unions in the Press and by members of the Cabinet has now been going on for the last ten months, while two months ago the King's Speech, at the opening of Parliament, contained an announcement that the Government intended to introduce new legislation with regard to trade unions. No details of this legislation have yet been announced.

The attack purports to be a correction of the law rendered necessary by the General Strike. In point of fact, however, although this is put forward as the reason for introducing legislation, the content of the arguments is not in any way different from the arguments put up for years past. From 1906 right onward the capitalists have expressed their desire to curb the power of the unions. The whole atmosphere of the capitalist Press has been one of hostility to trade unions in so far as they engage in strikes or were by their contributions building the Labour Party.

Before the war, whatever the Liberal Government may have intended it could not very easily reverse the Acts of 1906 (the Trade Disputes Act) and 1913 (the Trade Union Act) which had been passed by itself. During the war period effective coalition of the trade unions with the Government for the purpose of winning the war secured them immunity from attacks which were directed against the unofficial movements that had sprung up on the Clyde and elsewhere. In any case the war legislation, Defence of the Realm Act, and the Munitions Acts, could be and were invoked to deal with those unofficial activities of trade unionists. After the war in the immediate two years succeeding the Armistice it was impossible to reverse the Trade Disputes Act, but it was possible to create by legislation an instrument that could be used against strikers or against the unions in case of need. This instrument was found in the Emergency Powers Act of 1920. Being a newer Act and having behind it the whole force of the Government, the Emergency Powers Act represented a very effective

rival to the Trade Disputes Act. This, however, was as far as the capitalists dared to go, and it is arguable, if a more strenuous opposition had been put up to the Emergency Powers Act, whether it would have been passed, or at any rate whether it would have remained effective. Had the trade unionists put it as one of their immediate tasks the moment the Labour Government got into power that the Emergency Powers Act should have been repealed, it would have received the backing of the vast majority of the organised workers in this country.

However that may be, the attack on the trade unions was renewed year after year in Parliamentary Bills brought forward by private members, but obviously receiving the strongest sympathy from the Ministers of the Crown. The Cabinet were restrained by their fear of rousing a tremendous trade union opposition from giving those Bills Government backing. They remembered that it was the Taff Vale judgment and the agitation for the Trade Disputes Act which had largely created the Parliamentary Labour Party and defeated the Conservatives in 1906. And therefore it was on the last occasion when a private member's Bill was brought forward, in the spring of 1925, that the Prime Minister, knowing that at that point the capitalists dared not go forward with a frontal attack on the unions, made a virtue of necessity and paraded his prudence as a piece of magnanimity and kindliness. This was the occasion of his speech on "Peace in our time, O Lord." The fact was that their own apprehensions bound them over to keep the peace.

Now the significant fact is that the situation is scarcely changed from what it was two years ago. Again we have the tremendous propaganda of the Press and the politicians in favour of weakening the unions. The general line of attack is: -

- (i) That the law in regard to the political levy is to be reversed ;
- (ii) The law in regard to picketing to be made more stringent ;
- (iii) The general strike to be made illegal ;
- (iv) Unions to be made liable for the acts of their members ;
- (v) Secret ballot is suggested ;
- (vi) The separation of unions in Government services and vital industries from those in other industries has been mooted.

Yet though all these things are suggested, and while even more virulent propaganda is put forth portraying clearly the secret

desires of the capitalists (witness the newspaper bills and headlines describing the beheading of the Shanghai trade unionists as "The way to deal with strikers"), the significant fact is that the Government for ten months has steadily delayed putting their vague, though insistent, threats into any precise shape. What is the meaning of this? Does it mean that some comprehensive combination law to suppress trade unions entirely is being prepared? Does it mean that the Government are steadily building up clauses of some Draconic measure? No. The position is plainly that the Government will only act if they think they can do so successfully. That is to say there is no Government attack if the trade unions are solid.

The rights that the trade unions have won have all been gained by their own strength in the teeth of the bitter opposition of the whole capitalist class, and they can only preserve them by the same means. Nothing the Government can do by way of Bills and Clauses can make one iota of difference to the real position if the movement is absolutely agreed to maintain its collective rights and organisation unbroken.

This is the crucial point. If it is understood and acted upon there is no fear whatever, no danger to anticipate.

But is it thoroughly understood? Is the Movement absolutely agreed to show an unbroken front? For here is the danger, not from without but from within.

Attempts have been made for some considerable time to get members of trade unions, who are associated with Conservative clubs up and down the country, to undertake propaganda with a view to forming new unions of what is termed a "non-political character"—actually of an openly pro-capitalist character. But the response has been so meagre that no one in any responsible position takes the matter seriously, and the loud trumpetings in *The Times* and other papers of the growth of non-political unions have found so little echo that they have been brought to a stop.

But there appears to be rather more in the other suggestion made in the newspaper articles, namely, that there should be "agreed" reforms of trade unionism. What does "agreed reform" mean? It means that one element in our movement should be divided from the other elements, lined up behind the

Government against their fellow-trade unionists. This is the really serious position. This is an attack from within that would be a genuine danger. If from what I have already said it is clear that the Government dare not attack the trade union movement if it is united, then it follows equally clearly that the Government will concentrate all their endeavours on dividing the trade union movement. "Divide and Conquer" will be their policy. Conciliate one section and bring forward some specious programme that they can call "agreed reform."

Is there any indication that the Government will be successful in this sinister policy? Unfortunately there appears to be some acquiescence in the suggestion that Labour members of Parliament should consult with the representatives of the Government as to the line of policy to be adopted so as to lend colour to the idea that an agreement has been reached. This is the most fatal policy, and plays right into the hands of the Government if they can obtain—as has been stated—certain Labour members who favour reform. Then the Government will be placed in the position of really dividing our ranks, the line will be drawn between the Lefts and the Rights, a show of conciliation will be made, and the Labour Movement, both political and industrial, will be continuing to quarrel amongst itself to the detriment of the working population, as has been the case since the General Strike.

One has no desire to say anything that can be construed into separating the two wings of the workers' movement, but our politicians should remember that they are not sent to the House of Commons to agree to any modification of existing conditions that will place the industrial movement in any less strong position than they occupy at present. In referring to the two wings of the movement, political and industrial, I do not mean to suggest that there should be any difference or antagonism between the political and industrial aims of the movement. If such a difference arises then it is likely to be because some of the politicians are beginning to forsake the aims common to both the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party.

Under no circumstances can the working class surrender the right to strike or agree to any limitation whatever of their freedom of action in strikes. Intimidation, victimisation, a million

and a quarter unemployed: these things have weakened and are weakening the trade union movement without any question of legal fetters.

But it is suggested by some of the Haden Guest type that the unions should agree to surrender the general strike and nothing else. Let it be made perfectly clear. To give up the general strike is to give up the right to strike itself. No effective distinction can be drawn between the general strike and other strikes of large dimensions. What is to be the measure of the magnitude of a strike? The fact is that all big strikes at once involve the Government, bring the State into play on behalf of the employers and threaten vital supply of food, &c. It would soon be found that if a distinction were made in practice the distinction would be drawn by the Government so as to prevent strikes which had any chance of success and only to allow those in which the workers would be beaten. It would mean that the trade unions would have to be content with a partial weapon which allowed them only to fight in sections—and to be beaten in sections. The experience of the past six years should have convinced the workers that in that way lies defeat.

No weakness by division or splits can be afforded at the present crisis. The action of one important union and also the Labour Party in taking steps towards the exclusion of a section on the ground of particular views is dangerous at all times, but especially at the present time when it is playing straight into the hands of the Government. This is a question on which all trade unionists, whatever their views, must feel strongly. To meet the Government attack absolute unity is essential.

The trade unions were founded on the basis of the working-class industrial struggle and on that basis alone, and no question of minor divisions was allowed to come in. The backwardness of the trade union movement in other countries was partly due to their tendency to splitting. Unfortunately some people have become so obsessed by the idea of conciliating the middle-class vote that they are blind to the lessons that other countries show them, and are prepared to wreck the trade unions in order to gain some Party advantage. It may not be obvious now, but the collapse and ruin of trade unionism in other countries, the present

perilous and unsatisfactory situation of the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions should be a warning before it is too late.

In conclusion, the Government thinks the trade unions are played out, that the Movement is incapable of fighting further &c., and that they can do what they like. There could be no greater mistake. The voices of defeatism, of industrial peace here and there, are no evidence of the real state of the movement. On the contrary never was the spirit of the working-class consciousness or awakened militant unity stronger. If the Government think they can attack with impunity, they will learn their mistake at their own cost.

MAX HOELZ

By ERNST TOLLER

"The fundamental law of my volition and my actions has been that every man has a right to live, and the duty to help others. Throughout my life I have stressed most the value of fulfilling and realising the second half of this law : the duty of helping others. What once I did only instinctively, emotionally, for my neighbour, I do to-day with understanding and intelligence. It is a fine thing, Kant says somewhere, to do good to mankind from love and the impulse of sympathy, but the primary moral maxim to guide our conduct is solely duty. On that principle I act, therein lies my religion, my faith, which makes me inwardly strong and happy and self-confident. That is enough for me, all the rest is merely formal. You may reply that my theory is sharply opposed to my actual deeds . . . I am never satisfied with merely understanding what is essential, but once I have understood, I try with all my might to translate it into fact. It is not for the sake of fighting that I am taking part in the revolutionary struggle. Once I had been driven to the realisation that the aim of human liberation could not be reached by the road along which the great Nazarene pointed, I drew the necessary conclusions and act in accordance with them, even if such action is contrary to my feelings, my emotions. I count myself among those who would be unspeakably happy if every struggle of man against man should cease. Whether that will ever be possible, I dare not determine. But I hold it my duty to exert all my strength in order that the crudest and most obvious causes of the struggle of man against man may be removed. I regard the existence of private property in land and the means of production as such. . . . Of what use to mankind are the glorious intellectual creations and ideals of a Socrates, a Rousseau, a Kant, Fichte, Marx, if they remain mere words, mere dead letters? If they are not realised as life-giving, liberating actualities."

SO wrote Max Hoelz to his defending counsel from the prison in Münster on July 24, 1922. No one can ignore the force and purity of his words, not even the citizen whose press portrayed Hoelz as a blood-thirsty robber captain, who was not satisfied if he had not burnt three mansions every day before

breakfast and had three men shot at supper time. This confession of faith shows us a man who takes his own actions seriously, who follows his chosen path from a deep conviction of duty, knowing the tragic element in every revolution and yet possessed by a burning faith in revolution. Some have called Max Hoelz the heir of Thomas Münzer, and rightly, for only in the German Peasant Rising have the people brought forth such men.

The son of a small peasant and agricultural labourer, he himself began life as a farm labourer. The bright boy attracted the notice of an engineer, who took him under his care and sent him to England. There Hoelz found unpaid work in an engineering office. He returned to Germany and, as he could not find employment as a mechanic, he worked as a house-porter and labourer. Later, in Dresden, he attended a private school, meaning to study and prepare for a university engineering course. He earned the money for his school fees by serving in skittle alleys at public-houses, and later as a cinematograph operator.

The war broke out, and Max Hoelz volunteered with a Saxon regiment of hussars. At the front he was one of the bravest despatch riders. Hitherto he had been of the petty bourgeoisie, his ideal to get on, to do well, to push his way out of the ranks, to work his way up. His experience of the "great time" opened his eyes. Where he had thought to find freedom, he saw oppression and complicity in the criminal schemes of the mighty. He joined the ranks of his struggling worker comrades, and after the war we find him in Saxony selling Socialist papers and speaking at meetings. As formerly he had spent his nights reading books on engineering, so now he studied in order to understand Socialist doctrine. His name first appeared in the papers on the occasion of an unemployed demonstration in Falkenstein. As a member of the Unemployed Committee he compelled the town authorities to provide food for the hungry, and wood and coal for the shivering people. The mayor called in the military, the Unemployed Committee was arrested, but Max Hoelz escaped. He worked and agitated under another name in the Launa works and other places.

At the time of the Kapp coup Hoelz hastened to Falkenstein and led an armed troop of workers against the Kappist insurgents. The workers gained the upper hand in Vogtland, and it was not

until they were surrounded by fifty-thousand soldiers of the regular army that Hoelz disbanded his troop and crossed the Czech frontier. The Czech courts refused his extradition. He was not a common criminal ; political motives had determined his actions. When he received news of the March rising in Middle Germany, Hoelz left his safe place of exile and, though a price was on his head, he fought in the foremost ranks, in the most responsible position. The rising was crushed, and the minutes of a Commission of Inquiry set up by the Prussian Diet give a terrible picture of the conduct of the military.

Again Hoelz escaped, in spite of fierce pursuit. The comfortable classes regarded him as their most dangerous adversary.

At last he was arrested ; a spy betrayed him to the Berlin police. After his arrest the Berlin police authorities offered, on April 16, a reward of 50,000 marks for evidence that would lead to his conviction. Just think of it ! A public authority deliberately seeks evidence that shall lead to the conviction of an accused person !

Erich Mühsam, in his courageous pamphlet, *Justice for Max Hoelz*, which the *Rote Hilfe* published in Berlin, writes :—

. . . Either the Public Prosecutor, seeking independent witnesses, as is his duty, really cannot produce a single one to confirm his suspicions that Max Hoelz has committed a certain crime for which he has been arrested—then, since his suspicions are proved mistaken, or since there is lack of evidence, he must drop the case and set the accused at liberty—or his inquiries produce the necessary evidence and he must hand the prisoner over to the competent court and ask for a date to be fixed for the trial, and must leave it to the court to determine whether, and how severely, the prisoner should be punished. . . . We need hardly discuss the value of witnesses who hurried to offer their evidence regarding the "criminal" Hoelz after this proclamation.

The trial was not held in Thuringia. Hoelz was brought alone before a Berlin court. He accepted responsibility for all his revolutionary acts. Only one he repudiated—the shooting of a landowner named Hess. But it was just that of which he was accused. The wife of the murdered man, who had not recognised Hoelz during the preliminary inquiry, thought during the course of the trial that she recognised the perpetrator in him, and another witness for the prosecution named Uebe, whose trustworthiness

was even then open to serious doubt, clinched the matter. Hoelz defended his case in an admirable speech, which rose to a tremendous arraignment of capitalist society. It was of no use, the court held the case against him to be proved, and he was condemned to penal servitude for life.

There followed bitter years of penal servitude ; he made unceasing efforts to get his case re-opened. He felt himself to be unjustly sentenced, unjustly treated. The stronger a man's character, the more hardly he suffers under imprisonment. European prisons make it their task to break the prisoner's will. Woe to the man who shows strength of character. And Hoelz did show strength of character. It is strange ; in bourgeois history books those men are crowned with praise who refused to bow, in spite of their opponents' superior power. But if a worker adopts such an attitude, no one understands him.

At last, after five years, the investigations of Hoelz' friends have brought about a decisive change in the situation.

In the Imperial Amnesty Committee, Felix Halle made the following statement on behalf of the Communist Parliamentary Party :—

A man called Fricke has come to Dr. Apfel, Hoelz' defending counsel, in order to unburden his conscience, and has made the following declaration :—

He took part in the Hoelz rising of 1921 and in that capacity was at Roitzschgen, and fired the shots at the landowner Hess, for which Hoelz had been accused of manslaughter ; further, he had shot at Hess with his rifle, in order to put him out of action, and moreover, he had called upon his comrades to shoot at Hess, feeling menaced by him. Because of this feeling that he was menaced, and being beside himself with fear and rage, he finally killed Hess, who had been shot at by the others as well.

Halle, moreover, moved the following resolution :—

That the Amnesty Committee resolves to examine the locksmith, Uebe, on the subject of his conviction that in his statements before a Special Court in 1921 in the criminal case against Hoelz his evidence was in fact incorrect, in so far as he was no longer able to uphold his declaration that Max Hoelz fired several shots at the landowner Hess. After the statements made to him by the actual perpetrator, Uebe is convinced that the evidence then given by him was based upon a confusion of persons.

As early as October, 1924, Mrs. Hess had declared that fresh doubts had arisen in her mind whether Hoelz was the real perpetrator.

Uebe's recantation and Friche's confession made the deepest impression upon the Committee and upon German public opinion. The Amnesty Committee delegated its chairman, Dr. Moses, to visit the prison at Gross Strehlitz.

Meantime weeks passed. Those who had hoped that Hoelz would be set at liberty, at least provisionally, were disappointed. Hoelz had been excluded from the amnesty of 1921 solely because he was then accounted a murderer. As far as high treason alone was concerned, he must, in accordance with the intention of the law, have been included in the amnesty.

And now, what is to be done? Who can tolerate—wherever he may stand—that a man should remain one day longer in gaol for a crime that he has never committed? Should not public opinion raise a passionate demand for justice? Silence on all sides, but Hoelz need not fear that he will be forgotten. It is not the worst citizens of Germany who realise that this is no personal question, that it is an imperative moral duty to free this man of his heavy burden. And Germans, without distinction of party, have made the demand for Hoelz' liberation a political demand. That is as it should be, for such a trial as this is never a purely judicial affair. Trial and sentence confirm the outcome of the political struggle for power.

Ehrhardt, Hitler, and all those who were sentenced for high treason on the side of the reaction in Germany enjoy their freedom; and Hoelz and the 1,300 to 1,500 others still immured in German prisons are to remain entombed, broken? No, freedom for Max Hoelz, freedom for all political prisoners!

IMPERIALIST OPPRESSION IN LATIN AMERICA

By CODOVILLA

The Methods of Imperialist Penetration

THE struggle which is now developing among the imperialist countries for the conquest of raw material with the object of submitting world economic forces to their domination is particularly intense in the countries of Latin America. This struggle is, above all, developing between British imperialism and American imperialism.

The object of these two imperialist States is the economic and political subjection of the Latin American countries. This is particularly true of the United States. However, these powers sometimes play an objectively progressive rôle, when in order to carry out their penetration they have to get the support of the petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie.

This has happened in many countries of Latin America. Before the war, all these countries with few exceptions were under the direct influence of Great Britain. The characteristic of the latter country is that it is a country of finance capital, which above all imports raw materials to transform them into manufactured products in the metropolis and then sells them again in the markets from which the raw material came. The policy of Great Britain in these countries has played a reactionary rôle. This rôle was supported by the big landed proprietors who have been absolute masters there. In taking raw materials, Britain prevents all economic development, and therefore all development of the petty bourgeoisie and of the national industrial bourgeoisie.

During the war Great Britain more or less had to abandon these markets, being absorbed above all in war production. Thereupon a national industry rose up in the Latin American countries, transforming a large part of the raw material which was no longer bought by Great Britain from the national industries. National

industries have been started, particularly in countries such as Argentine, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.

After the war Great Britain endeavoured to regain her influence in the South American market, but she had to reckon with numerous competitors, notably North American imperialism, young national industry and the protection laws established by the young countries to defend themselves against foreign competition.

On the other hand, American imperialism was compelled to combat British influence in these countries by a more flexible and appropriate policy, while aiming at the same object. British imperialism had already invested capital in railways, means of transportation, and had already made loans to Governments and held them under her influence. Where these Governments were based on the big landed proprietors, American imperialism had to get the support of the petty bourgeoisie and of the liberal bourgeoisie in order to penetrate into these countries.

Another factor which favours the United States is a historic factor. In many of these countries, with the exception of the Argentine where there is already a national industrial bourgeoisie which participates in power, we have still a situation which existed in France before the bourgeois revolution. It should not be forgotten that in Brazil it is only fifty years since slavery was abolished, while feudalism still exists and predominates in nearly all districts of the country.

As already pointed out, the characteristic of British imperialist policy of penetration is the prevention of industrial development of these countries. It is evident that all the liberal petty bourgeoisie, which would like to develop national industry and become the ruling class, is against the big landed proprietors, and for this reason against British imperialism. America has profited from this situation; in allying herself with this new social stratum, in increasing her interests in the national industry by investing capital and placing machinery, she aids the development of the industries that have sprung up during the war.

American imperialism employs two forms of penetration: with its industrial capital which it invests in new industries, and with its finance capital which penetrates little by little and gains

ground in Latin America. For example, in the Argentine before the war there was not a single American bank or a single direct railway line with North America. Now there are several banks, and already a regular railway service several times a week (passengers and goods) between the United States and the Argentine. But what facilitates still more the development of North American imperialism at the expense of British imperialism is that the former invests its capital in industrial enterprises which are continually developing, whereas Great Britain has invested practically everything in transport and Government loans. In 1925 the foreign capital invested in the Argentine amounted in round figures to £527,000,000, of which £397,000,000 belonged to Great Britain. Of the 397 millions invested by Britain, 233 millions were invested in railways, 80 in Government loans, and 84 in banks, agricultural enterprises, tramways and other industrial enterprises. The United States, which has lent approximately £80 millions, has nearly everything invested in industrial enterprises, banks and Government loans.

The United States dominates in the industrial branches in whose development she has assisted. For example, the United States owns heavy investments in the meat trade, where about 350,000 workers are employed. There are American investments in the big refrigerator plants, and also in the boot and shoe, cotton and wool industries. Formerly all cloth was imported from England, now it is made in the Argentine itself. Thus the U.S.A. is especially engaged in developing the national industry and gaining control over it.

This process of industrial development is a process of concentration; one section of the petty bourgeoisie and of the industrial bourgeoisie is associated with American imperialism, while another section is becoming proletarianised. This is the result of the penetration of American imperialism into the Argentine.

Another example is that of Brazil, where the situation differs somewhat from that in the Argentine. Industrial development in Brazil is taking place unevenly, and only in certain branches of industry. An enormous quantity of the raw material is in the hands of Great Britain, which, in her policy of penetration, has

been for more than a century supported by the Governments of the big landed proprietors.

In 1925, the total amount of capital exported by Great Britain into Brazil reached £310 millions, nearly 50 per cent. of which was Government loans, and the remainder was invested in agricultural enterprises, railways, banks and industries. Because of this, Britain has endeavoured to obtain a certain political control over the country by supporting the reactionary policy of the Government of the big landed proprietors.

The landowners have hindered, by legal means, the industrial bourgeoisie from getting into power, not only in the economic field but also in politics. This led to the armed revolt of 1922, where the oppressed strata attempted to overthrow the power of the big landed proprietors. The revolt was suppressed at the outset. The second revolt in 1924, when the U.S.A. helped the revolutionaries by all measures and gave them money, at first succeeded. The working-class region of San Paolo and a whole section of the more industrial regions were finally occupied because of the aid of Great Britain, which on its part sent money to the Government and promised it military support if necessary. The revolt was crushed. But the spirit of revolt is still latent. The revolutionaries are not yet disarmed. They are concentrated in the interior of the country in the district of Mattogrosso, and they still keep the Government in check. The petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie will finally triumph; firstly, because they have the support of the United States imperialism; and, secondly, for historic reasons. In the district of San Paolo, American imperialism has obtained the absolute monopoly of the production of coffee and certain concessions in the productive districts of cotton and rubber, which until last year were reserved for Great Britain.

On the other hand, with the federal state system the industrial bourgeoisie dominates and it has facilitated the penetration of American capital. This further increases the economic and political antagonisms of this country, where two tendencies come into collision, that is to say, one nation against another nation: the industrial nation against the big landed proprietors who are still in power, but who will undoubtedly soon be ousted.

These two examples of the two most important countries of South America show the characteristic form of American imperialist penetration.

Different Degrees of Imperialist Oppression

Although exercised in general over all countries of Latin America, the degree of imperialist oppression varies according to the different economic and political forms of the various countries.

Wherever the big landed proprietors are in power, and maintain this with the support of British imperialism, the petty bourgeoisie struggles to develop itself and to become the ruling class. North American imperialism, in supporting the petty bourgeoisie, plays an objectively progressive rôle. But wherever the penetration of British imperialism is too weak, where American imperialism is supported by the same social strata as the British, it plays the same reactionary rôle as the latter.

In order to facilitate this analysis the countries of Latin America may be divided into four categories:—

(a) Colonial countries, depending directly, economically, and politically, on American imperialism.

(b) Semi-colonial countries, which, by their dependence on foreign finance capital, despite their political independence, are economically subjected to American imperialism. In these countries, the Governments are in the hands of the big landed proprietors.

(c) Politically and economically independent countries, which in the most important economic fields are already penetrated by imperialism, and are more and more subjected to its domination.

(d) Countries where there are already democratic revolutionary Governments which are endeavouring to build up a national economy.

In the first category are the countries of Central America controlled by United States imperialism not only financially, but also politically and militarily. The so-called independent republics of the Caribbean region (Cuba, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, San Salvador, Costa Rica, &c.)

are in reality colonies of American imperialism. The only stable Governments in these countries are those which are supported by the U.S.A. and serve its interests. The insurrections which frequently take place are instigated by American imperialism in order to extend its domination.

On the other hand, America has imposed "financial control-commissions" in these countries which control their own economic activity and even the orientation of their policy. The assessment of taxes, foreign trade, have to be approved by the commission.

It stands to reason that the local Government has no control in the American enterprises existing in the country, and that the imperialists are the absolute masters. That is why these countries can be considered as absolute colonies.

The countries of the second category, such as Venezuela, Columbia, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, &c., are politically independent but are subjected to American imperialism by means of concessions and loans. America has obtained a number of concessions in the districts richest in raw materials, where she has entrenched herself as in a conquered country. She has established her own control and her own conditions of labour. In the countries where working-class legislation exists, America has never applied this legislation in her concessions. Native workers are exploited like colonials; they work from ten to twelve hours per day; meetings and strikes are forbidden. The workers live in houses belonging to the employers, and have to buy their goods in the employers' shops. They are absolutely bound to the enterprise; working-class revolts are ruthlessly suppressed. The Government has no effective power over the districts given in concession to American imperialism. On the other hand, the majority of the bourgeois politicians are bound to the imperialist forces either as shareholders or else as employees of the enterprises.

In short, the vital forces of national economy are monopolised by North American imperialism (British imperialism intervenes here to a negligible extent), which can export oil, brass, copper, rubber, cotton, wool, coffee, tobacco, &c., at its ease.

In the third category we find the more important countries, the Argentine, Brazil, and Chile. The struggle between American and British imperialism is more acute here than elsewhere. This

is precisely because there is a certain amount of industrial development, and the two imperialisms influence different economic tendencies, so that the definite domination of one of the two is very difficult. Thus, imperialist penetration is effected with a certain flexibility and only makes itself felt in the economic field, avoiding all political collision which could make the Government think that the political independence of the country is placed in danger by imperialist interests.

On the other hand, the national bourgeoisie already feels strong, and if it accepts collaboration of foreign capital in order to develop economically, it always thinks of realising its independence and of building up the economy of the country with its own resources.

Despite such illusions of the petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie, imperialist penetration continues in all branches of economic activity, and subjects them more and more to its control every day. The concentration and modernisation of the industrial enterprises is being carried out, entailing the pauperisation of a section of the petty bourgeoisie, reductions of salaries, &c., while concentration of landed property causes proletarianisation of the peasants.

In the fourth category is Mexico. Foreign imperialism has penetrated various branches of national economy, but despite the internal and external contradictions, the petty bourgeois Government aims at the economic and political independence of the country on the basis, or with several elements, of Socialist construction. We can to a certain extent compare the present situation of Mexico with that of Russia after the Kerensky revolution. A Social-Democratic Government, afraid of being overtaken by the proletarian revolution, is still supported by capitalist elements, which, beaten by the revolutionaries on the field of armed struggle, endeavour to re-establish their economic situation by coming to an agreement with the Government.

Without a firm economic basis, and politically dislocated by sectionalism, the petty bourgeoisie has to make concessions first to the bourgeoisie then to the workers and peasants, who represent the only basis upon which the petty bourgeois Government can rely to repulse the internal and external reactionary attacks.

*The Importance of Latin America as a Market for Industrial Capital
and as a Reserve of Raw Material*

Latin America is of very great importance for the policy of expansion of the imperialist countries, and in particular for the United States. This is clearly seen if we analyse the figures for the industrial and financial capital invested in Latin America, *viz.*, 4,245 million dollars, of which 3,230 are industrial capital and 1,015 finance capital, *i.e.*, 40 per cent. of the total capital exported by the United States. As far as trade is concerned, United States trade with South America reached 2,095 million dollars, *i.e.*, one-quarter of the total American trade.

Everyone knows the heated struggle which is taking place among the imperialist powers for the conquest of the sources of essential raw material such as oil, rubber, coal, cotton, copper, brass, and nitrates. Latin America possesses all these raw materials in great quantities, and with the exception of Mexico one can say almost in an unexploited condition. British and American imperialism covet the greatest possible number of concessions, and in this struggle the U.S.A., by the flexibility of her policy of penetration, has more chances than Great Britain.

At the present time America is endeavouring to seize oil sources. It is a fundamental problem for America to prevent Great Britain getting hold of them. At times she does not exploit these oil regions immediately, since the necessary work and means of transportation require large investments of capital; she waits in order to do it at a moment more advantageous to her interests. Thus immense oil regions conceded to Standard Oil in Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Columbia, and Venezuela are still unexploited. This has created scandals in certain countries where the industrial bourgeoisie has denounced this policy of sabotage of the national economic interests.

The utility of an oil reserve has been made still more clear by the declarations of the scientific commission appointed by the oil department of the U.S.A., stating that if the exploitation of oil sources continued as hitherto, they would be exhausted in a short time. This commission had already made similar forecasts which were immediately denied. But in its last report in July of 1926, after having studied the problem carefully, the com-

mission declared than in six or seven years there would be no more oil in North America.

It is well known that Mexico is the second oil-producing country in the world, but what is probably less known is that other countries of South America possess still more oil than Mexico. This is the case with Venezuela. In this country, the struggle for oil districts between Standard Oil and Royal Dutch is extremely acute. The former wants to conserve its concessions at all costs, while the latter wants to repurchase them in order to win the whole zone under its influence. The oil region of Maracaibo is larger than Belgium and is 140 miles nearer to New York than the oil districts of Mexico. On the other hand, thanks to river transport to the sea, the oil can be sold in the ports cheaper than that of Mexico and California. What is the increase of oil production in this country? Attempts at exploitation were made as early as 1907, but effective exploitation only commenced in 1921 with a production of 446,000 barrels; in 1923 the production was already 4,000,000 barrels, in 1925 it was 20,000,000 barrels, and this year will be 35,000,000 barrels. This means that in five years production has increased from half a million to thirty-five million barrels. We are assured that in 1930 this country may be one of the first oil-producing countries in the world.

The exploitation of oil is beginning to be intensified in the other South American countries: Peru, with 1 million tons; Argentine, with 0·7 millions; and the remainder of the countries with 1·4 millions.

Another important mineral exploitation which is developing enormously is that of copper, which belongs for the most part to the U.S.A. In Chile, in Bolivia and in Peru 90 per cent. of the copper production is in the hands of American enterprises. In Chile, in particular, America has installed modern factories, where already about 30,000 workers are employed. Production has increased from 45,000 tons in 1916 to 207,000 tons in 1925, with a tendency to increase. After Chile come Mexico, Peru, Bolivia and Cuba in order of production.

The exploitation of nitrates in Chile is also of world importance. Owing to this exploitation, Great Britain had the monopoly of

nitrate before the war. The U.S.A. obtained a number of concessions in the copper regions, &c., but Great Britain had the saltpetre and the coal. As saltpetre is an essential production for America, both for war and peace industry, she is endeavouring to conquer this region by all possible means. In order to smash the British monopoly she has tried various ways, such as the production of synthetic saltpetre and the loan of capital to the German nitrate industry for its development. In this way she has caused several crises by withdrawing from the market as a buyer. Later on she strengthened her position. By means of loans to the Government of Chile she obtained a number of concessions in the saltpetre region. She established modern production there in order to produce better than Great Britain. She compelled the latter first to compromise and later, in the middle of 1926, to sell the factories. To-day, American enterprises dominate the production of nitrate throughout the whole country. The increase of this production has followed the same route as that of copper. It increased from 498,000 tons in 1914 to 909,000 tons in 1925-26. There are at present about 100 factories with more than 40,000 workers employed. As a result of this penetration, American exports of capital to Chile increased from 25,000,000 dollars in 1913 to 350,000,000 dollars in 1925.

The production of cotton has also increased in these countries. In Brazil it increased from 907,000 quintals in 1913 to 1,312,000 in 1920. In Peru the increase was from 159,000 to 452,000 quintals; in Argentine from 6,000 to 146,000 quintals, while the production in Paraguay last year was 90,000,000 quintals. The production continues to increase in all these countries.

There is also a strong industrial development in the districts of San Paolo and of Rio de Janeiro. In 1920 there were 104,000 textile workers, while now there are already about 180,000.

Another important raw material in South America is rubber. It constitutes a quarter of the imports to the United States. The latter wants to escape the British monopoly which costs it a great deal. Although South America is very adaptable to this production, only Brazil can produce large quantities. At the present time, out of £35,000,000 total production £29,000,000 are sold to the U.S.A. British and United States imperialism are

feverishly contesting the regions suited for the production of rubber.

With regard to the production of coffee, cocoa, and other agricultural products, and cattle rearing, the importance of the South American countries is already known. It is well known that the Argentine occupies the second place in the export of cereals and that the meat trade is widely developed.

Such is the general picture of the riches of Latin America, which add fuel to the flames of the rivalry among the imperialist countries, and it shows the importance of these countries in the total world economy.

Colonial Methods of Imperialist Penetration

The characteristic feature of imperialist penetration is the economic and political oppression of the South American countries and their real colonial exploitation.

The two provinces, Tacna and Arica, in the north of Chile are the object of desire both of Chile and Peru. From the international point of view in general, it is not understood why America has prevented the solution of this question.

These two provinces belonged to Chile after the war with Bolivia. The war was won by Chile. But under the terms of the treaty, these two provinces should have decided by plebiscite to which country they wanted to be attached. Chile and Peru never came to agreement on this plebiscite, and the arbitration of America was solicited. But instead of favouring the plebiscite, America endeavoured to prevent it by all possible means. She wanted to neutralise these districts in order to subject them to her influence. Firstly, she wanted to create there oil depôts for exportation to Europe and other countries of South America from her Bolivian oilfields. Secondly, to have a military base in case of necessity against the revolutionary movements of South America, and above all Chile. Thirdly, to have a base in the event of war with Japan or conflicts in the Pacific. Oil, copper and tin are all that is necessary to establish influence on the Continent and acquire a military base.

Here we see imperialism directly and resolutely guiding the general policy of these countries. In other cases imperialist

pressure is also exercised on the interests of the bourgeois strata of one country.

Let us take for example one of the most important countries, the Argentine which is the second wheat exporting country in the world. The wheat production of this country is appropriated by the big British and American trusts which have undisputed domination of the market to the detriment of the middle farmers and small peasants. It is they who establish the prices of wheat. If the small peasants do not accept these prices they are sure of not being able to sell their harvests. For example, production may be concentrated in the co-operatives, but afterwards it must be sold; and as the co-operatives have no possibility of advancing credits, the farmers, in order to obtain these credits, are obliged to fall into the clutches of the wheat purchasing trusts. In the case of a farmer being able to sell his harvest directly, he has no means of transportation (the railways, maritime, transport, &c., being the property of American-British companies), and if he does not accept the conditions of the trusts he can concentrate as much corn as he likes but he will not be able to transport it to the markets. Recently a congress of small and big farmers protested against the economic oppression of the big trusts, demanding that the Government should dissolve and also nationalise the refrigerative enterprises and the railways. But despite this protest the big trusts not only are not dissolved, but foreign capital is penetrating more and more into the economic life of the country every day, concentrating production and eliminating the small producers. The big foreign enterprises are buying up increasingly large areas of land for cattle rearing and agricultural produce. By this it will be very easy for them to create artificial crises on the market and to cause drops in prices.

Chile is another example of the system of colonial exploitation. The saltpetre mines, copper, and coal are exploited there in quite a primitive manner. In order to extract the saltpetre, mines are dug and charged with tons of dynamite connected to an electric station and then blown up by a charge of electric current. It once happened that an electrician pulled the wrong switch and sent the current to the mine thinking it was an electric light.

The mine blew up while 300 people were working there; there were 100 victims, including children. The laws of Chile forbid the employment of children under fourteen years, but in this mine children of ten and twelve years of age were working. In order not to be caught red-handed infringing the law, the mine-owners killed off the wounded children. In reply to the indignant protests which arose throughout the whole country they said: "We killed them out of humanitarian feelings, in order to minimise their sufferings."

It should be added that the small native peasants expelled from their land every day are obliged to work as labourers under miserable conditions. They have to work eight or ten hours per day for starvation wages and are more and more exploited by the modern technique.

These three examples of the most important countries illustrate imperialist penetration in Latin America in the economic and political fields.

(To be concluded)

NEW ZEALAND AND THE EMPIRE

By R. P. ANSCHUTZ

AN amusing and instructive sidelight on the recent Empire Conference is provided in *The Times* Special New Zealand Number. The motive prompting its issue is plainly expressed in the editorial: "At the recent Imperial Conference, the New Zealand view of the Empire, though vigorously asserted, did not fill the forefront of the picture. The emphasis at that time was in another direction, and the achievement of the Conference lay in removing misunderstandings and assuaging feelings that New Zealand, blessed with a happier history, has never had cause to know. So it happened that the representatives of a people undivided in origin, with no unhappy past or differences of race (*sic*!) to handicap modern statesmanship, found themselves acquiescing in a somewhat less whole-hearted view of the meaning of Imperial co-operation than they themselves were anxious to express."

That is to say, New Zealand is to be rewarded for her "patriotism" by "the finest and most valuable advertisement that the Dominion has ever received in printed form in the Motherland" (*New Zealand Herald*) in the hope that the other Dominions may mend their ways.

The Times Special Number is replete with the dense Jingoistic stupidity that constitutes the outlook of the average New Zealander. The Prime Minister's contribution is typical. It opens with the proposition that "New Zealand is British to the core," it finishes with a quotation from the Prince of Wales, and in between it talks of England, the "Homeland," Great Britain, the "Motherland," the United Kingdom and the "Old Land." Everything, according to Mr. Coates, is fine in the best of all possible Empires as long as we remain true to our British breeding. And the proof of this is the prosperity of the New Zealand people—"99 per cent. of it British!" Mr. Coates seriously draws the conclusion that wherever this British stock is present prosperity will result. In the face of this it is, perhaps, worth while to examine

briefly the forces operating in New Zealand, the resulting conditions, and the course of development.

The fundamental fact about New Zealand, so far, is its isolation and its consequent primitive organisation. New Zealand is out of the way, and so has not been exposed to the factors which in most other parts of the world have made for the tightening and speeding up of capitalist economy. In so far as life is easy there it is easy because it is at a low state of development, and it is at a low state of development because it is isolated and therefore immune from the more exacting demands of capital.

But it is obvious that a prosperity which is founded on isolation is a wholly artificial prosperity, which will inevitably fail as the competition between capital for areas of exploitation grows more stringent. The prosperity of New Zealand is the prosperity of its small farmers, and these small farmers are doomed. Sooner or later they must become either large farmers or farm labourers. There are no other alternatives, and no legislation or State control can provide a remedy. This process is now well under way in New Zealand, as is even shown in *The Times* Special Number in the article on "Finance" by Sir George Elliot, chairman of the Bank of New Zealand. He says:—

Since the slump on farm lands in 1921, and the heavy losses made by mortgagees, there has been a disposition on the part of leading institutions and investors generally to look with disfavour on such securities, and to turn their attention to loans for the development of hydro-electric, road, harbour, and other improvement schemes, of which there have been numerous flotations by municipal and other public authorities during the last few years. On such investments from $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 per cent. is being obtained for periods of from 20 to 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ years, against from 6 to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on mortgages.

There follow details about State advances, and the article continues:—

It is becoming increasingly evident that if primary production, on which the country absolutely depends, is to be maintained and developed loans for long periods are essential. In view of this, an interesting experiment is about to be made by the Bank of New Zealand, in which institution the Government owns one-third of the capital. An Act of Parliament has been passed authorising the bank to set up a special department, to be known as the "Long-Term Mortgage Department," for the purpose of making loans on an amortisation basis, bearing interest at the rate of 6 per cent. plus an

adequate sinking fund. By this Act the bank is empowered to issue special capital as well as debentures secured against the long-dated loans to an amount thrice that of the special share capital.

From this it may be seen how far in the clouds is "the New Zealand ideal" of "a little farm well tilled." The small farmer cannot carry on without mortgages, and even with mortgages his chances of success are estimated to be so poor that he cannot raise money in the open market. Even if he does he becomes simply a labourer for finance capital, liable to eviction without a penny for years of work should a fall in prices occur. From figures given by the *New Zealand Year Book* for 1926 it may be calculated that between 1919 and 1925 (inclusive) mortgages were raised on thirty-seven million acres, that is, 84.4 per cent. of the total occupied area. At this rate the whole of the occupied rural land in New Zealand is mortgaged every 8.3 years.

The consequence of this failure of the small farmer may be seen very plainly in the drift of population from the country to the town:—

Census		Rural population per cent.	Urban population per cent.
1906	.. ..	57.96	44.04
1911	.. ..	57.07	42.93
1916	.. ..	54.18	45.82
1921	.. ..	51.23	48.77

And the further consequences in the increase in factory production:—

Date	No. of productive employees in thousands	Value of land, buildings, machinery (£ millions)	Value added by manufacture (£ millions)	Average h.p. per employee
1916	.. 51	21	13	2.5
1921	.. 64	38	26	3.1
1925	.. 72	50	32	4.0

From all this it is plainly evident that the isolation which has enabled New Zealand to become a home of prosperous small farmers is breaking down. Finance capital is taking charge and is ushering in industrial capitalism. The expropriated small farmer is providing an increasingly large supply of factory labour. The unexpropriated small farmer is sinking to the position of a farm labourer working for the banks. In twenty years' time it is obvious there will be no longer unanimity in "patriotism." New Zealand will have something else to think about.

BERTRAND RUSSELL AND MODERN PHYSICS¹

By MAX LEVIEN

Since the revolution which overturned theoretical science the necessity of arranging the accumulation of purely empirical discoveries has caused the opposing empiricists to pay more and more attention to the dialectical character of the operations of nature. The old rigid antagonisms, the sharp impassable frontier lines, are more and more becoming abolished.

(Engels : "Anti-Duhring," Second preface, 1885.)

When I had grown used to Hegel's language and mastered his method, I began to perceive that Hegel was much nearer to our standpoint than to the standpoint of his followers ; he was so in his early works, he was so everywhere where his genius had got out of hand, and had dashed forward forgetting the gates of Brandenburg. The philosophy of Hegel is the algebra of revolution, it emancipates a man in an extraordinary way and leaves not a stone standing of the Christian world, of the world of out lived tradition.

(Alexander Herzen : "Thoughts and Memories.")

Human knowledge does not pursue a straight course, but a course which approximates to a spiral.

(Lenin : "On the Question of Dialectics.")

MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL is a very famous man, a Fellow of the Royal Society, the heir presumptive to an ancient Earldom, and sometime Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. His followers of the I.L.P. call him "the greatest living philosopher." At any rate we came across this *epitheton ornans* in an I.L.P. review of his pamphlet, *Democracy and Direct Action* of 1919. Russell is still alive, so far as we know, and may still pass as the greatest philosopher, but since there is nothing more tedious than to argue with a Fabian about philosophy, we will leave Mr. MacDonald and his fellows with their idea of the "greatest living philosopher."

Nevertheless, Mr. Bertrand Russell is undoubtedly a very interesting man, and that primarily because he shows with great clearness the helplessness of the modern "progressive" intellectuals of Great Britain. His writings show with incomparable force the barrenness of the subjectivist outlook. He has also distinguished himself by an extraordinary literary fecundity and an equal

¹ A Review of Bertrand Russell: *The ABC of Atoms*. Translated from the German edition of the Russian periodical *Under the Banner of Marxism*.

catholicity of interest. He is one of the leading English mathematicians, and has written a series of fundamental theoretical works on the principles and, in particular, on the philosophy of mathematics. He is responsible also for several purely philosophical works, and a number of social-political writings, of a pacifist-reformist tendency, advocating a "constructive" socialism of the Guild-socialist type. Further, there appeared some time ago, a little book by Russell called *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism*, and more recently a book on China. He is thus, in truth, a "modern" man, thoroughly expressing the spirit of the age.

The basis of Russell's whole outlook is scepticism. As regards his theory of knowledge he is subjectivist, in mathematics he clings to logicist,² in social theory he is idealist, and finally in politics petit-bourgeois utopian, which tendencies, be it remarked, accord admirably one with another. It would be difficult to imagine a more undialectical mind.

Scepticism, however, is the essential characteristic of all Russell's philosophy, and is to be observed throughout his writings. It does not always appear openly. It usually lurks behind some truism about the general progress of human knowledge or the like. Sometimes it appears only as an under current of his pronouncements. This is particularly true of his more recent publications. Take one of his recent books, for example, one which has appeared lately in a German translation, *The Problem of China*, and open the first chapter. His scepticism here rises to complete despair of the civilisation of Western Europe. Were this all-pervading melancholy not that of an English gentleman, its effect would almost be dramatic.³ In his pamphlet *Free Thought and Official Propaganda*, his scepticism emerges without the usual English fig-leaf. He says: "William James used to preach the 'will to believe.' For my part I should wish to preach the 'will to doubt.'" Naturally! The "modern" Guild-socialist

² He is described as "logistischer Axiomatiker," i.e. he looks upon mathematics simply as a construction upon the basis of axioms and logical principles. It is clear that this divorces mathematics from human experience, and is a *subjectivist* tendency.—Tr.

³ It may be stated that Russell's book on China is full of the most foolish fairy tales about the history of China, and serves to introduce us less to modern China than to the pedantic workings of the author's mind. It also goes without saying that he provides us with a considerable dose of John Bull hypocrisy.

with his "freedom of thought and freedom of the individual," the new shame-faced apostle of Manchester-Liberalism, cannot now, as a member of the Labour Party, allow himself such "freedom of thought and personality" as does his philosophical colleague William James, who with true American audacity applauds the traditions of the priest-ridden middle-ages. Mr. Russell is not so primitive. He is a gentleman, and for the present keeps his liking for the good God to himself.

We have no doubt that he waxed very indignant at the "monkey-trial" which took place recently in the United States, and the anti-Darwin propaganda which it occasioned. If he did not, he would be a poor apostle of the famous watchword of Mrs. Snowden—"For future children and humanity." And everybody knows that he is a most assiduous propagandist for this essentially British slogan. But it is no personal concern of our professor's that his friend, MacDonald, openly brandishes the Bible and gives his blessing to the International Church Congress at Stockholm. For must not the right of propaganda extend to the churches also, in the name of "Freedom of Thought"? The only little thing that might have disturbed him would have been the too obvious indiscretion and too noisy behaviour of His Majesty's Master of Ceremonies who, by his reverence for the heads of the church, rather too frankly gave away the inmost secret wishes of his Party comrades.

The social-political⁴ and philosophical scepticism of Russell is naturally reflected, in spite of some unconvincing compliments to exact research, in his attitude to mathematics and physics. As, for example, when he makes, in reference to mathematics, the *general* statement: "It is the science in which one does not know what one is talking about, nor whether what one says is true."

In what follows we shall concern ourselves with Russell as a physicist, and with this object we shall cast a glance at his most

⁴ In his *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* (London, 1920. p. 121) his Olympian anger at the definiteness of the revolutionary Marxist outlook is expressed in the following outburst: "The dogmatic character of Marxian Communism finds support in the supposed philosophic basis of the doctrine; it has the fixed certainty of Catholic theology, not the changing fluidity and sceptical practicality of modern science." We shall see, at the end of our discussion on Russell's present book, whither "the sceptical practicality of modern science" leads.

recent book *The A B C of Atoms*. This purports to be an introduction to the modern theory of the atom, but is in fact much more, for it treats in general of the whole basis of modern physics. The importance of Russell as a scientist on the one hand, and on the other, certain positive achievements of this book, which distinguish it from his other writings, and finally the great popularity which the book enjoys, not merely in England but in Germany and probably other European countries, compel us to discuss it fairly thoroughly.

The well-known English physicist and populariser, Sir Oliver Lodge, describes the book as "an initial introduction of clearness and insight." We agree. Russell's exposition is actually extremely clear and ingenious in dealing with complicated matters. It treats the problems of modern atomic physics with what is, for a popular book of a hundred-odd pages, amazing scientific thoroughness. The diction is excellent, the style of a vivacity which compels the reader to finish the book at one sitting. In this particular, our German popularisers can still learn much from Russell. In spite of many objections which we have to bring against points of detail, and especially against the whole outlook of the author, we can recommend any worker to read this very well-produced book, at least, when he has a sound grounding in Marxism. Russell's exposition has many merits, but it contains a series of conceptions which call for vigorous criticism from the point of view of dialectical materialism.

To begin with the merits: the chief, in our view, are the following:—

- (1) The book, standing as it were at the pinnacle of the most modern results of physical research, gives in a small space an extremely clear idea of the principal problems and methods of investigation into the structure of atoms. Russell understands how not to lose himself in details, but to bring the reader again and again to an examination of fundamental relations. The book teaches one to think.
- (2) Russell never becomes superficial, but yet expounds the complicated questions of one of the most highly developed parts of physics clearly, easily, and gracefully.

- (3) He describes not only the results obtained, but points out again and again the gaps still existing in atomic physics and the difficulties still to be overcome.
- (4) *His development of the subject shows very clearly the weaknesses and the uncertainty in the theoretical thinking of modern physicists*, as soon as it is a question of drawing epistemological⁵ conclusions from the empirically established regularities. In this book are reflected certain aspects of that crisis which in the last two decades has overtaken not only the theory of atomic structure, but the basis of the whole of physics.⁶

On the fourth point, particularly typical, as showing the confusion in the minds of many physicists as a result of current developments, is the following passage (p. 150):—

It must be confessed that the quantum theory in its modern form is far more astonishing and bewildering than in its older form. It might have seemed odd that energy should exist in little indivisible parcels, but at any rate it was an idea that could be grasped. But in the modern form of the principle, nothing is said, in the first instance, about what is going on at a given moment, or about atoms of energy existing at all times, but only about the total result of a process that takes time. Every periodic process arranges itself so as to have achieved a certain amount by the time one period is completed. *This seems to show that nature has a kind of foresight, and also knows the integral calculus*, without which it is impossible to know how fast to go at each instant so as to achieve a certain result in the end. (An extraordinary statement! Such anthropomorphism means nothing else than the resurrection of long buried ideas, *vis vitalis* or *visus formativus*, and their application to physics. How is this conception of Russell's different from the mediæval notion that nature "abhors a vacuum." It "seems to show" us that in the face of axioms and integrals the great mathematician has lost his head.—M.L.) All this sounds improbable. (See the *katzenjammer* already beginning.—M.L.) No doubt the fact is that the principle has assumed a complicated form because it has forced its way through, owing to experimental evidence, in a science built upon totally different notions.⁷ The revolution in physical notions introduced by Einstein has as yet by no means produced its full effect. When it has, it is probable that the quantum principle will take on some simple and easily intelligible form.

⁵ Epistemology: the philosophical theory of knowledge.

⁶ A number of quotations are then given, with the object of illustrating these points. We are obliged to omit almost all of these to save space.—Tr.

⁷ This statement is criticised later.—M.L.

(It seems to us rather that this would be stated more correctly the other way round, namely : in the measure in which the revolution which the *quantum principle* has produced in physics is completed, many of the solutions to fundamental problems of mechanics and electrodynamics, provided by the relativity theory, but still clothed in an extremely complicated form and difficult to verify experimentally, assume a simple and more obvious character.—M.L.) But it will only be easily intelligible to those who have gone through the labour of learning to think in terms of modern physical notions rather than in terms of the notions derived from common sense and embodied in traditional physics. (To call the physics of Hamilton, Maxwell, Hellenholtz, Lord Kelvin, Hertz, Boltzmann, Gibbs, &c., a "physics of common sense," is of course ridiculous, apart from the fact that the opposition of science to common sense is scientifically untenable. The conception of common sense is ambiguous, but involves in no way the idea of a limitation of human thought, or a condemnation of it.—M.L.)

This quotation gives us a good idea of one aspect of the crisis which modern physics is passing through. Only it must not be forgotten that this crisis has not brought about merely harmful results—a reaction towards idealistic, or even sometimes mystical modes of thought—but that it produces also extraordinary, really revolutionary effects, in the direction of a dialectical-materialist solution of the problems of natural science.⁸

We turn now to consider those views expressed in Russell's book which from the standpoint of a thorough and logical materialism, of Marxism, demand a decided answer. We have already pointed out that Russell is not merely a "modern" man, but is also definitely a sceptic. To-day this means, among other things that one denies the existence of an æther. We shall not say that any "modern" physicist must of necessity deny the existence of an æther. There are, indeed, many researchers, and among them some of the greatest names, who defend the idea of an æther tooth and nail. But a sceptic can, of course, have nothing to do with an æther, since the greatest difficulties still prevent any unified theoretical conception or practical treatment of the subject. It is obvious, however, that to acknowledge that fact does not involve, as with the philosophers, the "logical" or "epistemological" abolition of the conception of æther. The philosophers,

⁸ Before proceeding with general criticism, several detailed and somewhat technical points are dealt with which we are unfortunately obliged to omit.

of course, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred begin with such a threadbare argument as the attempt to deny real objective existence to the smallest material particles, molecules, atoms, and electrons. But Russell, for his part, appeals neither to "logic" and his theory of knowledge, nor to experience, but simply to "the will to doubt," probably with the cunning idea that against doubt as such, doubt in itself, this fundamental doubt, no opposition will be made, so that he will not have to supply any arguments. He renounces the æther and neatly gets rid of the whole trouble, as follows (p. 49):—

People have invented a medium, the æther, for the express purpose of transmitting light-waves. But all we really know is that the waves are transmitted; *the æther is purely hypothetical, and does not really add anything to our knowledge.* We know the mathematical properties of light-waves, and the sensations they produce when they reach the human eye, but we do not know what it is that undulates. *We only suppose that something must undulate because we find it difficult to imagine waves otherwise* (our italics: M.L.)

A brilliant argument, indeed, for "the greatest living philosopher"! It has three weaknesses however. First, a medium was not "invented," rather have we been forced towards the acceptance of such an idea by the whole development of our conceptions of the inter-relations of space, time, and matter. The nature of this logical compulsion does not differ in fundamentals from that which forced us to accept the evolution of organisms. Second, that the æther is hypothetical says nothing against it, unless one advocates the complete abandonment of hypotheses, as Wilhelm Ostwald does, so persuasively, but with such doubtful results. A science without hypotheses is inconceivable. What is objectionable from the point of view of sound research is not hypothesis as such, but metaphysical speculation, smuggling itself into science under that name. There are hypotheses and hypotheses. Third, Russell, himself, explains that without the assumption of a "something" which undulates, "we find it difficult to imagine waves." But this "something" is precisely what we mean by "æther" though we are not at the moment able to give its properties more exactly.

Further, while we are thus being informed that the æther is "purely hypothetical," and "does not add anything to our

knowledge," Russell suddenly gives us a whole theory of the æther (p. 152):—

The æther, which used to play a great part in physics, has sunk into the background, and has become as shadowy as Mrs. Harris. *It may be found, however, as a result of further research, that the æther is after all what is really fundamental, and that electrons and hydrogen nuclei are merely states of strain in the æther, or something of the sort.* (Very fine, but how then does it "really add nothing to our knowledge?"—M.L.) If so, the two "elements" with which modern physics operates may be reduced to one, and the atomic character of matter may turn out to be not the ultimate truth. (This conclusion is unsound. The extension of our knowledge of the structure of the æther will in no way disturb principles based on the study of atoms, but will simply bring them into accord with the more general principles of physics derived from the study of the æther. The laws of molecular motion, for example those established by Einstein, Smoluchowski and Perrin for the Brownian movement, have not been upset by atomic physics, as the laws in question are of a higher order, and concern phenomena showing new properties, dealing as they do with molecules as opposed to atoms. This is true further for molecular physics, for astronomy, &c.—M.L.) This suggestion is purely speculative; there is nothing in the existing state of physics to justify it. *But the past history of science shows that it should be borne in mind as a possibility to be tested hereafter.* (Again we ask, how then does it "really add nothing to our knowledge?"—M.L.) If the possibility should be realised it would not mean that the present theory is false. (What theory? That of an æther, which, like Einstein's, has neither mass nor the possibility of motion?—M.L.); it would merely mean that a new interpretation had to be found for its results. Our imagination is so incurably (I : M.L.) concrete and pictorial that we have to express scientific laws, as soon as we depart from the language of mathematics, in language which asserts much more than we mean to assert. We (who? : M.L.) speak of an electron as if it were a little hard lump of matter, but no physicist really means to assert that it is. We speak of it as if it had a certain size (we have seen that *in fact* and not "as if" it has a definite magnitude—M.L.) but that also is more than we really mean. It may be something more analogous to a noise, which is spread throughout a certain region, but with diminishing intensity as we travel away from the source of the noise. (Try to explain this to your colleagues Planck, Einstein, Rutherford or Millekan!—M.L.). So it is possible that an electron is a certain kind of disturbance in the æther, most intense at one spot, but diminishing very rapidly in intensity *as we move away from this spot.* (This means no more and no less than mixing up physics and physiology into a Mach⁹-ian mud-pie, and the removal of that

⁹ Mach, a German philosopher who endeavoured to found his system upon the basis of pure sense-data.—Tr.

separation between the physical and sense-physiology which physics has to thank for its success up to the present. From such a crime against objective investigation it is only one step to the identification of all real existents with "experience-complexes"; from that the third step, as everyone knows, is to solipsism.¹⁰—M.L.)

If a disturbance of this sort could be discovered which would move and change as the electron does, and have the same amount of energy as the electron has, and have periodic changes of the same frequency as those of the electron, physics could regard it as what the electron really is without contradicting anything that present-day physics means to assert. And, of course, it is equally possible that a hydrogen nucleus may come to be explained in a similar way. All this is, however, but a speculative possibility; (How nice! Kelvin, Helmholtz, Hertz, Lorentz, J. J. Thomson, Stokes, &c., are mere speculators?—M.L.) there is not as yet any evidence making it either probable or improbable. The only thing that is probable is that there will be such evidence, one way or other, before many years have passed. (Our italics throughout—M.L.)

Thus the conclusion, to which Russell's wisdom comes is that æther, may well, from a "pure speculation" or "pure hypothesis" (these conceptions are identical to him!), become a fruitful theory, founded upon experience.

(To be concluded)

¹⁰ The theory according to which the only reality is one's individual consciousness.

The World of Labour

NORWAY

Trade Union and Labour Movement

Norwegian Trade Unions

THE Norwegian Trade Union and Labour Movement has been for some time outside both the reformist and the revolutionary Internationals, but a determined effort has been made recently by the reformist International to draw it in.

In 1925 the Norwegian Trade Union Congress decided unanimously not to affiliate to either of the Internationals, but to establish direct contact with the Anglo-Russian Committee, and to demand the calling of a world unity congress in order to create one Trade Union International. At the beginning of December, 1926, a Scandinavian-Baltic Trade Union Conference was held. This had been called by the Swedish Trade Union Centre and by Oudegeest for the I.F.T.U. The purpose of this Conference was ostensibly to unite the workers for the class struggle, but really to draw the Norwegian Trade Unions into the I.F.T.U. This is shown by the fact that the questions of struggle against the White Terror and against the Fascists, which are so vital for the Baltic Trade Unions, and the question of national and international Trade Union unity were to be discussed only if the Conference had time.

The chief decision of the Conference was that the three Trade Union Centres of Sweden, Denmark and Norway should set up a Joint Committee with three delegates from each country. This Committee would unify the Scandinavian Trade Union Movement, organise financial aid, and during a struggle direct the publicity work and the Trade Union Press. But the condition for the functioning of this Committee was that the Norwegians should affiliate to the Amsterdam International. The I.F.T.U. count on the Norwegian need for help from the other two countries to induce them to affiliate to Amsterdam. At a meeting of the Norwegian General Council on December 16 and 17 it was decided to instruct the Executive Committee of the National Centre "to re-examine the question of the international relations of the Norwegian Centre, and to submit to the General Council a report, on the basis of which the Executive is again to take a decision in this matter, and to submit the question to the members for decision." The Executive decided to wait until the end of the wage negotiations, and probable lock-out, before laying the matter before the members.

The R.I.L.U. have put before the Executive of the Norwegian Centre a proposal for the establishment of a Norwegian-Finnish-Russian Trade Union Committee. The purpose of the Committee would be, among other things, to "fight for international Trade Union unity, and reciprocal financial assistance in strikes, lock-outs, and other social conflicts."

The Unification Congresses

The Norwegian Labour Party seceded from the Communist International in 1925 under the leadership of Tranmael, but for some time it still stood for the class struggle and for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and was not linked up with the Labour and Socialist International. This party has now been united with the Socialist Party.

On January 30 a Unification Congress was held. This was called by the "Twelve," consisting of Tranmael for the Labour Party, the leaders of the Socialist Party and a few Trade Union officials. The attitude of the Communist Party to this Congress was at first undecided. Two extreme proposals were put forward by certain members, the first that the party should liquidate itself in favour of the new party, and the second that the party should boycott the Congress. Both these proposed tactics were abandoned for the policy that the party should take part in elections to the Congress and try to get a real working-class party established. But the conveners of the Congress tried to prevent this by making every delegate accept certain conditions—such as acceptance of the opportunist programme, dissolution of all political organisations, &c. Many organisations refused to accept these conditions, with the result that 400 "free" delegates were elected. These delegates were refused admission to the Congress, and finally held a Labour Congress of their own.

The Unification Congress, of delegates who had accepted the conditions laid down by the conveners, was attended by 870 delegates, representing 56,000 workers, 461 from the Labour Party, 175 from the Socialist Party, and 247 from Trade Unions. This Congress formed a united Labour Party. The chief difficulty at the Congress was in allotting the offices in the new party so as to satisfy both of the old parties. Finally it was decided that Tranmael (Labour Party) should edit the chief party organ, that Oskvik (Socialist) should be secretary, that the former presidents of the two parties, Torp and Magnus Nilssen, should be joint presidents, and that Edward Bull (Labour Party) should be deputy president. Regret was expressed by the Socialist Party at having to sever its connection with the Labour and Socialist International, but it was hoped that the new party would soon affiliate as a whole.

The Labour Congress, of the 400 excluded delegates, consisted of 250 Trade Union delegates and 150 Communist Party delegates, representing 30,000 workers. They founded the "Collective Party of the Working Class," which will now include the Communist Party and all Trade Unions with Left tendencies. The Congress discussed the question of unemployment, of a moratorium for poor peasants, and of action against capitalist militarism, against intervention in Russia, and in support of the Chinese Revolution. This party represents chiefly the large industrial centres, while the United Labour Party represents especially the workers of the capital.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE AIMS OF CHINESE NATIONALISM

China and the Nations. By Wong Ching-wai. Translated and edited by I-sen Ting and John Nind Smith. (Martin Hopkinson, 7s. 6d.)

ONE turns with relief from a dreary mass of rubbish about China in newspapers, periodicals and books to a work which is at once authoritative, live, and amazingly to the point.

China and the Nations is indeed the most authoritative statement yet available of the Kuomintang policy towards the Imperialist Powers. For it is the report prepared by Wong Ching-wai on International Problems for the People's Conference of Delegates which was to meet at Peking in 1925, and which may meet there this summer—in what altered circumstances—if all goes well, and Chang Tso-lin shares the fate of Wu-pei-fu and Sun Chuan-fang and Chang Tsung-chang.

Wong himself—though he has been less in the limelight than some of his colleagues and is indeed scarcely known to glib newspapermen who have learned to prattle of Chen and Chiang and to talk nonsense about the internal affairs of the Kuomintang—is probably the biggest figure in the Nationalist Movement since Sun's death. He has been chairman of the Governing Committee of the Canton Government. He heads the list of the newly-elected Standing Committee of the Party. He is likely to be President of the Republic when the war is finished and the building of the new Chinese State begins.

And—as the reader will soon guess—he has some reputation not only as an orator but as an author. For this report, concise and businesslike as it is, is a little masterpiece of political literature. It tells the history of China's relations with the Western Powers, it analyses the existing situation, it lays down a policy with a firmness of tone and an economy of expression that are beyond praise. The essential facts are marshalled to tell their own damning story. The comments are incisive, the aphorisms have the Nietzschean touch.

Obtain the consent of the Imperialists to abolish the unequal treaties?
Wait for the river to lose its mud.

What is International Law? It is an instrument for securing the privileges obtained from the weak by the powerful nations. The powerful nation has already used force or blackmail to obtain the privileges. It uses international law to secure them. A wolf and a lamb talking justice.

Robbers and cutpurses always band together if they mean to be brigands. (Hence the precedent of "Equal Opportunity and Privileges" was invented by the Imperialists).

Such comments as these run through the story of plunder and humiliation which Western statesmen so blandly forget but which the Chinese so bitterly remember—that story not only of shameless robbery but of insolence and insult which explains so much that Sir Austen and his like can only attribute to the magical incantations of the Red Hand.

That story—of the clear-sighted understanding of its economic significance—is the key to the policy in which a superficial stupidity can see nothing but “xenophobia,” thinking, after the manner of the stupid, that a Greek name is an adequate explanation of any phenomenon.

“Imperialism is the enemy” is Wong’s thesis. “Triumph over Imperialism is the root of roots.” It is the first condition for the crushing of internal militarism, for financial reform, for industrial development, for political improvement, for everything. It is the “root of roots.” And Wong is a radical.

He does not, like the sentimental Nationalist or the bourgeois-national place hunter, visualise Imperialism merely as a political domination, a foreign engrossment of jobs which might be filled to their own advantage by native politicians.

Modern Imperialism has for its object economic invasion. The promotion of political ascendancy is designed to protect the economic invasion. Military power is both pioneer and reserve force in the struggle for political ascendancy.

Or again: Imperialism is the utilisation by any people of its political and military ascendancy for subjecting to its economic encroachment some foreign country or territory or race.

Imperialism—not “foreigners”—is the enemy. “The People’s Revolution is antagonistic not to the foreigners but only to Imperialism.”

“The people, in every country, have the idea of crushing Imperialism, but less strongly than the Chinese. Could the Chinese people co-operate with them in this work they would welcome it gladly. For the destruction of Imperialism would benefit not only the Chinese people, but equally the peoples of all the world.”

But why go on quoting? *China and the Nations* is a book which is, in the jargon of the professors, an “essential document.” If you want to understand the Chinese movement you have got to read it. And that, after all, is all that a reviewer need say.

W. N. E.

THE WHITE GUARDS’ REPLY

La Russie sous la Régime Communiste. Edited by Michel Feodoroff. A Reply to the Report of the British Trade Union Delegation, based on Official Soviet Documents. (Paris: Nouvelle Librairie Nationale, 30 fr.)

ONE interesting thing about this book, *Russia Under the Communist Régime*, is that it is compiled by men who belong to the old Tsarist régime and who were very active in the civil war, on the side, of course, of the White Guards. One need only mention Kokovtsoff, who was the Tsar’s Minister of Finance, and Gourko, who was considered to be among the reactionaries even in the Russian Tsarist bureaucracy. The main editor of the book is Dr. Feodoroff, also an old Minister of the Tsar and a very active member among the Russian Whites who are still dreaming of restoring Tsardom. Many of the authors of the book were very active in the last Congress of the White Guards, which had for its purpose the proclamation of the Grand Duke Nicholas as the Russian Tsar.

A second interesting feature of the book is that it is presented to the French people by Hubert Bourgin, an active French Fascist. Thus the book can be considered as the creation of a Fascist reactionary coalition of different nations.

The Tsar's Minister and the French Fascists are very glad to be in the company of Mr. F. Adler, the Secretary of the Second International, in the common vote against the delegation of the T.U.C. General Council. They quote with pleasure (p. 54) the pronouncement of Mr. Adler that the delegation "compromised the honour of the working-class movement."

Notwithstanding the fact that all the stars of the old Russian régime worked several months to prepare this reply to the Report of the T.U. Delegation, the book itself contains all kinds of accusations against the Soviets which are very often in the greatest contradiction to one another. Furthermore, the same writer very often makes contradictory accusations against the Soviet régime; for instance, Peter Struve, who was the chairman of the above-mentioned Congress of the White Guards. Peter Struve took upon himself the writing of the general introduction to the book. On page 7 he says that the Russian Revolution was a violent reaction which brings us back to the economic barbarity of the Middle Ages. On the same page this writer tells us that, after the Revolution, Russia was thrown back in some respects to the end of the eighteenth century, and in others to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thus we know that, according to Struve, the Russian Revolution threw the country back either to the Middle Ages or to the eighteenth century. It appears that when Mr. Struve came to the end of his introduction, he forgot all he said on the seventh page, and he makes the following declaration:—

Far from having established Socialism in Russia Lenin prepared the basis for a renaissance in the ideas as well as in facts of a bourgeois régime and ideology such as history has not yet known.

Now compare the statement made on p. 7 with the statement just quoted (p. 15) and you will come to the conclusion that the man who took upon himself to introduce the book to the reader does not himself know what was the idea of the Russian Revolution.

All the contributors are, of course, very scornful when they deal with the Report of the T.U. Delegation and its authors. Again and again they repeat that these men—the authors of the T.U. Report—do not know Russia enough, and so on. The authors of the reply know Russia very well. Still more, they played a big part in the destinies of that country. Still, they do not say a word as to why and how they, the rulers of old Russia, lost their influence and were compelled to fly from the country which they kept in their hands for decades and decades. It is quite obvious that this is the problem which matters. It is not enough to write a book against those who have given an honest picture of conditions under the Soviets. The authors of the book had full power to fight Soviet ideas and the defenders of the Soviets. Why did they lose? But there is not a word about this problem in this book, which comprises 571 pages.

The funniest thing about the book is that it contains many facts which are absolutely correct. Their greatest indictment against the Soviets is that

this system shows preference to the workers. That is the thing which they cannot tolerate. A very loyal man, Professor Timacheff, goes so far as to say that the very fact that the Soviet Government draws a clear line between workers and non-workers makes Soviet Russia a state divided into castes (p. 36). Well, if we are not mistaken, the Report of the T.U. Delegation never denied that the working class is the ruling class under the Soviets, and that the Soviet system has for its object to practise and not only to preach preference for the workers.

There are two chapters in this book which deserve special attention. One is about the Comintern and the other about Soviet militarism. The authors of the book try their very best to serve the international reaction. They have heard of some accusations concerning the relations between the Comintern and the Soviet Government. They are very anxious to substantiate these accusations. Unfortunately for them they do not exactly know the aims of Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sir William Joynson-Hicks. In order to prove that the Soviet Government and the Communist International are the same thing they advance the following theory:—

- (i) The dictatorship of the Russian C.P. exists in the Soviet Union.
- (ii) The Russian C.P. is a part of the Communist International as a member and as a subordinate organ.
- (iii) The Communist International is the chief master of the destinies of Russia, which it governs through the medium of the Russian C.P. (p. 40).

Poor professors! Chamberlain and Joynson-Hicks are trying their very best to prove that the C.I. is governed by the Soviet Government. Now these learned professors, only anxious to help Chamberlain, are proving that the C.I. is ruling Russia. Which means that Russia is ruled, not only by the Russian workers, but by English workers, German workers, French workers, and others, who, together with the Russian Party—in the book it is stated clearly that the Russian Party is a subordinate part of the Comintern—form the C.I. This is quite a different thing. If the authors of the book are correct, then Soviet Russia cannot be blamed for the actions of the C.I., but the British, French, German, and other workers should be blamed for the mistakes or for the achievements of Soviet Russia.

Still more amazing is the chapter on militarism. It is called the "Militarisation of the U.S.S.R." The chapter begins with a pathetic announcement that the Bolsheviks seized power with the slogans: "Down with war!" and "Down with the military!" Then the author of this chapter (by the way, he is afraid to give his name; all we know is that he is an officer of the General Staff of the Imperial Russian Army) continues that many Socialists have written apologetic books about the militia. He knows that the army of the U.S.S.R. consists only of 562,000 men (p. 79), which is about one-third of the old Russian Tsarist army. He also knows that the Soviet Union is passing little by little to the militia system. Still he writes a long chapter on militarism. Where do you think he finds that famous militarism? He finds it in a speech by the late People's Commissar for War, M. V. Frunze, who stated that while Russia is surrounded by capitalist Governments it should always be prepared to resist an attack. Of course we understand that the authors of this book, who are very anxious to restore Tsardom and to

crown the uncle of the late Tsar, would prefer that Russia should not be ready to resist an attack. Well and good. But honest men have no right to speak about a country which cut down its army to one-third of its previous size, and which is continuing to cut it down, as a militarist country.

The book itself is divided into two parts. The first part deals with general conditions. The second part deals specially with economic conditions. The second part is the biggest. The most interesting feature about the second part is that the authors make a point of emphasising the damages which the country suffered as a result of so-called war Communism. They pretend not to know that war Communism was chiefly a measure of defence against the same authors, who were at that time not so busy writing books, but in organising the active armed counter-revolution with the help of the international bourgeoisie. If someone is to be blamed for all the sufferings endured by the Russian people, for all the tragedies at the time of the civil war, there is no doubt that the authors of this book are the first to be blamed. The most interesting thing is that, apart from several critical remarks against the authors of the T.U. Delegation Report, they do not deny, and they cannot deny, the facts and figures of the Report.

There are very many groups of people in all countries who dislike the Report of the T.U. Delegation. But the only group to take upon itself the task of preparing a full reply (we do not speak of Friedrich Adler, who preferred to abuse the Report instead of answering it point by point) was a group of the old rulers of Russia. This fact shows that the authors of the Trade Union Report understood the situation sufficiently well. They preferred to line up with the workers and the peasants in their efforts and in their achievements in the fight against those who were defeated by the victorious revolution. To answer the reply would mean to criticise the Tsarist and capitalist regimes. The working-class movement has many occasions to do this on the basis of everyday life. This book deserves attention only because it shows who are on the side of the Soviet—the British workers, as well as the workers of many other countries—and who are against the Soviets—Russian White Guards, French Fascists, and reactionaries of many other countries. The Report of the T.U. Delegation on the one hand and the reply on the other are quite a good illustration of the two sides in this struggle. That is the most important thing about the book.

P B.



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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
W.C.1*

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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

May, 1927

Number 5

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Italy—The United States

Published at

162 Buckingham Palace Road

London

S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : SLOANE 5412.

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One year 8/- or \$2.00 Six months 4/- or \$1.00

American Subscription Representative :—Philip Novick, 2710 Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

Advertisement Rates on application.

Volume VIII (January to December, 1926) is now ready and can be supplied for 10s. 6d. post free, or these numbers can be bound and returned post free for 4s. 6d.

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NOTES of the MONTH

After Twelve Months—Trade Union Bill and Dictatorship—1867-1927—A New Era—From Taff Vale to Baldwin—End of Liberal Capitalism—Legal Organisation of Wage-Slavery—No Distinction Economic and Political—Wage Issues Revolutionary—Trade Unions to Revolution—Minority Movement—Suppression the Reply—Against Revolutionary Trade Unionism—Sectional Unions Permitted—Liberal Protests Valueless—Either Capitalist or Proletarian Dictatorship—Fascism, Webbism and Paul-Boncour—Trade Union Bill as Reformist Policy—Police-Reformist Alliance—Where do the Reformist Leaders Stand?—Preparing to Bargain—The Real Fight

THE Government's Trade Union Bill, coming as the inevitable sequel of the defeat of the miners and the smashing of the General Strike, is the sharpest declaration yet of the real policy of British Capitalism to-day. For twelve months the dominant Labour Party and trade union leaders have been steadily on the retreat ever since the declaration of the General Strike, apologising for the General Strike, condemning the General Strike and all strike policies, condemning the miners for their resistance, stabbing them in the back, vowing "Never again," preaching industrial peace, joining up openly with the employers, denouncing and expelling the revolutionaries and honest working-class fighters, and disrupting the Labour Party and trade unions. What is the outcome? Is the attack in any way diminished, are the workers one whit protected by this "safe," "sane," "cautious," "moderate," "constitutional" policy? On the contrary. *The attack is intensified.* As the revolutionaries predicted, the abandonment of the miners has at once led to the extension of the attack to the whole working class. It is no longer a question simply of the General Strike; it is no longer a question of the imprisonment of a dozen Communists; it is no longer

even a question of the wages and standards of a principal section of the working class. It is the elementary trade union and political rights of the workers that are now the subject of attack. From this can be learnt the lesson that there is no half-way house, no safe, moderate, constitutional resting-place in the class struggle. Whoever is not prepared to fight must retreat, and must go on retreating until a stand is made. The Trade Union Bill is the blow of reality, after the poison-gas of industrial peace propaganda, censures of the miners, and renunciation of the struggle. Let the lesson be learned. The whole working class is awakening to the fight ; but the voice of compromise and bargaining on top is already heard. On the fighting strength of the workers to resist, and on nothing else, will depend the outcome of the new attack.

BY this new Bill the break between modern bourgeois policy and the old forms of democracy receives its clearest expression. Here the sequel of the General Strike, of the war-confrontation of the capitalist state machine and of the organised workers, is given legal form. It is no longer possible to trust to the old liberal safeguards to hold in the workers ; the intensity of the class struggle in the period of capitalist decline has grown too great ; the new revolutionary forces are becoming too strong ; the humbug of the old Liberal leaders is wearing thin. The General Strike demonstrated that the workers had grown beyond the old bounds ; it was not the actual danger that most alarmed the bourgeoisie—they had too many odds on their side for that, too much grounds for confidence still in the weaknesses, illusions, as well as the operations of their own agents in the workers' ranks—but rather the revelation of what the future holds in store. Therefore they find it necessary on the heels of victory to reinforce their position in time, to hold in the workers henceforth with open chains of law. The two camps are now plainly recognised. The workers are directly subjected to a special régime, with special penalties. For the first time in law a " strike " is proclaimed a legal crime. Millions of workers are threatened with imprisonment for the crime of withholding their labour. In this way the régime of capitalist democracy approaches its legal end. The fiction of the freedom of the labour contract is now denied in

legal form as well as in fact. The General Strike and the Trade Union Bill are the two decisive signposts of the new era. With the advance of the class struggle the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie comes increasingly into the open.

SIXTY years ago Conservatism passed the principal legislation establishing the modern basis of the trade unions. To-day Conservatism is engaged in destroying that basis. This change marks an era. The meaning of this change is well worth the study of the Fabian Liberal-Labour pedlars in illusions of gradual "progress" within capitalism who still dominate the traditional school of the existing Labour Movement and who are wholly out of touch with the realities of the modern period. They can only meet the new developments with "horror" and "amazement" at such "fantastic" proposals. "The whole thing is entirely out of touch with twentieth-century ideas and conditions," is the verdict of Pugh, the chairman of the General Council at the time of the General Strike. On the contrary. It is extremely in keeping with the century of the imperialist world war, of the beginning of the world revolution, of civil war, of dictatorship and extraordinary legislation, of Fascism, of chemical warfare, of colonial oppression and air-bombing, of the capitalist offensive—and of the General Strike. It is extremely in keeping with the century which began appropriately with the Boxer international massacre by the "civilised" Powers, with the South African robber-war, with the Hague Hypocrites' Conference—and with the foundation of the Labour Party. In other words it is extremely in keeping with the period of imperialism, that is, with the period of capitalist decline. Whoever does not see this, but sees the new Bill only as a monstrous apparition, a bolt from the blue, an erratic flare-up of obsolete reaction, an inexplicable, unforeseen accident and throwback—like the war, the fall in wages, or the growth of Communism, as they appear to the Fabian Liberal-Socialist mind—is not at the beginning of understanding the problems of the working class in the present period; is still digging at the dead Liberal roots of servitude to Capital (Fabianism), when the advance of the class struggle will no longer allow the yield of any fruits for such pains, instead of advancing

to the clear understanding of the real working-class struggle in the present imperialist era and the consequent action upon such understanding (Leninism).

IT is sometimes attempted to compare the present attack to that of the Taff Vale Judgment and the Osborne Judgment. But the conditions, as well as the scope, of the present attack represent such a volume of difference as to make no true comparison possible. Then the attack was still an outpost affair through the reactionary law courts, endeavouring by indirect means, by the trickery of economic liabilities and financial restrictions, to prevent the functioning of the unions. To-day the attack is directly led by the Government of the day as its major political issue ; the Government and the political party organising the attack represent the overwhelming majority of the bourgeoisie ; the attack is openly turned on to the whole operation and organisation of trade unionism, seeking to make strikes "illegal" under virtually any conditions that the Government of the day and judiciary may choose to determine, to make strikers personally responsible, to make advocacy of major strikes a crime, to make the funds of the unions seizable, to make the discipline of the unions inoperative, to make not only picketing, but the most passive demonstration of working-class feeling a crime, to make combined action impossible, to make strikes for any higher object than wages, hours or conditions of employment impossible, to cut off the unions as collective bodies from politics, and to cut off the State machine and all services connected with it from the Labour Movement. The character of this attack (even after making full allowance for the proportion of sweeping clauses only inserted in the first draft to be possibly removed or toned down subsequently as "concessions") is of such a magnitude as to raise completely new questions and mark a new era in the relationship of the working-class movement and the State.

NEVERTHELESS it may be noted incidentally that the Taff Vale Judgment and Osborne Judgment are forerunners of the present attack. Although no more than preliminary guerrilla warfare, they represent as it were storm-signals of the new period. The Taff Vale Judgment twenty-

six years ago was the first sign of change, the first attempt to reverse the "ordered progress" of the nineteenth century, and withdraw the privileges previously accorded by the consent of both political parties. It was the first sign *backwards*. Thus the twentieth century opened at its outset with a signal of the new period. It is true that the Trades Disputes Act of 1906 nominally restored the old position, and even strengthened it by extended and clearer interpretation. But it could not and did not restore the relative stability of the old position. For the Trades Dispute Act was already in the sphere of "partisan" legislation, carried as a sequel of violent mass-agitation, and in the face of violent opposition, with the trade unions drawn by that agitation into the full stream of politics, and with a powerful section of the bourgeoisie vowing opposition and reversal. The renewed attack of the Osborne Judgment in 1908, and the very inadequate and unsatisfactory defending Act of 1913, were only a continuation of the fight. Trade union rights were already in the full zig-zag of daily political struggle. The war, while in reality it forced forward to the extreme point, as with every other immanent tendency of Capitalism, the State control and regimentation of the trade unions, obscured for the moment from view the permanent character of the issues raised (the full significance of this most shameful section in the history of the trade union bureaucracy, embodied in the Munitions Act, has never yet been adequately treated). The large-scale struggles since the war, culminating in the General Strike, made increasingly clear the new issues. Thus the Trade Union Bill is the outcome of a whole process of development, in which the trade unions have moved increasingly to larger and political issues, while the bourgeoisie has increasingly attempted to push back, confine and control the operations of the unions, and even withdraw the rights already accorded.

WHAT is the meaning of this change? Put shortly, it may be said that the advance of capitalism and of the class struggle has made impossible the continuance of the old Liberal methods. So long as capitalism was broken up into comparatively small-scale enterprises of a number of employers the fiction of freedom could be maintained. The worker could be

supposed "free" to "choose" between one employer and another, and even permitted to organise in collective groups to bargain better (provided always he organised in still more divided sectional groups without real unity); the only unspoken condition was that he must choose some employer; he was not free to escape from the employing class. As Marx declared: "The worker leaves the capitalist to whom he has hired himself as often as he likes, and the capitalist dismisses him as often as he thinks fit. But the worker, whose only source of income is the sale of his labour-power, cannot leave the whole class of purchasers, that is, the capitalist class, without giving up his existence. *He belongs not to this or that capitalist, but to the capitalist class.*" This is the description of the Liberal period (written in 1849), of Liberal wage-slavery.

BUT when capitalism develops to the large-scale monopolist stage, under the increasingly close direction and control of the State, this position is no longer possible. There is now in effect only one trust to employ the workers. In consequence the old nominal freedom automatically disappears in practice; and it becomes only a question of time, if capitalism succeeds in maintaining its hold, before the political and legal forms change correspondingly. The workers can no longer be allowed even the old nominal freedom of movement within their slavery. Since there is only one trust to employ, the pretence of freedom of choice cannot be maintained: the workers must either obey or be disciplined. So the whole movement of modern trustified capitalism is in the direction of increasingly open dictatorship, suppression, extraordinary laws, emergency powers or Fascism. Just as Liberalism gives place to imperialism in the foreign field, so it gives place to concentration of power of the Executive and of the bureaucracy at home, to the suppression even of Parliament, and the attempted absorption or repression of all independent forms of organisation of the workers. It becomes a question of the "public interest" that the "essential services" must be maintained; and since the "essential services" happen to be the trusts, it becomes a question of "public interest" that the trusts must be protected, and that the workers must be compelled to

obey them and work for their profit (supply the "essential services") uninterruptedly, since the alternative is economic and political breakdown. The old unorganised situation cannot be left. *Large-scale capitalism inevitably moves to the legal organisation of wage-slavery.*

IN the era of trustified capitalism, in consequence, the distinction between economic and political issues breaks down. All issues, however small, affect the whole system, and are therefore in the last resort political. It is inevitable that if a whole industry has become a single unit any issue, whatever its character, affects the entire industry. If that industry is an essential part of the whole organisation of production, then that same issue, whatever its original character, affects the whole organisation of production and therefore the whole social organisation, and raises much larger issues. Previously the play of economic issues within an industry, of wage-bargaining and strikes, represented only in a sharper form the haggling of the market, the competition between the resources of a section of capitalists and the holding-out powers of a section of workers. But now there is no longer the old market. Competition is killed by monopoly. In place of the automatic regulative mechanism of the market, organised capital is confronted with the organised working class. The class character of the issue, even of the smallest wage bargain, is laid bare without concealment. The outcome depends on consolidated class strength, on class power. Thus every issue, however limited to begin with, however "purely economic" or "purely industrial," as the General Council with its head in the sand would like to persuade itself, raises inevitably, if it is pressed forward with determination, the whole issue of class power, of capitalist class domination. The trade unions can only advance to the new political issue of united class struggle against organised capitalism and the State, of revolutionary class struggle, or surrender all along the line. On this the capitalists are very clear, as they showed last May. And therefore they are determined at all costs to prevent the unity of the trade unions, to cut their claws and prevent their action, even on the old economic issues, save within the most limited, sectional lines.

MORE than this. The period of trustified capitalism is the period of capitalist decline. The increased productive power, the large-scale organisation of production, reaches its highest point, but for this very reason becomes incompatible with the obsolete basis of private individual property ownership and narrow national States. The huge productive forces and drive to expansion beat against these bonds, and find no adequate outlet within the limits of private ownership and production for exchange. The intensified competition resulting leads to imperialist antagonism, war, restriction of production, unemployment and wage-cutting. The conditions of the workers go downwards ; the class struggle is intensified ; the ratio of production to productive power, and even the absolute level of production, goes downwards. This process reveals itself in all the older capitalist countries, but most of all in the oldest, Britain, where the admittedly necessary process of reconstruction and adaptation is checked at every turn by the existing framework of obsolete property rights. Thus every economic issue becomes in this period a revolutionary and political issue in a far more basic sense than that of simply involving the intervention of the State. The simplest economic issue raises the whole organisation of industry and society. The basic industries are declared "economically incapable" (*i.e.*, incapable within the existing system of property rights) of paying a subsistence wage : the money is "not in the industry," although the wealth of the capitalist class is obvious, and the power of production is greater than ever. In this way the most elementary wage demands, and even resistance to wage-cuts, come to raise revolutionary issues. The capitalist class is driven to the position of a purely reactionary force, resisting every advance, and closing its ranks with all the reactionary elements in the social order, while effective leadership passes increasingly to the Right. Thus policy to the trade unions passes from liberal tolerance and skilful negotiation to direct force, repression and control. There is no longer scope for bargaining, a harmless, neutral sphere in which the trade unions may be allowed to operate freely without danger of raising major issues. The most innocent economic issues now become "subversive." In this way the Trade Union Bill is the expression of the policy of Capitalism in decline.

BUT the same process that forces Capitalism to endeavour to repress and confine the action of the trade unions, forces the trade unions to endeavour to enlarge and extend the scope of their action. It becomes clear to every thinking trade unionist that the unions can no longer continue under modern conditions with any hope of success on the old sectional lines, and that not only amalgamation on industrial lines is necessary, but unification of the entire organised workers' forces. It is obvious that the whole drive of modern trade unionism, despite the doubts, delays, retreats and actual sabotage of the leading machine, which fears the consequent unmasking of class issues, moves in this direction ; and that the General Strike was only a first, and not a last, step of a new process, already prepared for and foreshadowed by the foundation of the General Council. But the enlargement of the character of the fight, as well as the failure of the old wage-bargaining, carries with it an enlargement of the issues : Trade unionism is brought into direct conflict with the State (seven times on a large scale in the past sixteen years), is compelled to take up questions of the organisation of industry, of war and peace, &c. In the period of capitalist decline, trade unionism, if it is to continue as a fighting organisation of the workers, is driven more and more to take up political issues. But this process is in itself revolutionary, however much it may at first be concealed in form (formation of the Labour Party as an indirect vehicle of trade union politics, only later to be superseded in all big issues by the direct confrontation of the trade union executives and the State ; entry into conflict with the State, while vowing loyalty to the Constitution, &c.). So British trade unionism, despite all its famous conservatism, traditionalism, constitutionalism and the rest of it, with the crust of reaction and reactionary leadership still unbroken upon its surface, nevertheless passes inevitably by the process of events, because there is no alternative, into the path of the General Strike, that is, of concealed civil war.

THUS while Capitalism moves increasingly to reaction, the trade unions move to revolutionisation. The growth of the revolutionary forces in the Labour Move-

ment is not, as the Tories and MacDonalds and other Bolshevik-hunters imagine, the result of revolutionary "plots" and "nuclei," but of the process of events in relation to the common sense of a growing number of organised workers. The organised and conscious revolutionary workers, who assist, in the face of every obstacle and intimidation, in clarifying and organising this growing consciousness, are simply doing their working-class duty, as every honest person in the Labour Movement, whatever his views, knows. But it is just this growth of the revolutionary forces that gives the sharpness and urgency to the new problem from the point of view of Capitalism, making necessary open, coercive measures in place of the old tactical ingenuity and conciliation. If the Labour Movement had remained securely in the hands of the MacDonalds, Hendersons and Thomases, without danger of deflection from other forces, the capitalists would be at peace; the workers could be fleeced without difficulty, and every wage-cut and capitalist move would be accepted "in the public interest." Against such lap-dogs the whips of the Trade Union Bill would never have been invoked, as the capitalists themselves clearly declare; a piece of sugar would be sufficient. Even the presence of the small revolutionary minority which has always existed in the trade unions would not have made and did not make, so long as the situation was not ripe to give scope to their influence, any crisis as to-day. It is the visible possibility of a revolutionary mass movement, of the revolutionary conquest of the trade unions, as evidenced in the General Strike, the miners' struggle and the growth of the Minority Movement, that gives rise to the present crisis.

WHAT is the response to this process of revolutionisation from the previously unchallenged apparatus of Capitalist Government and Liberal trade unionism? The response is identical in both cases. It is a response of *coercive repression*. The reformist bureaucrats do not attempt to argue with the Communists or with the Minority Movement, whose aims and policy they consciously distort on lines set them by the sensationalist millionaire Press ("slaves of Moscow," "destroyers," "disruptionists," "poison," &c.); they do not even trust to

the processes of democracy in which they profess to believe, once it becomes clear to them that those processes can begin to yield results very disturbing to themselves (election of Cook, Scarborough decisions of the Trades Union Congress, all holding out possibilities of very rapid developments in view of the speedy growth of the Minority Movement to over a million members, and similar signs). They endeavour speedily to stamp out the new force by disciplinary measures, by expulsions, suspensions, disfranchisements, refusal of representation, &c. In exactly the same way the Government throws aside the pretence of liberal methods, of negotiation and conciliation. They turn at once to the legal coercive machine to stamp out the new forces, to make illegal the new methods and policies of trade unionism. *The Government is determined not to allow Left-Wing control of the trade unions. If it should come, the trade unions are to be made illegal, and only Right-Wing unions allowed. This is the real meaning of the Trade Union Bill.*

THE Government's Trade Union Bill is thus essentially a Bill to safeguard the trade unions against the revolution. It is in this respect exactly the same as the campaign that the reformist leaders have themselves been waging ; and this is the real danger of the situation. For the protests of the reformist leaders are all protests in the name of the old liberal economic rights of the trade unions, the right, in the words of the National Joint Council resolution, to defend " standards of life and conditions of employment " when these are " assailed by organised employers." But the Government will readily reply to this that there is no intention of attacking these " legitimate " rights, so far as possible, and that amendments will be gladly considered to secure this. The attack is nominally not against trade unionism as such, but against revolutionary trade unionism—against united trade unionism, combined action, sympathetic strikes, general strikes, mass picketing and the rest. But this is precisely what the reformist leaders have themselves been attacking. How then can they put up a defence against the Government's attack ? This is the crux of the situation. It is noticeable that in all the statements issued after the publication of the Government's Bill,

not a single reformist leader defends the General Strike. And yet, on a real understanding of the situation, this is the central issue.

THE distinction which the Government attempts to make between "legitimate" trade unionism and revolutionary trade unionism is in fact a distinction without a difference. For trade unionism to-day, if it is to fight at all, must inevitably be revolutionary, *i.e.*, united, political, centrally led, fighting the State strike-breaking machine, &c. If this is not allowed, trade unionism is weaponless in the modern era. If united action is not allowed, if the sympathetic strike is not allowed, if the General Strike is not allowed, if conflicts involving the State are not allowed, if conflicts involving the "community" or "a substantial portion of the community" are not allowed, then trade unionism may as well give up the fight under modern conditions. The shell of the old, formal, limited rights may remain ; but there is no longer any reality behind them. The permission to fight is kindly granted only under such conditions as will guarantee the capitalists complete success. The sectional trade unionism which is allowed to remain is utterly useless, helpless and ineffective to assist the workers ; it ceases to be an organ of the workers' class struggle and becomes only an instrument of capitalist administration. All this was pointed out when the reformist leaders began their campaign of "Never Again" after the General Strike. But the reformist leaders simply played into the hands of the Government attack, and made them a present of the distinction which it is now their pleasure to use.

THE Liberal protests, in the name of the old limited economic rights, as expressed by some of the Liberal spokesmen and by the reformist leaders, are valueless, and bear no relation to present issues. They assume that the attack is simply a throwback resurrectionist attack by an eccentric group of Die-hards temporarily in a position of power upon the rights of the trade unions as settled fifty years ago, and they bring up all the old arguments of the expediency of Liberal methods to avoid class struggle. The National Joint Council regrets that the measure will "intensify class strife and embitter industrial

relations." The *Manchester Guardian* finds it "a political disaster"; "no sensible man of any party doubts that reforms are needed in the trade union world. The best way to prevent reform is to throw down a challenge to the trade unions." Lord Grey finds it "a huge mistake" to have laid down a direct line of conflict with the whole Labour Movement: "the community has no desire to revoke the charter of the trade unions," so long as "constitutional methods" are maintained. Clynes regrets that "it brings down with a crash all the recent efforts to produce feelings of goodwill in industry." Henderson finds the measure "a direct attack upon the vital principle of working-class combination and common action in defence of the general standards of life and employment which the unions exist to maintain." (It will be observed that the unions "exist to maintain," in Henderson's view, certain "standards of employment"; there is no question of the political general strike, as, for example, for resistance to war, to which the Movement is officially committed: the issue is simply shirked.)

ALL these Liberal arguments and pleadings evade the real issue of the conflict between organised Capitalism, centralised in the modern State, and the organised working class. This issue, once it is reached with the bareness revealed in the General Strike, can no longer be got over and concealed with smug phrases of class-conciliation and diplomacy after the old Liberal model. It can only end either in open Capitalist dictatorship or in revolution. The policy of the Baldwin Government is not an erratic "sport" of an irresponsible Die-hard minority, lacking the wisdom and experience of the Liberal reformers. On the contrary it represents the real trend of policy of modern Capitalism, as a survey of the international situation will show. What Fascism has attempted to do with the trade unions in Italy, that British Conservatism is beginning to tackle in its own fashion here. The modern large-scale centralised social organisation the old unorganised "Liberal" position cannot remain. *The trade unions cannot remain neutral economic bodies.* In fact they must become part of the apparatus either of Capitalist dictatorship or of Proletarian dictatorship. If the trade unions fail in the fight

with Capitalism, then Capitalism will attempt to absorb them and turn them into governmental institutions. The only alternative for the trade unions in the last stage of Capitalism is to take up openly the fight against the Capitalist State, that is, to enter with full consciousness on the revolutionary path. Only revolutionary trade unionism can fight and defeat the attack represented by the Government Trade Union Bill.

AND in fact the State capitalist regimentation of the trade unions is the inevitable outcome of reformist policy. This is the final realisation of all the preachings of "Never Again" and Industrial Peace. Once again a survey of the international situation will show this clearly. The shameful signed agreement of D'Aragona and the Italian reformist leaders with Fascism, at the same time as revolutionary trade unionists all over the world, in Italy, in Lithuania, in the Balkans, in China, are dying for their principles—that is the true expression and outcome of reformism. The trade unions are handed over bound to the mercies of Mussolini—because Fascism, they discover and announce to the world, has after all much in common with Social Democracy. In France the Paul-Boncour Militarisation Bill, prepared by the Socialist Party and the General Staff in unison, and voted by the entire Chamber with the exception of the Communists, hands over to the Capitalist State in emergency dictatorial powers over all individuals and associations, including the trade unions, which are thus militarily subjected to the Capitalist State. Here is the policy of "Socialism" of the Second International. And indeed the whole movement of Fabianism in England goes in the same direction; as an examination of the Webbs' *Trade Unionism*, and in particular of the concluding chapter in the revised post-war edition, would show, where the whole progress of trade unionism becomes an advance, not in class-consciousness and strength and power as organs of class-struggle, but an advance from the old unrespectable semi-outlaw public-house position to that of respected pillars of the State, represented in all organs of capitalist administration, and co-operating with the Government in all measures. Reformism,

while still using the language of Liberalism, becomes in fact simply the servant and social organiser of Imperialism.

FOR this reason, in this attack, as in every capitalist attack in the present period, the greatest danger lies, not in the attack itself (a solid front of the workers can completely repulse it and make it, even if carried into legislation, practically invalid), but in the reformist leaders, who from the workers' side are in practice co-operating with the capitalists in the attack. *The Government Trade Union Bill represents, as to 75 per cent., the policy preached by the reformist leaders.* It is the reformist leaders who have preached against any trade union alliance as an attack on "the community"; it is the reformist leaders who have denounced the General Strike; it is the reformist leaders who have proclaimed the superior interests of "the Nation" and "the State" and "the Constitution." The Government has simply translated into law the arguments supplied them. And in practice, at the same time as the whole need is for a common defensive front ("I now appeal to all trade unionists to rally together," in MacDonald's own statement), the reformist leaders are busy breaking up that front and expelling and disfranchising good trade unionists and trade union organisations, on the basis of disloyalty to those same "community" "Constitution" doctrines.

ON the same day that the text of the Trade Union Bill was issued, Frank Hodges (who, as the joint-employee of Baldwin and Amsterdam, embodies, as it were, professionally the policy of class-conciliation, showing how easily reconcilable are the salaries of capital and labour in one person), lunching with the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and speaking on "Industrial Relations; Can They be Improved?" said:—

Employers, on the one hand, who do not understand the legitimate principle of trade unionism, and the followers of the Bolshevist philosophy on the other, can destroy such measure of prosperity as exists, unless there is strong rigorous action on our joint part to destroy them. (*The Times*, April 5, 1926.)

Where Hodges speaks, there speak MacDonald, Thomas and the rest. This is their outlook at the moment of the launching of

the Trade Union Bill. The "legitimate principle of trade unionism"—how reminiscent of the very language of his master, Baldwin—so well understood and approved by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, is sharply contrasted with revolutionary trade unionism. Against the latter there must be "strong rigorous action on our joint part" to destroy it. On whose joint part? On the joint part of business men and Labour leaders, of Hodges and the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, of MacDonald and Baldwin, of Churchill and Thomas, of the reformist leaders and their capitalist masters. This is the policy of Hodges, Thomas, MacDonald and the rest. And this is the policy which is realised—"strong rigorous action on our joint part"—in the expulsions and disfranchisements on the one side, and the Trade Union Bill on the other.

AT the present moment the whole Labour leadership is speaking in opposition to the Trade Union Bill. The unanimity and resentment of the whole working-class movement allows no other utterance. But, with the example of the General Strike fresh in mind, the workers will do well to look sharply, and to demand, what lies behind those words. Twelve months ago there was an even greater unanimity of utterance of the whole leadership, under the pressure of the working class, to resist to the last with the whole power of the movement any Government attack on the miners' standards. The outcome is known; and it is only after the event that the reformist leaders have explained to us that they did not mean their words and their pledges, but in view of the volume of working-class feeling did not consider it expedient at the time to say so. Into what is this opposition in words to be translated? This is the decisive question. Is the Special Conference of Executives to meet only to "hear," according to the announcement, the plan of a propaganda campaign, or to prepare united action? Is the Bill to be allowed to become law? If the Bill becomes law, will the reformist leaders proceed to turn the other cheek and announce that in future no proposals for united action must be considered, since these are now "illegal," and so make use of the timely assistance of the abused law to overcome their Left-Wing critics? Will the Labour Parliamentary

spokesmen oppose every section of the Bill without reserve, or will they seek to bargain and negotiate for amendments and "improvements"? Will the next Labour Government be pledged to repeal the Bill as a whole, or will they utilise, and perhaps even seek to preserve, some of the provisions themselves against a strike movement, as they have already utilised the Emergency Powers Act? On all these questions the workers will do well to demand plain answers, and to enforce genuine opposition.

ALREADY there are plenty of signs of danger, even in the statements made immediately following the publication of the Bill. In all these statements only certain issues are touched (the political levy, economic rights of the unions, Civil Servants and the Labour Party, &c.); others are left completely untouched (united action, the general strike, the political general strike). The *Daily Herald* even issues an editorial to prove that the question of the General Strike is of no importance in relation to the Trade Union Bill. And in the statements of the Parliamentary leaders, such as MacDonald and Snowden, the offer of bargaining is plainly suggested. It was MacDonald who proposed, while the Bill was in preparation, a Government inquiry to consider the amendment of Trade Union law. And after the Bill is published, we find him declaring :—

The Bill is a handicap to Labour in so far as it treats of admitted difficulties which might be the subject of an exchange of views. (*Daily Herald*, April 6, 1927.)

Here the offer is plain and open. United action of the unions, centralised control, sympathetic strikes, general strikes, mass-picketing, all these, against which MacDonald has often enough proclaimed his opposition in language barely distinguishable from that of Baldwin, and indeed often quoted by Baldwin with pleasure, are "admitted difficulties." But the Conservative Government has been tactless. These questions "might be the subject of an exchange of views." The united front of Baldwin and MacDonald already shows through.

AGainst the menace of the Government's Trade Union Bill the strongest opposition needs to be organised by the working-class movement, and the pressure will need

to come from below. In a characteristic servile editorial, the *Daily Herald* advises the workers to defeat the Trade Union Bill by—"loyalty and discipline" to their leaders.

The Movement is fighting against the worst piece of class legislation this Government has yet produced, and in that fight there is need of two things—Loyalty and Discipline.

The General Council, the Labour Party, and the Parliamentary Labour Party should have no doubt that in whatever action they take they will have with them the rank and file of the trade unions, the voters for the Labour Party, and all who still have any regard for fairness and justice.

If this advice is taken, the Trade Union Bill will certainly not be defeated. In exactly the same way, twelve months ago, the *Daily Herald* on the eve of the General Strike came out with the advice to "Trust Your Leaders," with the result that is known. The strength of the fight against the Trade Union Bill depends entirely on the strength of working-class pressure, and not at all on the General Council, &c., who, if left to themselves, will do nothing at all beyond a little formal opposition. Loyalty and discipline to the working-class movement require that the greatest possible vigilance and the greatest possible pressure shall be exerted towards the reformist leaders, through whom the movement still has to carry out its action, and who are for the most part known and notorious traitors, collaborators with the Baldwin Government, and secret or open opponents of the united trade union action that is the principal subject of attack. The General Council, Labour Party, and Parliamentary Labour Party should not at all be in the position of having "no doubt" that they "will have with them the rank and file" "*in whatever action they take.*" On the contrary. They should have no doubt, and be made to have no doubt, that they will "have with them the rank and file" *only if they put up a genuine fight with the whole force of the working-class movement, without reserve or compromise, against the Government's Trade Union Bill.* This fight can only be carried out and enforced by the action and agitation of Left-Wing revolutionary trade unionism, which is the true protagonist in the present fight with the Baldwin Government, and which must with its campaign awaken the whole working class.

R.P.D.

THE GOVERNMENT TRADE UNION BILL

By R. COPPOCK

THE activities of the great British Trade Union Movement have been wonderfully stimulated by the introduction of the Government's Trades Disputes Bill, and many and various are the criticisms of this piece of Conservative legislation which have been put forth.

On the one hand the opponents of the Bill have shown how it attacks the liberty of the subject, and how it is, in fact, a piece of State interference in the administration of our well-established Trade Union Movement. These have issued a call to arms and have advised the workers to use all their power to prevent it from becoming an Act of Parliament or in other words the law of the land.

On the other hand the supporters of the Bill state that what is being done is in the great interests of the nation, as they hold that for the trade unions to have the power which was manifest in May of 1926, is a serious menace to the nation and that disciplinary action must be taken.

We, therefore, see lined up on either hand two parties composed of strong and determined people, the one with political power, no morals and the big stick, and the other with a growing control of industrial organisational power whose efforts throughout its century of existence have been the only bright light that has guided the millions of toilers and moilers of this island of ours.

In the debates which will take place upon this measure in its passage through the House nothing new will be said, and the speeches which will be delivered by the supporters of the Bill can be read now if one takes the trouble to read the records of the House of Commons a century ago, for indeed there is no new point to develop other than the trade unions' association with the Labour Party which is only about twenty-five years old. The opposition will indeed use the same arguments as did the staunch few who fought for trade union rights years ago, perhaps with

a greater clarity and with more skill, but still their story will be the same.

* The big difference will be that the workers in the Trade Union Movement are more in numbers and more responsive and expressive.

The most important point in the whole question is that millions of men and women are preparing for this great political battle, and that this repressive legislation cannot do other than reshape the political outlook of many members of the working classes who in the past have been swayed by political slogan-coiners. Repressive legislation has always affected great masses of people and brought them up against the realities of their times.

We have a simple demonstration of the above in Ireland, whose great national spirit was subordinated to the political power of the British Parliament. We saw the revolt that arose from that political repression. There is also Russia, where the same story is told, only more vividly, because the present Government of that nation is the greatest challenge the *status quo* has ever received in history. Other great historical examples could be cited if there were space and time at our disposal in which to do so.

Why, therefore, do we find ourselves in this position? The answer should be simple, as is indeed the answer to all the great working-class questions of the world; it is that the workers of this country are realising that, having trusted the landlord class and the industrial magnates with political and industrial power for generations, they have only been able to loosen the chains very slightly on occasions, whilst the industrial conditions have remained as before. There have been manifestations of a growing desire for a complete change in our industrial relationship in society, some of which may even appear to have been misdirected, but that is a matter of opinion. They have been sufficient, however, to show the great desire of the worker for a change, whilst the direction was indicated by the many and varied roads we have travelled. What really set the clock of working-class opinion and demonstrated only too clearly the apparent separation of the classes in society was the events of 1925 and 1926.

The industrialists in their endeavour to entrench themselves further in Capitalist Society used their new economic power (won

by the great plundering of the national coffers during the war) and the great army of unemployed, which has risen to enormous dimensions owing to the reduced purchasing power of the world (also resultant from the world war), to reduce the comparatively decent standard of life to which the workers had attained in 1919 to the 1914 basis (all this was again done in the interests of the nation). Defeat after defeat has been the record of the workers' organisations since the declaration of peace. Then followed the desire of the workers for a great effort to help those of their comrades who were being crushed even further than human endurance would allow. The Government collapsed under the pressure of 1925, but not so in 1926. The inevitable happened, and we saw the greatest demonstration of solidarity this nation has ever seen ; the action was an heroic one and ranked with the greatest of working-class demonstrations and action the world over. To the governing class, however, it was unpardonable, and the politicians used every effort to crush it : Navy, Army, Police, Specials, and wireless lies. The crisis passed, and it was the Government's business to see that their friends must never again be upset by such a demonstration.

So we are faced with this repressive Bill. I do not intend to go into the pros and cons of it: so many people have done so already. All I desire to say to the Government of the day is that they are too late; they may proceed with their Bill; it may become law. We for our part must remember that we as workers must organise in ever greater numbers; that concentration and co-operation must be our work, and that we must build up our movement industrially and politically. The power is ours when we have the courage to take it; and when we have political control the game of playing the statesman must cease, and our efforts should be devoted to correcting first the repressiveness of reactionary laws, and then onward to bring the complete revolution of society as we know it to-day, and lay the permanent foundation on which we shall build up the great Co-operative Commonwealth and complete the emancipation of the workers both by hand and brain. We must not lament over our lot; we must expect these attacks. Let us repel them by action, which is the only method that will get us there.

CIVIL SERVANTS AND THE T.U. BILL

By W. J. BROWN

(General Secretary, Civil Service Clerical Association)

ANY commentator on the terms of the Bill as it affects Civil Servants and Civil Service Organisations must bear in mind the special position which they already occupy. Civil Service Associations differ from ordinary Trade Unions in two important respects. First, they have no such powers of imposing discipline on their members as the ordinary Trade Union possesses (as, for example, by withdrawing a member's card and thereby affecting his ability to secure employment). Secondly, Civil Servants are already deprived of the right to strike. And thirdly, Civil Servants, since they are the employees of the House of Commons, are even more directly affected by political events than the outside worker. Regarded in the light of these three factors, the provisions of the Bill, vile as they are in regard to the Trade Union Movement generally, become vicious in the extreme so far as Civil Servants are concerned.

Because of the absence of the strike weapon Civil Servants can less afford to stand alone than anyone. Thus the importance of affiliations to the Trades Union Congress. Because of the immediate reaction on the Service of political events Civil Servants cannot afford to be politically impotent. Thus the affiliation to the Labour Party, the promotion of Service Parliamentary Candidatures, and the creation of constituency machinery for bringing pressure to bear on candidates at election times.

And it is precisely these things that Clause 5 of the Bill hits most directly and most hardly. It provides that it shall be an offence punishable by dismissal for a Civil Servant to be a member of any Association which :—

- (1) Has members outside the Service ;
- (2) Is affiliated to any other body which has members outside the Service ;
- (3) Has " political objects," or
- (4) Is associated " directly or indirectly " with any Political Party.

If the Bill goes through, Service Associations will either have to become outlaw organisations or alter their constitutions to conform

to the Bill. If they choose the latter course (as the only alternative to sheer impotence), the results would be :—

- (1) To destroy the Postal and Civil Service Internationals.
- (2) To destroy the affiliation between Civil Service Organisations and the Federation of Professional Workers.
- (3) To destroy the affiliation of 30,000 Civil Servants with the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress.
- (4) To destroy the political funds of the Association.
- (5) To make it impossible for Civil Service Associations to promote their own Parliamentary Candidates—(this is a “political object”).
- (6) To make it impossible for Civil Service Associations to support or oppose the candidatures of other people—friendly or hostile to the Service.
- (7) To put every Civil Servant and Civil Service Association at the mercy of the “regulations” to be issued by the Treasury (and not to be submitted to the House of Commons).

The sole remedies for any grievance left available when the Bill becomes law will be (a) the Whitley system, and (b) the Civil Service Industrial Court. The two can be disposed of in as many sentences. Whitleyism is a costly and elaborate farce—no decision on anything being possible except by the consent of the Official Side. The Board of Arbitration can deal only with certain types of cases, and then only by the consent of the Official Side.

In short, the Bill says to Civil Servants :—

You have already no right to strike.

Hereafter you shall not influence the House of Commons, which is your employer.

You shall not associate with outside workers, even though their conditions are cited against you whenever you try to improve your own.

You must place yourselves completely in the hands of the Government, which will do with you precisely what it pleases.

This, and no other, is the plain meaning of the Bill as it affects Civil Servants.

Two things appear to have been overlooked in the drafting of the Bill, however. There is no provision for the summary execution of Civil Servants who blow their noses in official hours. And the sub-title to the Bill is also omitted—“Peace in our time, O Lord.”

THE DRIVING FORCES OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

By J. FINEBERG

THE victory of the nationalist forces at Shanghai is of enormous consequence for the Chinese national revolution, not only from the standpoint of the enlargement of the territory of the National Government and the addition to it of the most important industrial and commercial centre in China, but also from the political and social standpoint. There is no need to stress the economic significance of Shanghai; that is very well known. Suffice it to say that Shanghai has always been regarded as the prize by all the factions fighting for power in China, for the very considerable revenues accruing from the possession of this extremely important centre enabled those who held it to be financially independent.

It is the social aspect of this victory that must principally engage our attention. In this respect the Shanghai victory may mark the completion of a stage and the beginning of a new line of development of the Chinese revolution. The manner in which Shanghai was taken in itself brings out this point very strikingly. As is known, Shanghai was not taken directly by the regular Southern troops, but by the workers from within. This emphasises the rôle of the proletariat as a driving force of the Chinese revolution, and the acquisition of the great industrial centre of Shanghai by the nationalists implies that this rôle will be increased from now onward.

It is from this standpoint that the effect of the capture of Shanghai by the Southern forces upon the future course of the Chinese revolution must be regarded. The problems to which this situation gives rise are not new, for they have arisen in connection with struggles for national emancipation in other countries. The experience of national emancipation movements teaches that the time comes when certain classes participating in the struggle begin to waver in their attitude towards the movement and even

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to abandon it, and the extent of the influence which these classes exercise over the movement determines whether the national struggle is carried to its logical conclusion or not. Recent events in the Chinese nationalist movement are an indication that the attitude of the respective classes participating in the movement is undergoing modification and that this is calling forth certain reactions among the other classes participating in the movement.

The Chinese revolution is a national revolution in that it is a fight of the Chinese people against the domination and exploitation of foreign imperialism. On the other hand, it is a social revolution in so far as it is a fight of the Chinese bourgeoisie against the obsolete survivals of feudalism and present-day militarism, and for the establishment of conditions in China which will facilitate its development on modern lines; and of the workers and peasants against their exploiters, the bourgeoisie and the landlords, and against feudalism and militarism, the removal of which will clear the field for developing their struggle to its widest scope. As a national movement the Chinese revolution unites all sections of the people whose interests are affected by the domination of the imperialists. As a social revolution the diverse interests of the various and numerous classes cut across the unity of national interests and cause friction within the national movement itself. This does not mean that a clear line of demarcation can be drawn between the national revolution and the social revolution in China. The domination of foreign imperialism is an extremely important factor, tending to keep China in the state of semi-feudalism, and is an obstacle to the development of the national industry and commerce of the country. Furthermore, it serves as a bulwark of class rule. Consequently the social revolution is closely bound up with the national revolution, and the diversity of class interests among the Chinese people have their reactions upon the attitude of the various classes towards the imperialists.

The various classes participating in the national movement in China may be enumerated as follows :—

The compradore bourgeoisie, who act as the middlemen between foreign trade and industry and the Chinese market, and whose prosperity therefore is closely bound up with foreign

imperialism. Their desire to create in China a field for their investments independently of foreign capital inclines them towards the national movement, but their close connections with the imperialists predominate in determining their attitude, which can be described as definitely counter-revolutionary.

Then comes the Chinese wealthy industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, whose economic development is hampered by the competition of the foreign capitalists, whose competitive ability is strengthened by the domination of foreign imperialism in China. This class supports the national movement in so far as its aim is to abolish the privileges of the foreign imperialists and create the conditions for the development of national industry and commerce.

The next is the large class of petty traders and artisans, the urban petit-bourgeoisie, who are oppressed by the feudal survivals in the country which are fostered by imperialism.

In the rural districts there is the class of landowners and the so-called gentry—the traditional official class in China, which is closely connected with the landowning class. Both these classes have their connections with the compradore class. Like them, their association with the national movement is extremely doubtful, and they represent a decidedly reactionary element in the country.

The vast mass of the Chinese people consists of small landowners, tenant farmers and landless agricultural labourers, exploited by the landowners, the officials and the militarists.

Finally there is the growing industrial proletariat. The place of the two latter classes in the revolution will be revealed in the further elucidation of the subject.

For a long time the national movement in China was confined to the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie and to the intellectuals—the students. The leaders of the movement relied upon the military forces they could collect for the achievement of their aims. As long as this was the case the movement made no headway, for no national movement can make progress unless it carries the mass of the people with it. The incidents in Shanghai and Canton in May and June, 1925, roused the masses, particularly the proletariat, and swept them into the national movement. Since that time the movement has been steadily rising to its culminating point.

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Influenced by the Communists, the Kuomintang—the Nationalist Party—realised at last that the organisation of the masses of the people and gaining their support was absolutely essential for the success of the national revolution. The party was reorganised as a mass national party, and wide propaganda was carried on among the masses of the small merchants, artisans and the peasantry to win their adherence and active participation in the national movement.

But the masses of the people cannot be roused on the strength of abstract slogans and remote prospects of liberty. They have to be given a direct material interest in the revolution and immediate prospects of relief from the burdens from which they are suffering. The peasants demand relief from the severe burden of taxation and extortionate rents. They want land. The workers demand relief from the terrible exploitation that prevails in China and an immediate improvement in their conditions. The Kuomintang, therefore, was obliged to adopt an agrarian and labour programme. It had to recognise the right of the workers and the peasants to organise not only for the prosecution of the national revolution as such, but also in defence of their own class interests. It had to work in conjunction with the trade unions, and the organisation of peasant leagues became a definite part of the work of the party.

Being a party composed of representatives of the diverse classes represented in the national movement, the Kuomintang naturally reflected all the diversified interests of these classes. As the revolution developed the diversity of interests of these classes became more pronounced, and this in its turn could not but cause reactions in the party and in the movement generally. The internal friction in the Kuomintang became more acute in proportion as the workers and peasants began to play a more prominent part in the revolutionary movement. For example, Canton could serve as a base for the revolutionary national movement because of the determined and stubborn fight put up by the Hongkong and Canton workers. The revolutionary movement was fostered also by the activities of the workers in Shanghai. In the rural districts in the South the peasants were the backbone of the revolution and prevented a revival of the counter-revolution. As the rôle of the workers and peasants in the revolution became more important

they became more persistent in their demands for the satisfaction of their own class interests.

The predominance which the workers and peasants began to assume in the national movement caused disquietude among the bourgeois classes, and they began to raise the alarm. In the Kuomintang this was reflected in the growing activity of the Right Wing, which raised the cry that the Kuomintang was a Bolshevik organisation. Their activities, which began to assume a definitely anti-national character, led to their expulsion. The expulsion of the Right Wing, however, did not eliminate all the Right Wing elements from the party, and as the class differences in the party developed they accumulated strength.

Between the Right Wing and the Left there is the so-called Centre, which may be said to represent the middle industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, which is torn between its interests in the national revolution and its fear of the predominance of the workers and peasants. At the head of this Centre is Chiang Kai-shek, the commander-in-chief of the Southern forces, who observed the growing strength of the Left Wing with apprehension.

Things reached a crisis in March last year, when Chiang Kai-shek combined with the Right Wing to bring about a coup in Canton and took power into his own hands. Wang Ting-wei, the chairman of the party and of the Government and leader of the Left Wing of the party, was obliged to leave Canton. Chiang demanded the resignation of all the Communists from responsible posts in the party, and control passed over entirely into the hands of the Centre and the Right.

Soon, however, a remarkable balance of forces within the Kuomintang was revealed. Chiang Kai-shek found that, deprived of the support of the Left Wing, it was impossible to hold a Central position and that he must be inevitably drawn to the Right and into the camp of the counter-revolution. He discovered that without the Left Wing there was practically no revolutionary movement and without the Communists there were hardly any active workers in the movement. This brought him to his senses, and he began to make overtures for a compromise. A joint conference of the Executive Committees of the Communist and Kuomintang Parties was held last May, at which Chiang Kai-shek ostensibly

climbed down, agreed to break with the Right Wing and co-operate with the Communists. But his surrender was only temporary.

The internal class antagonisms in the national movement were not eliminated by this however. On the contrary, they continued to develop. The success of the Northern campaign extended the territories of the Kuomintang authorities, and in these newly acquired territories the same developments took place as had previously taken place in the Kwantung province. The peasants organised and put forward their demands. In many districts they came into direct conflict with the local gentry and landowners, who saw in the peasant leagues a menace to their power. With the arrival of the Southern troops at the Yangtse and the inclusion of the industrial centres of Hankow and Hanyang in the territories of the Kuomintang the weight and influence of the industrial workers in the national movement increased. Trade unions were rapidly organised, and the workers demanded improved conditions. In China the conditions of the workers are so bad that any demands for improvements that will make their conditions at all human, even according to Chinese standards, may quite naturally seem excessive. For example, workers receiving six Mexican dollars per month would demand eighteen dollars per month, which is still a miserably low wage, but a demand for an increase in wages of 200 per cent. would quite naturally shock an employer.

The bourgeoisie saw their economic interests threatened by the growing power of the workers and demanded that some restraint be put upon them. As a result of their pressure the Kuomintang Government last December issued a decree introducing arbitration as a method of settling industrial disputes and making this compulsory for certain branches of industry, like army supplies, transport, enterprises dealing with finance and enterprises supplying the common needs of the people. In Hankow the authorities issued a decree fixing a limit to the increases in wages which each category of workers could demand.

The discontent of the bourgeoisie with the growing activity and influence of the workers and peasants again caused an acute situation to arise in the Kuomintang. Open propaganda began to be conducted in the party against the Left Wing and the Com-

munists. Matters came to a head again at the beginning of 'ast month, just prior to the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang. Chiang Kai-shek led a definite and open campaign against the Left Wing, to which the latter replied with a vigorous counter-campaign. The situation bore all the symptoms of an approaching rupture in the party.

Meanwhile the imperialists were watching the conflict within the Kuomintang very closely, and there is not the slightest doubt that they placed great hopes on a victory for Chiang Kai-shek against the Left Wing. They did not confine themselves merely to hoping, but did their best to encourage the bourgeoisie to bring about a split in the movement. By their propaganda they fanned the fears of the bourgeoisie that the revolution was taking a Bolshevik turn and hinted that a way could be found for a peaceful settlement of the differences between China and the foreign Powers if the Left Wing could be eliminated and the labour and peasant movement crushed.

Besides the conflict of class interests in the national movement the imperialists placed their hopes upon another factor to crush the radical section of the national movement, namely, the military factor. Without in any way deprecating the military leadership of the Southern forces, it may be stated that the recent victories are due to a considerable extent to the defections of the Northern generals, who at critical moments came over to the Southern forces. Some of these generals sympathise with the national movement, and have maintained contact with the Southern forces even when they retained their command under the Northern militarists. Such, for example, is Chin Yun-ao, formerly a commander under Wu Pei-fu, and who is now holding up the advance of Chang Tso-lin. The majority of the generals who have come over to the Southern side merely display the traditional attitude of Chinese militarists of siding with the winning side.

The estimation of the situation in the national movement made by the imperialists is not without foundation. It was inevitable and foreseen that the time would come when a section of the bourgeoisie would tire of the revolution, and that when a certain stage of success had been reached they would long for a compromise. This longing would be quickened if the driving forces which have

carried them to this stage would appear to them to be gaining the mastery and threaten to rob them of the successes they had obtained. Feeling powerless to resist this new power by their own efforts, they would be inclined to compromise with the former enemy in order to resist the new one. In such an event the deserters from the Northern camp, together with the Right Wing elements in the Southern military forces, would be a serious factor to contend with.

This stage has not yet been definitely reached in the Chinese national revolution. The bourgeoisie has not yet exhausted its revolutionary rôle for the reason that its gains in the revolution have not yet been consolidated. On the other hand, while the imperialists are inclined to flirt with the wavering elements in the national revolution, they are not yet in a mood to make such concessions as would satisfy the desires of the moderate element. On the contrary, the aggression now being displayed by the imperialists, particularly by the British imperialists, is sufficient to convince all the elements striving for the emancipation of China that a stern fight has still to be waged before that object can be achieved. The bombardment of Nanking by the British and American forces has served as a striking object-lesson to all classes in China in the imperialist method of "solving the China problem."

Nevertheless, with the further development of the struggle the stage when the bourgeoisie will desire to call a halt becomes more and more imminent, and the recent crisis in the Kuomintang is a symptom of its approach. The capture of Shanghai may appear to the moderates to round off the gains of the revolutionary advance, while the establishment of direct contact between the vast industrial population in Shanghai with the national revolutionary movement and the Kuomintang will have the effect of quickening the process of class differentiation in the movement.

There is not the slightest doubt that if the movement of the workers and peasants were restricted the very serious danger would arise of the revolution running to seed and meeting with the fate that was suffered by the revolution of 1911. The national revolution in China was revived by the workers and peasants; they have urged, inspired and carried it to its present successes and on the further development of the labour and peasant movement

depends the complete fruition of the revolution. There is no question also that the further development of the labour and peasant movement will meet with the increasing resistance of the Right Wing of the bourgeoisie and provide them with a pretext for abandoning the national revolution.

Thus a delicate situation has arisen in the national revolutionary movement in China, and this was reflected in the crisis in the party in the beginning of March. The Right Wing, encouraged by the imperialists, were obviously working for a split, which if it took place at the present time would be of decided advantage to the reactionary elements. Again, the wavering of the middle industrial and commercial bourgeoisie was revealed in their bold opposition to the Left Wing and their collapse at the moment when the fatal decision had to be made. The crisis showed also that the Left Wing, consisting of the alliance of the workers, the peasants and the urban petit-bourgeoisie, represents the backbone of the revolutionary national movement and that it alone can be relied upon to carry it to its victorious conclusion.

This was confirmed by the outcome of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang that took place in Hankow in the middle of March. Chiang Kai-shek was faced with the same dilemma that he found himself in last May, with this difference, however, that the growth of the labour and peasant movement resulting from the acquisition of new and extensive territories by the national revolutionary forces had increased the power of the Left Wing and enabled it to make his declaration of submission more definite than that of last May. He was obliged openly to recognise the Kuomintang Party as the supreme authority in the national revolutionary movement and that the supreme control of the armed forces of the revolution must lie in the hands of the national revolutionary government. Again, he has been compelled to admit publicly that the Communists are essential elements in the national revolutionary movement and that without them it is impossible to rally the masses in the towns, in the country and in the army for the revolutionary cause. It remains to be seen to what extent he will act up to his declaration.

On the other hand the Communists have definitely joined the Kuomintang Government, and thus will be able to bring the

influence of the proletariat and the peasants to bear directly upon it. Two Communists, Hsu Sao-chen and Tang Ping-san, have accepted the posts of Ministers for Labour and Agriculture respectively. These two posts may be regarded as the most important posts in the Government at the present time, for they have to deal with the two departments of activities of the government which, if properly handled, will guarantee to the national revolutionary movement the continued and increasing support of the masses of the workers and peasants. The fact that these posts are now held by Communists will help the carrying out and further development of the measures which the Kuomintang Government have already passed for the relief of the conditions of the workers and peasants and the removal of those obstacles to their being carried out which have hitherto existed locally.

The last crisis in the Kuomintang ended in a victory for the Left Wing, but other crises of a similar nature are inevitable in the future. For the time being the truculent and aggressive attitude of the imperialists towards nationalist China is compelling the bourgeoisie still to cling to the national movement, but the time can be clearly foreseen when their class interests will gain the upper hand and they will seek more determinedly for a compromise with the imperialists. The outcome of the last crisis has shown, however, that the situation in China is such that the real driving forces of the Chinese national revolution are increasing in power and velocity, and that when the critical moment does arise when the bourgeoisie abandons the movement the proletariat, the peasants and the urban petit-bourgeoisie will have consolidated their forces and be in a position by their own efforts to carry the revolution farther forward and to a higher stage. The addition of the organised and militant industrial proletariat of Shanghai to the national revolutionary forces is a guarantee of that.

IMPERIALIST PENETRATION IN SOUTH AMERICA¹

By CODOVILLA

The Process of Class Differentiation

IMPERIALIST penetration plays an important rôle in the class differentiation and radicalisation of the workers and the peasant masses. In countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Columbia and Peru, the peasants formerly lived in a more or less primitive but peaceful manner. They consumed natural products, &c. There was no regulation of ownership of land ; everyone was as a matter of course a proprietor of land. But as American imperialism gradually penetrated into the country the peasants were expelled from the American concessions and were then forced to gain their livelihood as wage labourers. Some entered the mining enterprises and industry, while others were employed in agricultural enterprises. In view of the form of exploitation of these enterprises these new proletarian strata, concentrated in the places where they worked, are still more accessible for revolutionary propaganda.

In the Argentine and Chile, owing to the industrial development above mentioned, there is already a skilled proletariat in existence, and in the industrial regions a class struggle having the same characteristics as in Europe. In Brazil the proletariat, although not very numerous in relation to the total population of the country, represents a considerable force for the latent petty bourgeois revolutionary movement in view of the fact that it is highly concentrated. In these countries, where technique is highly perfected, the majority of industrial and agricultural enterprises possess modern equipment.

But the economic development of Latin America varies not

¹ The first portion of this article appeared in *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* for April, 1927, pp. 225-237.

only according to the countries, but also according to the various districts. In Argentina, for example, where economic development is greater than in the other countries, we have quite different forms of economy: in the districts of Buenos Ayres, Santa Fé, Cordova, there is an extensive industrialisation and exploitation of the land; in the big towns, such as Buenos Ayres and Rosario, there are big modern factories with thousands of workers employed, just as in Europe.

In certain regions of Patagonia, Chaco and Minones a semi-feudal economic system is in existence, where the foreign enterprises and big landed proprietors exercise an almost colonial exploitation.

But in the centre of the country the situation is similar to that of Europe. That is why American imperialism here has the industrial bourgeoisie as its support. Here a section of the petty bourgeoisie, impoverished by the process of concentration, finds employment as technicians. Recently the latter has begun to invest its capital also in agricultural enterprises, accelerating the process of concentration of land. To fight against this the liberal bourgeoisie proposes dividing up amongst the peasants the land which still belongs to the State and the big landed proprietors, and thus creating a class of small agricultural proprietors on whose support it could count for the development of industry.

In Brazil there are regions, like the Amazon, that are still unexplored. These regions are very rich and will provide great wealth of raw material in time to come.

Let us now turn to examine the exploitation of the peasants. They are concentrated in a tropical region where there are no houses. They live in shanties made from dead leaves and work all day long under the sun. Infectious diseases are rampant. They live absolutely isolated from all civilisation; in the coffee-growing districts they live three or four days' journey from the railway. The police of the big landed proprietors have their rifles constantly in their hands, and fire at the rebellious workers on the slightest pretext. These are conditions of primitive slavery.

In Chile large masses of workers are concentrated in the mining regions. More than 90,000 workers are employed in the saltpetre, copper and coal industries. These are native peasants from

the south evicted from their land, who hire out their labour to the big foreign enterprises. Here they live altogether, exploited in a brutal manner which keeps them in a permanently revolutionary mood. These enterprises constitute a kind of colony, where the foreign capitalists allow no liberty to the workers. The latter live in barracks that belong to the owners ; as soon as a strike breaks out they are turned away by the proprietors' police and left without any means of subsistence, sometimes during intense cold. Every strike in this region always ends in bloodshed. The workers know this and prepare to defend themselves against the provocation of the employers. No one imagines such a thing as a peaceful strike.

Therefore in certain countries the consequences of this imperialist penetration are equivalent to a development of industrialisation, and hence the birth of an industrial proletariat. In other countries, however, there is a concentration of agricultural exploitation and an agricultural proletariat is created. In general a process of pauperisation of a large part of the urban and agrarian petty bourgeoisie is taking place.

Development of the Revolutionary Movement Against the Native and Foreign Bourgeoisie

Such a situation engenders a latent spirit of revolt against the reactionary government of the big landed proprietors, who are the instruments of imperialism in several countries of Latin America. The social composition of this revolutionary force varies according to the economic and political situation of the country. Where the situation is based on the industrial bourgeoisie and certain strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie, the latter and a section of the intellectuals are allied to imperialism. Where it is supported by the big landed proprietors the most revolutionary elements come from the petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, allied to the proletariat and the peasantry. The revolutionary development and the combative forces must be analysed in accordance with the classification in categories which we have adopted for the various countries.*

*See first section of this article published in *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* last month (April, 1927, pp. 225-231).

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In Central America and the Antilles the latent revolutionary nationalist movement has for its aim economic and political independence in respect to American imperialism and the constitution of a federation of democratic republics. Its revolutionary programme includes the revision of debts and American concessions, dividing up of the big landed properties, State support for small industry and participation of the workers and peasants in the government.

The revolutions which have now taken place in Nicaragua, Honduras, &c., are all directed against the reactionary governments of the big landed proprietors and against American imperialist oppression. In Nicaragua the people took up arms to chase out the reactionary President imposed by the United States, which sent forces to suppress the revolt, thereby preventing its triumphant issue. In these countries the existing nationalist parties are formed of the petty bourgeoisie and workers and peasants. The workers' organisations are in general in favour of class-collaboration, and the reactionary government does not tolerate any class organisations other than those adhering to the American Federation of Labour. Communist groups are illegal and persons suspected to be Communists are condemned to several years' imprisonment.

The revolutionary spirit of the petty bourgeoisie and of the working peasant masses is also developed in the northern parts of South America. In Venezuela, in Colombia, in Bolivia and Peru, as a result of the brutal exploitation by the landed proprietors and foreign concessionaires, the native peasants and workers have several times revolted, but they have always been beaten and massacred. After these revolts they are driven to accept still worse conditions of labour, or else they are deported to other regions, for it is impossible for them to secure the means of subsistence. In spite of the brutal reaction a large number of the peasants are armed and inclined to fight, but these are only scattered groups with primitive and non-centralised district organisations. The reason of this is that in former days they worked on the land communally on the basis of the agrarian commune. Their desire is to return to this collective form of exploitation; this retrograde tendency and their feeble resistance to oppression results in their being driven more

and more off their land day by day by the big agricultural or mining enterprises. The petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, also oppressed by the governments of the big landed proprietors and by imperialism, endeavoured to profit by this latent revolutionary spirit of the peasant masses in order to organise revolts and conquer power.

In Venezuela there have already been two or three attempts at revolution, and we are now in a period when the peasants and petty bourgeoisie will in a very short time to come attempt a revolution.

In all these countries the Communist movement will play an increasingly prominent rôle. At the present time the existing tendencies, though calling themselves anarchists, syndicalists or Socialists, are, while not having a clear ideology, in general all favourably inclined to Soviet Russia. They know that the revolution will place itself on an economic ground : land to the peasants, communal labour.

That is why in Venezuela, although there is only a small Communist group, the petty bourgeois leaders endeavour to collaborate with it and also accept a part of its programme in order to engage in an armed struggle against the big landed proprietors.

In Bolivia and Peru, despite the brutal oppression, revolutionary groups defending Communism have recently sprung up. They were immediately dissolved, but their action found an echo among the working and peasant masses, and proved their revolutionary spirit.

Mexico is an important factor which facilitates the revolutionary development in these countries. Mexico helps the revolutionary movement to extend its economic and political influence and dispose of a base for its defence against American imperialism. It was not without reason that the Presidents of Nicaragua and Guatemala sent a protest to the League of Nations against the intervention of the Mexican Government in their internal affairs, accusing it of supplying arms to the revolutionaries.

In Chile a revolutionary movement exists under the direct influence of the Communist Party. About 40 per cent. of the Chilean population is composed of workers with a tradition for organisation. A social crisis has given the Communist party the chance to

play an important rôle. Unfortunately, having no political education, the party has not always understood its rôle as a class party, and has let itself be duped by the petty bourgeoisie, which has utilised its influence amongst the masses in its own interests. In 1924-25, a petty bourgeois revolution took place, conducted by the soldiers, in which the workers participated, and which ended in the taking of power in collaboration with the working-class organisations. A series of decrees on social legislation were passed : confiscation of the latifundia, eight-hour day, labour insurance, trade union control over production in the mines, transport, commerce, banks, &c. A Constituent Assembly was to be convened to modify the constitution and put the new social reforms into force. During the struggle the proletarian masses, urged on by the demagogic policy of the petty bourgeoisie, believed they had entered the decisive period of social transformation and prepared to participate in the Constituent Assembly to give it a class content and obtain power. A section of the peasants and students joined in the movement, but the petty bourgeoisie were overcome by panic in face of the radical turn of events. American imperialism, which had assisted the movement to drive from power the landed proprietors, who had been the instruments of British imperialism, brought pressure to bear on the petty bourgeoisie and threatened to withdraw its support if it submitted to the demands of the workers.

Meanwhile many workers' strikes for partial demands were taking place. This exasperated the owners of foreign concessions, who threatened, particularly in the saltpetre region, to close down the factories if the government did not moderate the workers' demands and reduce the taxes on the export of saltpetre. The government did not hesitate to crush the workers who had brought it into power, and the general strike of last year was taken as a pretext for this suppression.

During the revolutionary period quite a number of social laws (eight-hour day, employment through labour exchanges exclusively, &c.) were voted. But the foreign enterprises refused to apply these laws, as also the increase of wages demanded by the workers. They began expelling from the barracks those workers who forwarded these demands. The latter occupied the factories

and hoisted the red flag, reckoning on the government defending and nationalising enterprises. But the government replied by sending troops to eject the workers from the factories. The suppression was terrible. More than 3,000 workers were killed and many others wounded. More than 1,000 were deported.

This brutal repression did not crush the movement. This period of reaction was followed by a new revolutionary wave: the workers' organisations began reorganising; the peasants also organised. The public service employees, the teachers, railwaymen, and transport workers were organised in various national federations, grouped in a committee of action which led the special campaign. Every year in Chile on November 7 and May 1 the entire life of the country is paralysed. At the present time there are more than 100,000 members in the various organisations.

The Communist Party, which springs from the old Social Democratic Party, is increasing every day. It works in collaboration with the Labour Federation. It publishes four daily papers, two reviews and several weeklies. The co-operatives are in its hands. It has representatives in the municipalities and nine members in parliament.

In Ecuador a revolt of the army took place last year against the big landed proprietors similar to that in Chile. An organised labour movement exists. The Communist Party and the Socialist Party will probably soon fuse into a single party affiliated to Moscow.

In Brazil, in spite of the mineral wealth which will turn this country into an industrial power, the big landed proprietors, who are in power, have hitherto prevented industrial development. Out of 32,000,000 Brazilians there are 350,000 industrial workers and 9,000,000 agricultural labourers. (In 1914 there were only 200,000 industrial workers. This shows progress in spite of everything.)

There are only 100,000 workers organised in trade unions, but they are not organised in a national federation. No Socialist Party exists as yet; a party of the petty bourgeoisie has only now been formed. The Communist Party has existed for four years, and has already a certain influence, above all in the working-class centres.

Argentina is the South American country where class differentiation has operated most and where a proletarian class struggle is

proceeding against the agrarian and industrial bourgeoisie, and possessing European characteristics.

Formerly several parties of the bourgeoisie existed, but the process of concentration of agricultural and industrial enterprises, due to the penetration of foreign capital, made them disappear from the political arena. At the present time there are two big parties in existence—the Irigoyen Radical Party and the Alvear Party, which are parties of the agrarian and industrial bourgeoisie. The former is under the influence of American imperialism and the second under the influence of British imperialism. The Socialist Party has been in existence for thirty-six years. In 1917 the Left Wing of the Party split away and formed the Communist Party. The Socialist Party slipped towards the Right more and more every day and became more and more of a petty bourgeois party, which has not its own economic basis for constituting an independent party. On the other hand, industry being concentrated in two or three big towns only, the countryside has to accept the industrial products of the towns at very high prices, which makes it possible to keep wages up in certain industries, thereby creating a labour aristocracy, which also joins the Socialist Party.

Although already forty years old, the trade union movement of this country is not in proportion to the number of workers (only 30 per cent. of the workers are organised in the unions) nor to the fighting spirit. The trade union membership has undergone periodical fluctuation, due partly to repression and partly to the weak leadership of the movement. The latter is at the present time experiencing a crisis, the main causes of which are paralysis of a certain section of industry, excess of European immigration, and lack of confidence in the leaders of the trade union movement. For these reasons the organisation has now only 120,000 members, while it formerly had a much larger number.

The Communist Party is developing into a mass party, and its influence is increasing in the trade union and political fields.

Uruguay reflects the political and economic life of the Argentine ; all the phenomena which take place in the Argentine are soon repeated in Uruguay.

The situation in Mexico is at the present time one of the most interesting in South America. Important social changes are taking

place there. The subsequent revolutionary development will depend upon the influence that the working-class forces will have upon it. The peasants, who have fought to get the land, really want it and directly confiscate it in certain cases.

The interests of the revolutionary peasants are now bound up with the interests of the Mexican labour movement. The peasants of other South American countries who hope to make their agrarian revolution, and are encouraged by the Mexican Government, in order to be able to hold out in the present situation and not fall into the hands of imperialism must extend their political and economic influence over the neighbouring countries.

President Calles has already understood this and invited workers and intellectual delegations to visit Mexico. The Social Democrats of South America speak of the Mexican Government as a government which applies Socialist principles. They endeavour to distract the attention of the working and peasant masses, who have great sympathy for the Soviet Union, and while not attacking Russia they say : " We do not deny that they are trying to establish Socialism in Russia, but just wait a little and see that we will nevertheless establish Socialism in Mexico without either violence or dictatorship."

On the other hand, the American Federation of Labour, commencing to understand the revolutionary importance of the Latin-American countries and the danger they represent for American imperialism, is endeavouring to deflect the workers from the revolutionary struggle by propaganda in favour of a Pan-American Federation, which would remain under its influence.

A delegation was sent to the South American countries for this purpose. This delegation stated : " We can come to an understanding, we, the big industrial country of the North and the agricultural countries of the South, in order to augment the well-being of the working class and peasantry of the entire American continent."

The Relation of the Anti-Imperialist Struggle of the Latin-American Countries to Capitalist Stabilisation

Among other fundamental conditions of the present capitalist stabilisation there is a question of outlets for finance and industrial capital and for manufactured products.

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The figures that have been given show the importance of the Latin-American countries for imperialist expansion, and in particular for American imperialism. The latter understands that the situation in Europe is not very reliable for the investment of its capital, and that South America would be a much safer place.

The anti-imperialist struggle on the American continent in weakening American imperialism will give effective aid to the international revolution. The situation in Latin America is very favourable for an anti-imperialist movement. All struggle against the big landed proprietors is an anti-imperialist struggle, and the peasants can play a big revolutionary rôle in this struggle if the workers know how to link up this problem with the conquest of the land.

A primary condition for the development of the revolutionary movement in Latin America is to strengthen the revolutionary movement and the Communist Party in Mexico. This country should become the centre of the struggle against the big landed proprietors and against imperialism, especially that of North America. The petty bourgeois government must be compelled to realise the revolutionary programme with which it came into power, while there must be a continued mobilisation of forces for the application of this programme by a real workers and peasants' government when the petty bourgeoisie proves itself incapable of so doing. The petty bourgeoisie must be prevented by all measures from becoming a reactionary instrument in the hands of American imperialism and of the national bourgeoisie which is now in process of formation.

In the other countries the action of the Communist Parties needs to be strengthened by mobilising the peasants and petty bourgeoisie in mass organisations linked up with the Communist Party on the basis of the anti-imperialist struggle.

The existing Anti-Imperialist League of Latin America carries on abstract general propaganda without having studied the objective situation of each country and the fundamental problems affecting the masses.

The anti-imperialist struggle should be conducted throughout the whole continent and in every country, and should be connected with the struggle against the reactionary governments of the big

landed proprietors. The workers and peasants of these countries must be shown that during the first period they must support the revolutionary movement of the petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie against the big landed proprietors as the first step before arriving at the constitution of their own government.

The Communist Parties of Latin America, while allying themselves to the different social strata during this struggle, will maintain their position as leading parties of the working class, aiming at the dictatorship, but without trying to leap over the historically necessary stages of the democratic revolution.

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BERTRAND RUSSELL AND MODERN PHYSICS

By MAX LEVIEN

(Concluded)¹

ON page 64 of Russell's book we find a passage which is liable to give rise to the greatest confusion in the minds of readers who are not familiar with the roots of the crisis in modern physics as well as with the present theoretical chaos prevailing among scientists. Russell says:—

Evolution in biology and relativity in physics seemed to have established the continuity of natural processes more firmly than ever before ; Newton's action at a distance, which was always considered something of a scandal, was explained away by Einstein's theory of gravitation. But just when the triumph of continuity seemed complete, and when Bergson's philosophy had enshrined it in popular thought (Why does he say that? The influence of Bergson's philosophy was very limited, and in science has at the most left a few traces in the psycho-Lamarckian theories.—M. L.), this inconvenient discovery about energy came *and upset everything*. How far it may carry us no one can yet tell. Perhaps we were not speaking correctly a moment ago when we said that an electron passes from one orbit to another "without passing over the intermediate space" ; *perhaps there is no intermediate space ; perhaps it is merely habit and prejudice that makes us suppose space to be continuous*. Poincaré—not the Prime Minister, but his cousin the mathematician, who was a great man—suggested that we should even have to give up thinking of time as continuous, and that we should have to think of a minute, for instance, as a finite number of jerks *with nothing between them*. This is an uncomfortable idea, and perhaps things are not so bad as that. (Our italics throughout.—M. L.)

This passage shows how the "modern" man who is not familiar with materialist dialectics, blunders into contradictions so soon as he tries to generalise from the experience gained in special spheres. The conflict arising from the necessity of applying ideas, both of continuity and of discontinuity, divides physicists into the two corresponding schools. A fine picture! That our thought needs both categories in an equal degree, and indeed reflects the dialectical inter-relations and the dialectical synthesis of the opposites—*i.e.*, of the two categories in nature and in society,

¹ The first portion of this article appeared in the last number of THE LABOUR MONTHLY, April, 1927, pp. 241-249.

seems to most scientific men contradictory. Eugen Dühring, also, it is well known, considered it contradictory, if not absolutely nonsensical. But it should be equally well known that no less a person than Friedrich Engels read him a lesson, in *Anti-Dühring* from which scientific men, even to-day, could obtain more methodological instruction than from all the modern "philosophers" put together. But who is so old-fashioned as to take any notice of *Anti-Dühring* nowadays? Those who have felt any necessity either resort to the vulgar materialism of Büchner, Vogt or Moleschott, or turn to Mach or Pearson, or else give themselves over to transcendental idealism. And so the differences among physicists go merrily on.

If continuity and discontinuity are irreconcilable, that is, if the question can only be answered with the formula of "Yea, yea" or "Nay, nay," then we should like to ask Mr. Russell how is it that the differential and integral calculus has any right to exist, and in particular how are we to explain its tremendous practical use in the description of concrete natural processes, and the establishment of objective regularities, since here the opposite, the *dialectical* formula, prevails, "Yea-nay, nay-yea"? The question is unanswerable. The contradictions between continuity and discontinuity, as between quality and quantity, and so on, provide the motive force as well as the guiding thread in the development of thought in mathematics as well as in natural science and history. What, however, "jerks (in time) with nothing between them" may be we can leave Poincaré and Russell to imagine for themselves. Since the "jerks" cannot differ more than, say, two material particles, we cannot see why the "interval" between two "jerks" cannot be bridged by an integration covering the two "jerks." Why, too, should the idea of discrete "jerks" in time be "uncomfortable," or in particular more "uncomfortable" than that of discrete particles of matter or energy, or of quanta? When it is realised that differentiation and integration, and all methods which presuppose such polar opposites, always produce dialectically a higher method of thought, nothing "uncomfortable" will be seen about "jerks." Why should time claim a monopoly of continuity, and matter, and with it space, be condemned completely to discontinuity? What dialectical

materialism claims on this point, in opposition to all kinds of idealism, is that neither the discontinuity of space and time, nor their continuity, should be considered the "last" quintessence of all existence, since the value of the application of ideas of continuity lies in the possibility of their break-up, and *vice versa*. The necessity of the conception of an aether (to which finally Einstein himself has had to yield) lies precisely in the need of dialectical materialist thought to conceive of discontinuous matter as a particular condition of a space-time continuum.²

This was realised even by Hegel, whose dialectics are so much disliked by the scientific men, since they are so definitely in opposition to any shallow empiricism and any logical narrowness. That, however, is too kind to them; actually they do not concern themselves with such a back-number as Hegel at all. And yet there are to be found in Hegel's *Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences* the following words:—

Continuous and discrete magnitudes must not be looked upon as of different *kinds*, as if the categories of the one do not apply to the other; rather they differ in that the same thing is considered now under one, now under the other, definition. The contradiction of space, time and matter, in respect of their infinite divisibility, or on the other hand their nature as consisting of indivisible parts, is nothing but the looking upon them at one time as continuous and at the other as discontinuous. If space, time, &c., are placed only under the category of continuous quantity, they are infinitely divisible; under that of discontinuous magnitude, they are in themselves divided and consist of indivisible parts. The one is as one-sided as the other.

Further, Russell's statement that an electron may jump from one orbit to another without passing through any intermediate space involves insuperable difficulties only if the space is conceived of as simply an emptiness, and an aether is dispensed with, or, as previously noticed, if an Einstein-ian aether is assumed,

² Notice that no single postulate of Marxist dialectics is in opposition to the idea of a multi-dimensional manifold. This is for the benefit of those empiricists among us who at the mere sound of an attack upon their holy trinity of dimensions become so excited that they smell out already the resurrection of those spiritist "mediums" which Engels so thoroughly dealt with. This is of course childish. The new mumbo-jumbo, whose shadow even many Marxists think they see behind the non-Euclidean geometry of Gauss, Lobatchewsky, Riemann and Helmholtz, does not enter through the door of these great thinkers' mathematics, but through that logic which recognises only "hard" ideas, and measures the progress of human thought by the centimetre-rule and the second-pendulum.

which actually, considered from a physical standpoint, has no properties at all, since according to Einstein neither the conception of motion nor those of mass and energy can be applied to it. If Russell accepts this, as he does in his previously quoted statement (p. 49), he ought to say at this point that the contradictions in the explanations of electronic motion are due to the fact that we have as yet no clear conception of the aether as a universal medium, that we can postulate something to which we attach no very definite ideas, although we may very well be able to give a clear definition of what we do postulate.

We have further to urge against Russell's account that the quantum theory in no way, neither *a priori* nor *a posteriori* postulates a movement taking place in the intermediate space, into which no time-factor enters. The originator of the theory himself states:—

That they (Bohr's "stationary states"—M. L.) are the only possible ones, is therefore not at all to be assumed, since the transition from one state to another is in no case to be looked upon as a sudden or timeless one. (M. Planck, lectures on "The Theory of Heat Radiation, Leipzig," 1923.)

Another assertion in this connection requires special comment. The author tries to establish a conflict between biology and modern atomic physics. He represents things as if the laws of evolution in biology were exclusively in the direction of continuity. If Russell were to obtain only a superficial knowledge of biology, he would find that, particularly since the beginning of this century, thought in terms of discontinuous changes has found the widest application, both in zoology and in botany, and has already yielded important results. We shall mention at random a few of those departments in which the conception of phenomena from the point of view of discontinuity is essential in order to get an objective grasp of principles. We refer, for example, to the whole of systematics, the statistical study of variation, the theory of pure lines of descent, or "Genotypes" (by Johannsen), the experimental analysis of characters, by crossing, on Mendelian lines, the modern investigation of chromosomes (Morgan's school), the investigation of mutation phenomena, Ehrlich's side-chain theory, the chemistry of colloids in relation to physiology, and the continually increasing application of higher mathematics to various spheres of zoology and botany. In biology we frequently have to

deal with multiple integral proportion, but things in the world of plants and animals are more highly developed, and the phenomena involving the transition from quantity to quality, continuity to discontinuity, and *vice versa*, are far more complicated than in the sphere of non-living matter. Hence the use of conceptions of discontinuity in biology is still in its infancy, though it already shows great promise.

The helpless position into which Russell falls, thanks to his scepticism and eclecticism, is perhaps best shown by the concluding passage of the book, where he says:—

The theory of relativity has shown that most of traditional dynamics, which was supposed to contain scientific laws, really consisted of conventions as to measurement (!—M. L.), and was strictly analogous to the “great law” that there are always three feet to a yard. (Why the irony? What should the “great law” be?—M. L.) In particular, this applies to the conservation of energy. This makes it plausible to suppose that every apparent law of nature *which strikes us as reasonable* is not really a law of nature, *but a concealed convention* plastered on to nature by our love of what we in our arrogance choose to consider rational. Eddington hints that a real law of nature is likely to stand out by the fact that it *appears to us irrational*, since in that case it is less likely that we have invented it to satisfy our intellectual tastes. And from this point of view he inclines to the belief that the quantum-principle is the first real law of nature that has been discovered in physics.

This raises a somewhat important question: Is the world “rational,” *i.e.*, such as to conform to our intellectual habits? Or is it “irrational,” *i.e.*, not such as we should have made it if we had been in the position of the Creator? I do not propose to suggest an answer to this question. (Our italics.—M. L.)

How kind! First he constructs a mystic question, and then addresses it to the public, with the sole object of turning round himself and running away. We fail to see what advantage such a proceeding can bring to the reader. We also have some slight doubts as to the utility of such methods of propaganda for the advancement of scientific knowledge, which was certainly intended to be the author's object. What Russell finally gives us as the result of his expedition into the field of modern atomic physics is the purest agnosticism, or rather nihilism. If Einstein's relativity theory were really what Russell so contemptuously calls it, it would be totally incapable of fructifying, as it does by innumerable suggestions, a whole series of both physical and mathematical

investigations. Towards this "higher nonsense" (we borrow the expression from Engels) which Russell gives us Einstein is, of course, just as unsympathetic as was Darwin, for example, towards the anti-Socialist and anti-Semitic use made of his theory of natural selection by crazy race-theorists and eugenists. What, in fact, Russell does is to explain cheerfully that "a true law of nature" is, first, "a concealed convention," and, second, that it is the more highly esteemed the less we understand it. "The greatest living philosopher" was rather reckless when he made the statement about mathematics that it is the science in which one does not know what one is talking about, nor whether what one says is true. Our "philosopher" seems here particularly to have had himself in mind. He appears, indeed, not to know what he is talking about, nor whether what he says is true. If a law is to be more highly valued the less reasonable it is, why not take the Bible as the basis of physics? Any fool, if we may say so, could undertake to supply on the shortest notice as many "irrational" laws of nature as Russell's despairing heart could wish for. He could provide in all shapes and sizes as many hobgoblins, fairies, gods, devils, angels, hydras, cyclops, witches and what-not as required. What "the greatest living philosopher" is preaching here is the open bankruptcy of science and its abandonment to the Jesuits. "Hie thee to a nunnery!" There they produce these "irrational" laws for the fun of the thing. A science which takes as its ideal to establish laws whose principal advantage lies in their incomprehensibility to the reason, may please an abstract, logic-chopping, sceptical, mystical agnostic, but the great majority of scientific men will very definitely take the view that science has to do with the very comprehensible objective, causal relations of material processes, and that "concealed conventions," on the other hand, are not worth a pinch of snuff. Natural science is not yet a part of the Foreign Office, Mr. Russell! From the point of view of exact science, the construction of anthropomorphic, mystical, "irrational" laws is nothing less than reactionary nonsense. The "supposition," moreover, that all apparent laws of nature are really concealed conventions which we impose upon nature, is long ago played out. It occurs constantly as "conventionalism" in the different varia-

tions of the philosophical symphony of the critical empiricists, Mach, Petzoldt, &c. Again it appears as William James's pragmatism, or the "fictionalism" of Hans Vaihinger, whose philosophy of "As if" merely looks as if it were a philosophy.

Any scientific man who is in earnest about his science will see in Russell's thesis, as in the similar tendencies of his countryman Eddington, nothing but the complete breakdown of speculative thought. And just because both are taken as authorities in science a most energetic attack needs to be made upon them.

We have finished our discussion with Mr. Russell. Even if we had intentionally avoided entering upon a disputation with this omniscient one about his philosophy, his various statements on physical subjects would have given us a sufficient idea of the basis of his outlook, which in his physics, as always with Russell, is revealed as a mixture of realistic, even materialist and dialectical, with subjectionist and even positively mystical elements. We are heartily sorry for the I.L.P. Still, "facts are hard things"; history with "the greatest living philosopher" is—witchcraft.

Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas have now in the sphere of philosophy also thoroughly got themselves into the soup with their new genius. *Eclecticism in philosophy is the brother of opportunism in politics*, and history treats them both in the same way. And they know what that means!

This short but undoubtedly clever book of Russell's confirms once more, and particularly clearly, the correctness of Engels's views on natural science, as expressed in the following words:—

*Dialectics, freed from mysticism, have become an absolute necessity for science, which has now left the stage in which the rigid almost mathematical categories of logic will suffice for its needs. Philosophy takes a posthumous revenge upon science for its abandonment of her—and still the scientists might have been alive to the scientific implications of philosophy, that there was something in philosophy which was worth considering from their point of view. (Leibniz, the originator of the mathematics of the infinite, as opposed to the inductive thinker Newton, who plagiarised and debased him; Kant, whose cosmic theory preceded Laplace's; Oken, the first man in Germany to propound a theory of evolution; Hegel, whose all-embracing comprehension and classification of science is worth more than all the materialist nonsense)."*⁸ (Our italics—M. L.)

⁸ This passage is taken from Engel's fragment "Dialectics and Natural Science" which forms the first chapter of *Naturdialektik*, recently published by the Marx-Engels

Russell is indeed far from being one of those thinkers who have "abandoned philosophy"—he is a "philosopher" first and foremost—but nevertheless he is one to whom the materialist dialectics of Marx and Engels are a book sealed with seven seals.

How many false scents and side issues science would have been spared if she had taken to heart Engels's advice, given to the scientific men when he was already sixty-five, when he admonished them, "Learn from nature, your master, *but learn also from the history of human thought.*" This occurs of course in his great work "Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science," the second preface (1885) which ends with the impressive words :—

And these are just the things which were considered polar opposites, irreconcilable and insoluble, the fixed boundaries and differences of classification, which have given modern theoretical science its limited and metaphysical character. *The knowledge that these distinctions and antagonisms actually do occur in nature, but only relatively, and that on the other hand that fixity and absoluteness are the products of our own minds—this knowledge constitutes the kernel of the dialectic view of nature.* The view is reached under the compulsion of the mass of scientific facts, *and one reaches it the more easily by bringing to the dialectical character of these facts a consciousness of the laws of dialectic thought.* At all events the scope of science is now so great that it no longer escapes the dialectic comprehension. But it will simplify the process if it is remembered that the results in which these discoveries are comprehended are ideas, that the art of operating with ideas is not inborn, moreover, and is not vouchsafed every day to the ordinary mind, but requires actual thought, and this thought has a long history crammed with experiences, neither more nor less than the accumulated experiences of investigation into nature. By these means, then, it learns how to appropriate the results of fifteen hundred years' development of philosophy, it gets rid of any separate natural philosophy which stands above or alongside of it, and the limited method of thought brought over from English empiricism. (Our italics—M. L.)

This should also be taken to heart by those Marxists who seek to debase the Marxian method and dream of an alliance with mechanistic materialism. This mechanistic or, as Engels often called it, "vulgar" materialism, is just as helpless before Russell's scepticism and agnosticism as it showed itself a few years ago

Institute, and contains much material of interest in connection with actual current problems of scientific method.

against the reactionary attacks of Mach, Petzoldt, Poincaré, Pearson, &c. At best it hides behind the dogmatic statement that everything must, whatever happens, be "finally traced back" to mere quantities or to atomic and molecular motions (to-day they prefer to say electronic motions) ; so runs its creed.

There are on the other hand opportunists in the Labour Movement, still calling themselves "Marxists," who announce the coming of a "new era" of old rubbish, and prophesy "a development of thought, proceeding from Engels, but going beyond him," which can be briefly described : from mechanistic materialism to Mach's positivism, and from Darwin to neo-Lamarckism.⁴ (What is meant is the psycho-Lamarckism or neo-vitalism of Pauly, Francé and Wagner, since by neo-Lamarckism is usually understood the tendency of the famous botanist Wettstein, of Vienna, who has nothing in common with the so-called vitalists.) We who are *dialectical* materialists, however, are more interested in those thinkers who, if sometimes unconscious of their rôle, and sometimes falling to one side or the other towards idealism or "vulgar" materialism, nevertheless prepare the way for really dialectical thought, as, for example, is shown in a masterly passage from the distinguished Berlin physicist (and antagonist of Mach), Max Planck, who shall have the final word :—

But if the character of absoluteness is not ascribed to space and time, that character is not abolished from our conception of the world, but is removed, as it were, backwards and applied to the four-dimensional manifold, which arises from the fusing together of space and time, through velocity, into a simple continuum. This contains something of that arbitrariness and independence, and hence absoluteness.

Similarly, the so often misunderstood relativity theory does not abolish the Absolute, but in fact brings it more definitely into the foreground, in so far as physics bases itself upon an Absolute lying in the external world. For if the Absolute, as many metaphysicians maintain, exists only in one's individual experience, there would conceivably be as many kinds of physics as there are physicists, and

⁴ So we read in the editor's preface (Otto Jensen, who with Karl Vorländer, a neo-Kantian, is one of the latest theoretical lights of German Social Democracy) to the collection of old articles of G. Eckstein and F. Adler, issued under the name *Marxism and Science*, which is devoted to the propaganda of Marxism. In addition it contains two well-known articles of Engels. The only new feature is Jensen's addition. The volume is called *A Memorial on the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Death of Frederick Engels, Natural Philosopher*.

we should be completely unable to explain the fact that it has been possible, up to the present at least, to construct one science of physics, whose content, for all those who investigate it, whatever may be the differences in their experience, is effectively the same. That we do not construct the external world to suit ourselves, but, on the contrary, it controls and compels us with irresistible power, is a fact which should not be assumed to be obvious in these days when positivist tendencies of thought are so popular. While we in the investigation of natural phenomena proceed from the individual, conventional and accidental to the general, real and necessary, we seek beyond the dependent the independent, beyond the relative the absolute, beyond the transitory the permanent.

And Planck concludes :—

Who can be sure that an idea to which to-day we ascribe an absolute character will not show itself, perhaps to-morrow, in some new sense as relative, and give way to a higher absolute idea? There is only one possible answer: According to all that we have experienced and learned, nobody can give an assurance of that kind. In fact, we can say with complete confidence that the absolute will never be simply comprehended. The Absolute is to be regarded rather as an ideal object which we have before us without being able to reach it—an unpleasant thought, to which, however, we must reconcile ourselves. We are in the position of the mountaineer exploring unknown territory, who never knows whether, behind the peak which he sees before him, there will confront him a still higher one. But like him, we have the consolation that we continue to go forward and upward, and nothing prevents us from getting ever nearer to the desired end. Thus to draw towards the goal is the true effort of any science, and we can say with Lessing: "Not the attainment of truth, but the successful struggle after it, is the reward of the researcher; and cessation only becomes wearisome in the end. Vigorous healthy life results only from work and progress. From the Relative to the Absolute."

We have nothing to add to these excellent words of Planck except the observation that "work and progress" results only from struggle.

In the name of the victory of the dialectical materialism of Marx, Engels and Lenin, these three real spiritual leaders of the new epoch, physics also will free itself from the bonds which now hinder its full development, and will triumph on the basis of a new monistic-dialectical method—or else it will not triumph at all. The guarantee against the possibility of the latter alternative is provided by the development of that social class which alone

fears no obstacle, which alone can attain to a higher synthesis of human knowledge and a victorious scientific culture, which alone truly possesses a consistent monistic-philosophic outlook, since it alone has discovered the road along which the locomotive of history hastens towards its goal, it alone embodies the storm and stress of human progress, it alone is inspired with the spirit of Prometheus : the guarantee of the unlimited victory of mankind over nature, through nature, with nature—the proletariat.

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ITALY

Italian Trade Unionism

ON January 4 the Central Committee of the Italian *Confederazione Generale del Lavoro* passed a resolution stating that as it appears impossible to carry out the enrolment of members for 1927 the Committee declares its functions to be extinct, and commissions the Executive Committee to proceed with the liquidation and settlement of the remaining interests of the Confederation.

The Committee then moved its headquarters to Paris and now carries on activities of a restricted character under the wing of the temporarily anti-Italian imperialism of France.

This retreat of the reformist leaders into "private life" has had a very damaging effect on their prestige among the Italian workers, who have no such retreat open to them, but must remain constantly exposed to attacks of the employing class. The retirement of the Confederation leaders has meant a strengthening of the grip of the Fascist trade unions, of which membership is now in effect compulsory. Even in July, 1926, the membership of the Confederation was only just over six thousand; it has now fallen to a negligible figure.

The retirement of the Confederation leaders coincides with something of a crisis in the economic condition of Italy. The effects of the policy of restricting credit (dictated by the English and American banking interests, which have a strong hold over the Fascist Government) are now being seen in a serious damping down of industrial enterprise and a consequent rise in the number of unemployed workers. As an inevitable corollary of these conditions the employers are making an attack on wages, and at the same time there is a widespread move to raise house rents. In Naples alone over 30,000 inhabitants are reported to be under notice to quit their homes or pay exorbitant increases of rent.

In circumstances of this kind the need for a strong trade union movement, led with boldness and foresight, is abundantly clear. The workers show every sign of discontent, and the opportunity for rebuilding a militant trade union organisation is, on the side of the workers, a perfect one.

Such a reconstruction of the trade union organisation, if it is to be effective, must certainly be of a clandestine character, since no working-class bodies which function legally can hope to withstand the force of the State machinery of repression. Already active steps have been taken by the more alert sections

of the workers, acting under Communist guidance, to set up a new basis for trade union organisation in factory committees, federated locally and linked on a national scale with a revived General Confederation.

In Milan, the former centre of the C.G.T., arrangements were made in February to convene a congress of factory committee representatives with a view to reviving the C.G.T. and associating the factory committees with it. This work proceeds in the teeth of tremendous difficulties created by heavy repression under the Emergency Laws and the violent hostility of the employers. It is only possible for any such revival of the trade union movement to take place owing to the illegal activities of the Communists, who are putting all their energies into this essential task of rebuilding the Labour movement shattered by the joint efforts of the Fascist Government and the reformist leaders. The method of working is mainly the circulation of factory papers explaining the nature of the political situation in the light of the everyday struggles of the workers; in addition to such papers each covering a local field of circulation, it has been possible to produce a number of issues of the *Unità*, formerly the Communist daily. The success of this means of propaganda is so marked that the Minister of the Interior has sent a special instruction to his prefects urging them to root out by every possible means the circulation of illegal papers.

UNITED STATES

The Coal-mining Situation

THE expected struggle of the American mineworkers began on April 1, when nearly 200,000 workers came out in the bituminous (soft) coal industry of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Arkansas. The owners have refused to renew the 1924 agreement and demand a 20 per cent. reduction in wages as well as the complete institution of the "open shop."

The Coal Industry

The annual production of coal in the U.S.A. increased from 509 million tons in 1913 to 530 millions in 1925, and 578 millions in 1926. The American industry is affected by all the factors which have led to a breakdown of the coal industry in all the chief capitalist countries. In particular, the use of petroleum and natural gas, as well as the development of energy from water power, has rapidly increased as contrasted with the use of coal. Thus the energy developed by the use of natural gas and petroleum together was in 1913 only 12 per cent. of that of coal, whereas in 1924 it was already 40 per cent. Considering the great increase in the number of miners since the pre-war period, and the number of new mines opened up, and the advance in productive methods, it can be readily seen that the industry is actually stagnant. Since last autumn there has been a comparatively great increase in the monthly output, due to greatly increased exports as a result of the British lock-out and to loading up of stocks in expectation of the strike in April of this year.

There are 9,000 commercial coal mines in the U.S., operated by 7,000 owners (besides 6,000 insignificant private and waggon mines, the latter being mines having no railroad siding and producing less than 1 per cent.

of the coal). In 1920, 2,700 of the total of 15,000 produced 42 per cent. of the coal. The number of commercial mines increased 50 per cent. between 1913 and 1920, due to war expansion, and the consequent over-development has been one cause of the chaotic condition of the industry. Corporation control of the industry is indicated by the fact that in 1922 four big corporations, operating 215 mines, produced 7 per cent. of the coal, and 200 corporations controlled over 50 per cent. of the output. About one-quarter of the commercial mines are owned by consumers, largely big railroads, steel corporations, &c. Capacity of the mines (throughout only bituminous mines are referred to) is about one billion tons yearly, whereas production is less than 600,000,000 tons. More than half the total mines of the country were reported as closed in October, 1926, a time of peak production. These facts explain the crisis in the industry.

The non-union fields of the South have been replacing the union fields of the North, particularly of the Central Competitive Field (Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Western Pennsylvania), at a very rapid rate, so that the production of the country is now about 70 per cent. non-union, as against 30 per cent. in 1919. This displacement of union production has been due to the smashing of the union and the consequent low wages, absence of strikes, &c. ; to the discriminatory railroad freight rates, which permit Southern scab coal to be shipped twice the distance of Northern union coal for the same price; and to the co-operation of the local and national governments with the owners against the miners. Profits are difficult to get at, but we do know that in 1920 one-third of all the mines which reported made a profit of 50 per cent. or more, and one-seventh reported profits of 100 per cent. or more. At the beginning of 1927 one of the biggest Southern operators, the Island Creek Coal Company, controlled by a relative of President Coolidge, declared a 400 per cent. dividend.

As indicated before, annual production is less than 60 per cent. of capacity. In a normal year the industry can produce, during the rush season, 12 million tons weekly, and recently reached as high as 15 million tons. During September of last year, with a seasonal increase, large exports, and stocking up for the coming strike, consumption was only 9 million tons. Large amounts went into stocks, and it was expected that by April 1 stocks would be about 85 million tons, or sixty-eight days' supply. The owners' journal, *Coal Age*, says that "the industry will face April 1 with the largest stock pile in its history." (*New York Journal of Commerce*, 13-1-27.)

The Miners' Conditions

Working conditions among the miners are particularly bad, so far as employment, wages, and safety conditions are concerned. Miners earn very low wages because of the fact that the mines are usually open less than 200 days out of a possible 308 working days in the year, and not all the miners average even so much. Between the late spring slump and the autumn rush there is a difference of 30-40 per cent. in capacity required. During the August, 1920, boom, when prices were the highest ever reached, there was 40 per cent. of lost time, most of which was due to the owners. During that month only one-eighth of the mines worked full time. Over one-half

of the miners worked three-four days a week. During the 1921 depression there was 60 per cent. of lost time, and only one-fourteenth of the mines worked full time. Over 60 per cent. of the miners worked two-three days a week. In Kansas in 1925 only 16 per cent. of the union mines worked steadily, the rest working one or two days a week. In Pennsylvania some union miners averaged ten and a-half days a month for five years. Only 700 out of 1,200 Pennsylvania mines, and only 140 out of 400 Illinois mines were in operation, and many of them on part time.

Most mining communities are so isolated that during periods of unemployment the average miner cannot go elsewhere for a job, aside from the fact that he is untrained for other work. Hours are now eight and one-half at the "face," plus an average of three-quarters of an hour going to the "face." These figures exclude lunch time, and one can say that the American miner works nine hours a day, excluding lunch, and without pay for time spent for going to and from the mine.

Wages are low, due to great unemployment and part-time in all the mining districts, and to scab wages in the non-union districts. In 1921, when the cost of living was about 12 per cent. higher than it is at present, miners averaged as low as \$420 a year in Tennessee, \$500 in West Virginia (both scab districts), \$550 in Ohio, and \$762 in Western Pennsylvania, the latter two union districts. A minimum budget, necessary for a working man's family in 1921, as worked out by the reactionary employers' association, the National Industrial Conference Board, was \$1,697.95. How the miner's family lived on such wages is obvious. Piece-work rates in union and non-union districts compare as follows: hand (pick) work, \$1.11 a ton; machine work, \$0.78, in the union fields; hand work, \$0.40 a ton; machine work, \$0.37 a ton, in the non-union fields.

Health conditions among the miners are extremely bad, due to cramped quarters, bad air, accidents, &c. The death rate as compared with that of European miners is as follows: U.S., 4.08 deaths per thousand workers (in 1924); Germany, 3.11; Belgium, 1.58; France, 1.22; Great Britain, 1.13. The number of explosions in Great Britain has been zero since 1920, due to the use of rock-dust. In American mines the laws requiring such safety precautions are violated in wholesale fashion. During the last twenty years there has been an average of over 2,000 killed in American mines each year, and in some years the number exceeded 3,000.

Living conditions, on the wages that miners earn, are on a very low level. The average miner's family spends only two-thirds of the amount which they should spend on food. In unionised Illinois \$583 is spent yearly on food, whereas the average amount necessary is \$784. In non-union Alabama the figures are respectively \$472 and \$724, and in non-union West Virginia they are \$511 and \$783. The death rate of the babies in all mining counties of Illinois in 1925 was 12 per cent. greater than for the rest of the state, and two of the most important mining counties had infant mortality rates 60 per cent. greater than for the state as a whole. The explanation is unemployment, part-time, low wages and great exploitation, resulting in insufficient nourishment, bad environmental conditions, &c.

The question of civil liberties (the right to hold meetings, go freely about

the town, organise into unions, &c.) is one of the worst features of life in non-union districts, especially during strikes, but also during normal periods. In many mining towns one cannot enter the town without a pass from the company. Hoards of scabs, company gun-men and Burns' detectives have been imported, and they are aided by the state police, the militia and the courts. Tear-gas, riot-guns, searchlights, steel wire fencing are common sights. The miners have been beaten, starved, persecuted, and jailed under a continuous reign of terror.

The Mine-Workers' Union

During the eight years that Lewis has been president of the union, his administration has never won a strike, and he has been responsible for the loss of 200,000 miners, so that the union now has at most 200,000 to 250,000 members. He has been dining with the operators, and publicly advising wage cuts and the elimination of 200,000 men from the industry. He has never denied charges made by Farrington that he has accepted bribes amounting to far more than \$750,000 to permit scab mines to operate during the strike.

The Progressive campaign in connection with the elections for offices of the international union, as well as for the bi-annual convention, was carried on more intensively than any previous one. Progressive and Left Wing leaders, such as Howatt, Keeney, Brophy, Hapgood, &c., made tours throughout the locals, and the Progressive candidates for international offices, Brophy, Stephenson, and Brennan, issued much publicity in the form of pamphlets, programme statements and special election statements. The latter came out against compulsory arbitration, for a Labour Party, nationalisation of mines, democracy in the union, organisation of the unorganised field, reinstatement of the expelled Left Wingers, wage demands, and the rest of the Progressive programme.

The Lewis campaign against the Left Wing and the Communists has been ruthless, extending from connivance with the operators and the Government in order to send Communists to goal for long terms, to disqualifying them for office, and expelling them. Progressive meetings were broken up by the reactionaries, with the aid of the police.

The official results of the elections for international offices were not announced until just before the Convention, more than a month after the elections had finished. The vote as announced was 60,000 for Brophy, 173,000 for Lewis, a total of 233,000. This is an impossible figure, for it means that 85 per cent. of the membership voted. At a union election 60 per cent. is an extremely high figure. The first results announced were 290,000, but these were withdrawn after it was reported by the Secretary-Treasurer that the total membership was only 273,000. There is good reason for believing that Brophy actually polled a majority.

During the election of delegates to the Convention, Lewis kept a squad of more than 100 "organisers," each receiving about \$5,000 a year, whose sole duty was the prevention of the election of opposition delegates and the organisation of fake delegations from non-existent locals. In every possible way Progressive delegates were kept away from the Convention—by rump

meetings which annulled their credentials, by withholding of railway fares, by last-minute illegal suspensions and expulsions, &c.

The machine attempted to terrorise the rank and file by slugging a number of Progressive leaders, by unseating others right in the Convention, and by trying to discredit the records of the leading Progressives and Left Wingers and to isolate the Communists. The tactics by which it carried out this strategy were similar to the pre-Convention methods already described. The fake delegations were given bootleg rum on the trains, and were completely drunk and at the mercy of the machine by the time they reached the Convention city. They were carefully trained, and in the Convention sat massed in the front of the hall, and booed, cheered, and bellowed at the sign from their leaders.

Lewis' objective is to place the union on the same class collaboration basis of worker-employer co-operation that so many other A.F. of L. unions have been reduced to. The achievement of this aim was practically completely attained in the Convention by the elimination of the class-struggle clause in the preamble to the constitution; by gaining the right for unlimited assessment without any rank and file control; by the expulsion of the Communists and Left Wingers and the elimination of all minority opinion and activities; by securing 50 per cent. increase in the salaries of the bureaucrats; by securing unqualified endorsement of all official policies; by making illegal the holding of office by any foreign-born miner, although foreign-born miners make up a majority of the members; and by eliminating all constitutional sanction for elementary rank and file democracy. Through the methods of terrorisation mentioned before, this programme was put through, but it was at the expense of a great loss of political prestige, even among many delegates whom the machine had counted upon. The struggle of the rank and file began mildly with Brophy's speech attacking the failure of the reactionaries to organise the non-union fields. It became stronger through the struggle to unseat the leading Left Wingers and Communists. It gained real strength in the fight against the proposal to give the officials unlimited assessment power. It defeated the bureaucrats on the matter of the 50 per cent. salary increase, although it was counted out by the machine's tellers. It defeated the machine so overwhelmingly that there was no way of counting the opposition out on the issue of making local elections bi-annual instead of annual.

After the Convention ended the Report of the Wage Scale Committee, appointed by the Convention, was heard by the delegates. It was accepted by all but thirty votes. It instructed the officers to make no agreement reducing wages, and to have the new contract run for two years. (The Progressive bloc had fought for wage increases, a one-year contract, and a joint contract for hard and soft coal fields.) A Policy Committee was appointed which was to notify the membership of developments, and which included only machine supporters. This committee was to have supreme power in case of a strike. The Wage Scale Committee report did not mention such vital issues as the five-day six-hour week, a joint contract for both fields, an appeal to the non-union fields to join the strike, &c. The exact wording of the report is significant: "We recommend . . . to get the best agreement possible from the operators of the Central Field on the basis of no

reduction in wages." This is distinctly permission to make all possible concessions on every other issue but wages, and actually will mean a reduction in wages even if the present rates are maintained. It recommended that the outlying districts be authorised "... to negotiate with their respective operators when the opportunity presents itself," but not to conclude any agreement until after that in the Central Field had been concluded, or until "... permission to do so had been granted by the Policy Committee. . . ." This is an open invitation to the miners to insist on district agreements and a sliding wage scale, and to the bureaucrats to betray the men again.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Is Trade Unionism Played Out?* The Minority Movement's Answer. (N.M.M., 16 pp., 1d.)
- The Miners' Next Task.* An Open Letter to All Miners on the Next Big Step—One Miners' Union. (N.M.M., 16 pp., 1d.)
- British Mineworkers' Union.* A Constitution. (N.M.M. 48 pp., 1d.)
- Trade Union Leadership.* An Analysis of Recent Events. By a Trade Unionist. (N.M.M., 16 pp., 1d.)
- Humanising Education.* By Samuel D. Schmalhausen. (The New Education Publishing Company, 343 pp., \$2.50.)
- The Economics of the Kingdom of God.* By Paul B. Bull, C.R., with a Preface by Bishop Gore. (6s. net. Allen & Unwin, 223 pp., 1s. 6d.)
- Soviet versus Civilisation.* By "Augur." (Thornton Butterworth, Ltd., 95 pp., 1s. 6d.)
- The Bolsheviks and the Incas.* Lecture Delivered by Captain Francis McCullagh, December, 1926. (Knights of the Cross, Buenos Aires, 24 pp.)
- The Anatomy of African Misery.* By Lord Olivier. (The Hogarth Press, 234 pp., 6s.)
- Democracy under Revision.* By H. G. Wells. (The Hogarth Press, 47 pp., 2s.)
- The Legality of the General Strike in England.* A. L. Goodhart. (W. Heffer & Sons, 1s.)
- The Watson-Parker Law.* The Latest Scheme to Hamstring Railroad Unionism. By Wm. Z. Foster. (The Trade Union Educational League, 48 pp., 15 cents.)
- The Peasant War in Germany.* Fred Friedrich Engels. Introduction by D. Riazanov. (Translated from the German by Moissaye J. Olgin. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 185 pp., 4s. 6d.)



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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

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June, 1927

Number 6

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Published at
162 Buckingham Palace Road
London
S.W.1

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Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : SLOANE 5412.

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Unions Bill Repeal Illusion—
Resistance on All Fronts.*

WITH reckless violence the Tory Government has let loose its attack on all sides at once. The old calculations of expediency, of moderation, of a pretence of peace, of alternately concentrating first on one front and then on another, have been flung by the board. With ever-increasing sweep the full range of the present world offensive of counter-revolution, led and organised by the Baldwin-Chamberlain-Churchill Government, is laid bare. At one and the same time the most smashing attack in its history is delivered on the British working-class movement, eclipsing the issue of the General Strike last year and transforming henceforth the social situation in Britain into increasingly open conflict between the capitalist dictatorship and working-class revolution. At the same time guns, terror and barbarous violence are turned on to the Chinese masses for their suppression by methods of bestial savagery unequalled even in the present age of Imperialist Huns. And at the same time the lawless bandit outrage of the London raid, with its ostentatious defiance of all law, order, treaties, pledged words and international decency, is the open drive to war, the provocation for the supreme offensive, the offensive on the final unbroken citadel of the working-class cause, the U.S.S.R. The masks have fallen. The lying talk of two years ago of peace and moderation (when all the reformist Labour leaders proclaimed their belief in the goodness and nobility of Baldwin) is dropped and finished. The leaders of international Fascism, striking from the seat of power of decaying British capitalism, have judged their hour has come and are proclaiming

the assault all along the line. The highest point of crisis and testing time is now approaching.

WHAT lies behind this attack? It is folly to fail to see the *combined* character of the attack, to lose the single issue in a maze of details, to see the different aspects of the attack as so many isolated, separable, simultaneous accidents and incidents, and follow and protest at each blow as it comes without facing the battle as a whole, or even to suggest—as the reformists now are attempting to do—that one aspect is only a “blind” for the others, or *vice versa*. Thus we find the Parliamentary Labour Party suggesting that the Arcos raid was only a “blind” to draw off attention for the purpose of passing the Trade Unions Bill. At the same time we find *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* suggesting, in an article on the war-danger by Seymour Cocks, that the Trade Unions Bill is only a “blind” to draw off attention at home, comparable to Ulster in 1914, while the war is being prepared, and calling on all wings, Right and Left, to drop their differences and unite against the war-danger, which will otherwise engulf all alike.

ALL this is short-sighted nonsense. The different parts of the attack are concerted parts, and cannot be fought unless this is understood. The smashing of the working-class movement at home is the necessary basis for delivering the assault on China and the U.S.S.R. abroad. The war-danger cannot be fought, unless the power and freedom of working-class action is fought for now. The pacifist protests against the danger of war are idle voices in the wilderness unless the power of working-class action enters into the fight. The honest opponent of war, who sees in the present international counter-revolutionary offensive only a “war-danger,” will still, therefore, need to make it his primary task to fight in the working-class struggle, and above all to seek to strengthen the militant working-class elements, and to smash the Baldwin Bill and the Baldwin Government. But on the other side the Right Wing Labour lead of “opposing” the Trade Unions Bill, without any regard to the present urgent world crisis which is the background of the Bill, by a trivial

parliamentary comedy and chatter about repeal in the mythical future five years hence, is incapable of meeting the present crisis, and guarantees the paralysis of the working-class movement against the international offensive. To talk, therefore, of "sinking all differences" and unity of the Right and Left in the common danger of an impending war-crisis is as childish rubbish as the exactly similar talk of unity of the nation in the common danger of a war-crisis. On the contrary, this is just the moment when these differences become of life-and-death importance if a real fight is to be made. The only way to fight the Bill *and* to fight the war-crisis is to strengthen the fighting Left Wing leadership, which is out for action to smash the Trade Unions Bill and to smash the international offensive.

WHAT is, in fact, in question is not a separate "war-crisis" and a separate "attack on the Trade Unions" (as, say, in 1900 there was a "war-crisis" and an "attack on the Trade Unions"). These are completely misleading descriptions of the real essence of the situation. What is in question is a *single* attack by the Baldwin Government on the whole international working-class struggle, on the whole advance of the workers and subject peoples, calling for an active and united resistance all over the world. The attack on the working-class organisations in this country is one part of this offensive. The warships and troops turned on China are another part. The *bloc* against the Soviet Union and the Arcos raid are another part. The alliance with Fascist Italy, the intrigues in the Balkans, the winning of Rumania, the pressure against Nationalist Turkey, all fall into place in the same general scheme. This does not mean that there are not, as in every total situation, a thousand complex currents and cross-currents to disentangle in detail analysis (the most important complicating factor being the inner imperialist antagonisms which hamper the British Government from taking a straight path). But the first essential for the correct leading of the working-class struggle is to see the centre-point of the situation clear. That centre-point is the single international counter-revolutionary offensive to re-establish British Capitalism, which is the dominating aim of the Baldwin Government. And it is

a single offensive that we have to drive back with all our power. The fight against the Trade Unions Bill is also the fight against the war on China and against the threat of war on the Soviet Union : there is no division in the fight. For this reason the fight against the Trade Unions Bill cannot be treated as a parliamentary question of repeal in the distant future. It is a present crisis that has to be met with all the weapons in our power if there is not to be a still more disastrous situation in the immediate future.

TWO and a half years ago the revolutionary working-class elements were alone in giving warning of the combined home and international counter-revolutionary offensive which was the whole objective of the Baldwin-Chamberlain-Churchill Government, as the inevitable and logical sequel of the MacDonald-Herriot preparation and Dawes "pacification" of Europe (compare the Notes in this journal for December, 1924, "Towards Civil War" ; January, 1925, "The New Period" ; and February, 1925, "Towards the International Counter-Revolutionary Front"). At the same time the whole Reformist leadership was all at sea, acclaiming Baldwin as "almost a Socialist," applauding his appeals for Industrial and International Peace, and explaining to the workers the new type of "Social Reform Conservatism" which could only in practice continue the beneficent policies of the Labour Party. To-day, after all the experience of two and a half years, after the 1925 Offensive, after Locarno and the anti-Soviet *bloc*, after the General Strike and the smashing of the miners, after the armed expedition and war on China, the Reformist leaders can only express their impotent amazement and bewilderment at the culminating phase of the Trade Unions Bill as "incredible," "fantastic," "inexplicable," &c. "One's feeling on first reading it," declares the simple-hearted *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* of May 7, with revealing candour, "was that no set of men, even Tories dressed in a little brief authority, could be vindictive or foolish enough to wish to pass it into law. Apparently, however, this view of human nature was too generous" (not generous, only sheepish). Thus a month after the issue of the Bill, when the only question is the practical measures to resist it, the reformists are still scratching their heads

in puzzlement at the appearance of such a phenomenon in this enlightened progressive age, at this disappointment of their hopes in the "human nature" of "even Tories," at this disconcerting irruption of the class struggle, despite all their propaganda for peace—while meantime the Tories are steadily bludgeoning the workers without let or hindrance.

WHAT is the reason for this utter blindness, impotence and uselessness of reformist leadership in the present period? Why are they invariably wrong in every simplest estimate of facts and tendencies? Why are they unable to face the simplest obvious realities confronting the workers? And why are they consequently unable to lead any struggle against every succeeding larger and larger attack of the Tories? Why are they compelled to explain away every issue as it arises—from the Campbell case and the Zinoviev forgery at the last election, when MacDonald helped the Tories in, to their belief in Baldwin and his industrial peace blarney, to their belief in Locarno as a sign of peace, to their nine months' failure of preparation because they hoped the Government would not attack, to the General Strike, which they entered without wanting it and now try to pretend did not happen, to the defence of the miners' wages, which they pledged and repudiated, to their industrial peace propaganda, which the capitalists themselves now mock them for, to their attitude on the troops for China, which is a complete confusion and word-chopping, and now to their "resistance" to the Trade Unions Bill, which is such an obvious stage-play without substance that the workers are not even interested to attend their meetings, preferring to go to the Communists?

THE answer lies in the whole character of the present period, which is expressed in the Baldwin Government. It is a period of intensifying class struggle, inevitably following from the continued capitalist decline. Such a period results in a bourgeois policy of fiercer and fiercer blows against the workers, against the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, against the successful Workers' Republic, against all the forces they feel to be making for their decline. This policy is expressed in the

increasing Right Wing domination of the bourgeois forces, reflected in the Baldwin Government, which is in effect a Government of bourgeois concentration for purposes of class struggle. (If it succeeds in its task of heavily smashing the workers and reducing them to submission at a lower level, there is likely to follow a Liberal-Labour Government to ease the subsequent period of subjection ; but this is in fact only a further stage in the decline, and will in fact be faced with the same repressive problems and the use of the same weapons.)

BUT against this move of the bourgeoisie to more and more open class struggle the reformists are powerless with their bagful of old Liberal sermons, apologies, pious aspirations, parliamentary precedents, pacifism, legal lore and constitutional sanctity. It is no doubt very fine and ennobling to point out that the Trade Unions Bill contains principles unheard of since 1799, or even "since Richard II" ("with the exception of the Statute of 1563"); that it is injurious to the sacred cause of industrial peace ; that it is contrary to progressive principles and a reversal of the clock ; that it is infamous class-legislation ; that it will plunge the country into bitter strife; and all the other tags. But the only answer these statesmanlike Labour leaders receive is that the street-boy-in-office, Birkenhead, says "Yah!" informs them that thirty thousand speeches won't worry the Government, and adds as a parting shot (knowing that it will rile them more than for a Presbyterian minister to be accused of haunting night-clubs or a temperance reformer to be accused of secret drinking) that they are all "paid by Moscow" and receive their orders daily every morning by post. All which is duly echoed, applauded and repeated two-million-fold in leathern tones by the modern Government organ, the *Daily Mail*. The Labour leaders have the satisfaction of feeling that they are the only true repositories of the traditions of British statesmanship, of the genius of Parliament, of the spirit of the Constitution and of the principles of English law. But unfortunately one thing is lacking to all this painfully acquired monkey-imitation of an obsolete Liberal-statesman humbug—and that is power. The power rests with the bourgeoisie, who can consequently break their own precedents without turning a

hair, and have entered on a new stage, while the conscientious Labour leaders (who have never heard of dialectics) are still studying John Stuart Mill and feeling a respectable pain at the unaccountable antics of the bourgeoisie. In short, the present Government is no longer a Government of the old-fashioned Conservative type, but is in reality and essentials a Fascist Government; and this is the secret of the present position that leaves the reformist leaders helpless and the working-class movement without yet the effective leadership that it needs.

THE essence of Fascism does not lie primarily in the form of seizure of power, in the "March on Rome." The March on Rome was as obvious a piece of theatrical pantomime as any of the Mussolini repertoire, with about as much relation to a revolution as a cinema film has to war. The entry of the original job-lot of black-shirts was only made possible by the kindly co-operation of King, police and army; just as the much advertised Stahlhelm march on Berlin on May 8 was secured and protected by the most elaborate regulations and protections of the police (under a "Socialist" police president). Nor does the essence of Fascism lie in the military lawlessness of White Terror, though this may accompany its extreme stages; the bourgeois weapon of White Terror was familiar long before the evolution of Fascism. The essence of Fascism lies in its social character: that, in a period of stress and unrest, affecting not only the workers, but also the small bourgeois elements (high prices and taxation, unemployed ex-officers, decline of small trade and business, &c.), the big bourgeoisie throws aside normal methods and makes use of every species of demagoguery to enlist the petty bourgeoisie and such elements of the working class as they can secure in order to crush violently and lawlessly the working-class movement. (In Britain the social basis of Fascism is especially provided, through the imperialist position and overseas rentier income, in the consequent large section of parasitic proletariat and parasitic City-office small-clerk petty bourgeoisie—the "public" of the *Daily Mail*.) In this sense the present Tory Government is already in essence Fascist, though still in a relatively primitive stage. The Zinoviev forgery, the O.M.S., the General

Strike provocation and crushing, the Trade Unions Bill and the Arcos raid—all bear the authentic hallmark of Fascism.

INTERNATIONALLY, the position is still more clear and unconcealed. Not only is Mussolini, decorated like Denikin with British royal flunkey honours to mark his rôle, the close ally and associate in constant consultation with Chamberlain and Churchill, while Sarraut in France proclaims the outlawry of Communism, but all over Europe, outside the Soviet Union, and beyond Europe, the influence of Chamberlain (that is, of British warships and of British cash), as of Castlereagh a century ago, is extended behind wherever there is dictatorship and suppression of the workers, bloody legislation, smashing of trade unions, political imprisonment and torture, murders and executions. The butcher Bethlen in Hungary, the money-forgery and butcher in whose prisons the bravest of the Hungarian workers and peasants are being done to death without trial; the butcher Liaptchef in Bulgaria, succeeding the Zankov who came to power by the murder of the peasant Prime Minister (constitutionally elected with an overwhelming Agrarian and Communist majority in the elections), and now protected against inquiry raised as to his atrocities at the League of Nations Council by direct intervention of Chamberlain; the butcher Averescu in Rumania, with the notorious Siguranza and reign of terror and punitive expeditions in Bessarabia; the butcher Pilsudski in Poland, whose seizure of power last year was financed by British money and the character of whose regime was testified by the recent British Labour Delegation; the butcher Smetona in Lithuania, whose seizure of power recently was inaugurated by the shooting of Communists and trade union leaders; the professional ex-bandit and strangler, Chang-Tso-Lin in China, whose victims are rounded up and handed over to him by direct British power and action—these are the chosen allies and associates, and paid agents all over the world of British “civilised” “democratic” power to-day.

IN the face of this international record of subsidised bloodshed, suppression and executions, the reformist leaders in the imperialist centre, soaked and flabby and brutalised in the

layers of imperialist fat, blind and indifferent to the realities of the world around them, never having felt the whip in their own persons, knowing only the velvet parliamentary glove of the executioners, applaud the "democratic," "pacific," "excellent" formulæ of a Chamberlain, deplore the "militarism" of the Soviet Union workers who dare to defend themselves against these bandits, and, when the attack begins to come a little nearer home, express their incredulity that any "set of men, even Tories dressed in a little brief authority, could be vindictive or foolish enough" to wish to pass the Trade Unions Bill! This is a picture of the imperialist corruption and degradation of the upper layer of the working-class movement.

BUT in fact Social Democracy and the Second International is the principal support of the work of repression in Europe, just as it was the direct agent of the carrying of the Dawes Report in England, France and Germany. In Bulgaria, the murder-coup against the constitutionally elected Prime Minister was carried out with the officially admitted co-operation of the Social Democratic Party; and the Party entered into the resulting Zankov militarist butcher Government, under which, according to Vandervelde's statement, 16,000 Bulgarian workers and peasants were killed. The shaking Horthy butcher regime in Hungary was saved and sustained by cash from London under Snowden as Chancellor and MacDonald as Foreign Minister (like Tsarist Russia of old by Grey) in defiance of Liberal protests and direct appeals. The Pilsudski coup was directly supported by the Polish Socialist Party. The responsibility of the present international Fascist advance falls heavily and directly on the Second International.

WITH this record of the Second International, it is not surprising that the resistance in England also should be so weak, when the Trade Unions Bill begins the direct attack on working-class liberties and rights of organisation and begins the process, as Lenin foretold, of stripping the workers of every legal right and possibility of achieving the revolution. The effort of the reformist leadership is directed, not to mobilising the most powerful working-class resistance to smash at the outset

this attack on fundamental rights, the success of which will constitute a heavy barrier in the way of all further advance, but to weaken and neutralise the opposition and indignation aroused into safe channels of a passive parliamentary by-play, which cannot affect the issue within any time to be effective, and so cut off the opposition from the real present fight against the international Fascist offensive of the Baldwin Government. The April 29 Special Conference of Trade Union Executives, which had the duty of organising opposition to the Bill, ruled out of order two questions: the first was the question of the General Strike in opposition to the Bill; the second was the question of China. But these two questions gather up into themselves the whole real issue, the issue of working-class resistance to the counter-revolutionary offensive. By these two decisions the Conference stamped its own character and the character of its "opposition."

THE reformist leadership holds out the calculation of waiting for the next General Election and eventual repeal of the Bill by parliamentary means. But this process is a process of years, of at least four to five years and possibly more. The Baldwin Government may at its own convenience decide on a rapid General Election on a jingo slogan with the usual trickery, and there are certainly many signs that suggest this; but it can also remain legally in office for another two years, and in an emergency longer. In the event of a General Election the active bourgeois attempts to rehabilitate the Liberal Party may lead to a very possible result, not of an absolute Labour majority, but of a Liberal-Labour majority, in which case the parliamentary question will become, not repeal, but revision, leaving the worst character of the old law in existence. Finally, in the most favourable conditions of an absolute Labour majority at the immediate next election (involving already a whole series of assumptions), the resulting Labour Government will need to carry repeal over three years to pass the House of Lords; and it is extremely open to question whether a Labour Government with an absolute majority will remain peacefully in office for over three years. *And in the meantime, what is to happen, with the law all the time in force during the years continuing and the offensive*

continuing? What is to happen, with the further attack on the workers' standards, with the advance of the war on China, with the extension to the assault on the Soviet Republic, with the inevitable approach to renewed imperialist war. The reformists have no answer, and can have no answer. The workers are tied and bound, and, according to the reformist advice, must remain passive. *The reformist policy is a policy to paralyse the working-class movement in the struggles in front.*

IN the actual fight, which is not a standstill affair, in which the world does not stand still on its head to await the accomplishment of the theories of the parliamentarians, every retreat and every weakening of the working class leads to an immediate advance and intensifying of the attack by the bourgeoisie. The stand of the workers in 1925 led to the hymns to industrial peace on the part of the bourgeoisie and the subsidy to maintain wages. The abandonment of the miners led to the imposition of draconian conditions. The betrayal of the General Strike is the cause behind the Trade Unions Bill. As soon as the even partial opposition to the war on China, forced on the reformist leadership from below, was dropped by them (dropping of the demand for withdrawal of armed forces), the bombardment of Nanking followed and the open break with Chinese Nationalism (March 24). As soon as the success was achieved in China the Trade Unions Bill was issued (April 4). As soon as the April 29 conference and reception in Parliament showed that the reformist leaders meant to allow no serious resistance the extension of the attack to the U.S.S.R. by the Arcos raid followed (May 12). The more the reformists retreat, the more rapidly the bourgeois attack follows and enlarges its scope. And, conversely, a stand on one front is a stand on every front. To smash the Trade Unions Bill means also to deal a deadly blow on the war on China, to hold back the war on the Soviet Union, to weaken the hand of Chamberlain all over the world, to give new strength and energy to the workers in every country. This, and not parliamentary day-dreams of a hypothetical repeal, is the real and living fight in which we need to put forth all our strength to drive back by strong action now the ever-enlarging imperialist offensive.

R. P. D.

THE TRADE UNIONS BILL: A PLAN OF ACTION

By HARRY POLLITT

IF ever the working class of Britain have had a supreme example of how the speeches and writings of the Labour leaders are the finest weapon in the armoury of the capitalist class in their attacks upon the workers, that object lesson has been fully provided in the discussion on the Trade Unions Bill. From start to finish it has been one continuous repetition of quotations supporting the clauses of the Bill dealing with strike action, picketing, and intimidation, from the speeches and writings of the MacDonald, Thomas, Snowden, Clynes leadership. This situation should do much to convince those workers who in the past have been a little impatient of the revolutionary movement, for having so strongly criticised these defeatist and treacherous utterances, which reached the final objective after the betrayal of the General Strike and the Miners' Lock-out in the infamous "Never again" articles that appeared in the Yellow Press, in the banquets and luncheons financed by the oil group to promote industrial peace, which the Labour leaders felt it their duty to attend, in the suggestion of Mr. MacDonald that there could be a Committee of Inquiry into certain aspects of Trade Unionism. These, plus the expulsion of Communists from the Labour Party and intensification of this policy this year, the suspension and disenfranchisement of branches of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers because their members had dared to attend Conferences of the National Minority Movement, the decision of the General Council to strike off from their records any Trades Council having affiliation to or association with the Minority Movement, all serve to show the Government quite unmistakably that the existing leadership is not only weak and hesitant, but also that it is far more concerned with fighting the militant workers than with fighting capitalism. It is just because of this realisation (and these facts must be hammered home in every working-class meeting) that the Government has dared to bring forward a Bill which completely revolutionises the whole conception of trade union organisation, policy, and tactics, and

which reduces the trade unions to the level of slave organisations.

Yet, so far-sighted is the existing leadership, so thoroughly does it understand the present economic position of British capitalism, so well does it read the international situation as a whole, that it expresses profound surprise when the Bill is finally introduced, that it has "exceeded their anticipations," that it "has gone further than they expected," and all the rest of the humbugging palaver which it has been the lot of the workers to have to listen to during these last three or four weeks.

When the Bill was finally introduced into the House of Commons, with what flourish of trumpets were we told that it would be fought line by line, and to the last full stop and comma ! With what servile appeal *Daily Herald* leading articles begged the movement to remain loyal and disciplined—to a leadership which has only shown itself capable of splitting the movement ! A Special Conference of Trade Union Executives meets and refuses to allow an old fighter like Alex. Gossip even to act in accordance with their own constitutional procedure of submitting an amendment to the official resolution ; a Special Conference, which in the main is content to be called together at a vast expense, not to hammer out a policy as a result of the considered contributions of the delegates as a whole, but just to receive a report of certain organisational measures that it is proposed to operate. Area Conferences of the rank and file are summoned, where the official General Council and Labour Party speakers are the big guns, but where tried and trusted fighters like A. J. Cook and Gossip are not invited to speak, and even where the workers themselves are not permitted to move amendments to the official resolution, which, for a piece of pious and meaningless phrase-mongering, eclipses anything that has been produced on a serious question by the Labour Movement. Yet at every demonstration and conference that meets, the demand is made for organised obstruction in Parliament and preparation for a real General Strike. But these demands have been stifled by the official machine and platform. In the House of Commons the "fight" has been carried on. With what gusto it has been suggested that strikes against a "breach of contract" perhaps could be illegal, or a general strike against "the State" could be illegal ! How, in

their speeches, Clynes, Snowden, and Thomas have all pointed out how they "abhor" strikes, and have consistently placed themselves in the hands of the Government, which is able to and will make the fullest use of these statements. The long arguments of Labour's standing Counsel, Sir Henry Slessor, are expounded, and we defy any worker to read them and say he is any clearer after reading them than he was before.

There is parliamentary obstruction *and* parliamentary obstruction. What has been witnessed is only the sham thing—an attempt to conduct the most vital issue Labour has been faced with within the constitutional channels of parliamentary procedure. It is worthy of note that the *London Star*, a Liberal organ, while congratulating Sir John Simon on one of his speeches, warned him of the danger of being too closely associated with the Bill and so enabling the Government to quote this high legal authority as supporting the measure. What a humiliation to the Labour Movement that a Liberal newspaper can warn one of its prominent members against a situation that has already become nauseating as far as many prominent Labour leaders are concerned.

The only force that can smash this Bill and the Government is a strongly organised working-class movement. This strength can only be developed to the degree that the fight being waged is of a character that can rally the workers in ever-increasing numbers and strength to Labour's standard. To this end the parliamentary machinery should have been used to declare, positively and unmistakably, that the Government could do what it likes as far as this Bill is concerned. *The general strike will be maintained by Labour as one of the strongest weapons in its armoury. In the event of the railwaymen being asked to accept reduced standards, the whole working-class movement will be rallied behind them in defence of their present standards; that in the event of war being declared, the resolution of the Hull Trades Union Congress that a general strike should be called to stop a war would be immediately operated. Above all, that in the present Chinese war, the movement would at last make full retribution for its shameful betrayal of the Chinese workers and peasants, by even now giving the call to all workers to refuse to make, handle, or transport any more munitions, soldiers, or sailors for use against the Chinese workers and peasants.*

It is not enough for individual Labour leaders to declare at provincial meetings that they will take such and such action after the Bill has become law. It is in the parliamentary debate that these declarations must be hurled in the face of the capitalist Government. There must be an end to the sparring-about process that has gone on. Let the insolent challenge of the Tory Government be answered by the determination of our movement that the methods of struggle we have won as a result of generations of sacrifice will never be forfeited to any forgers' Government under any circumstances. Let the declaration be clearly made that trade unionists will stand for their inalienable right to decide what the trade unions shall or shall not do, that any outside interference is capitalist interference, and must not be tolerated. If this policy had been carried out, we venture to suggest that there would now be such a feeling throughout the movement that would make it possible to carry the campaign to its logical conclusion—a real general strike. The very fact that the Government have gone to the lengths they have in order to make the general strike illegal only convinces the serious-minded workers of the importance and necessity of this weapon to working-class organisations.

The present Bill is only the prelude to further attacks upon the wages and hours of the workers. Throughout the workers' ranks bitter and intense poverty prevails. Engineers and ship-builders are forced to demand increased wages; dyers, textile workers, and miners all have to face the immediate prospect of wage reductions. Unemployment is on the increase in the transport industry. Everywhere there is a great desire and demand to end the retreating policy that has so long been the order of the day. The Trade Unions Bill affords the means of rallying the whole working class behind the Trades Union Congress. Capitalism knows that the economic decline, now a marked feature of British capitalism, makes new attacks upon the workers' standards inevitable. They have therefore introduced this Bill to undermine further the trade unions and the Labour Party in order to make this task easier. It is no longer a question of the workers possessing their weapon, or being told that the remedy is in their own hands at the next General Election. It is a question of choosing now between smashing this Bill and the Government or slavery. In

this fight, therefore, there must be an end to all the shilly-shallying that has gone on. The active workers everywhere must redouble their efforts in order to force upon the leadership the responsibility of organising a complete general strike as the only real and effective weapon to achieve the downfall of the present Government.

We must demand a cessation of all further splitting tactics and heresy hunting, and organise a mobilisation of all working-class forces to defeat the Bill. The National Minority Movement has submitted to all its conferences the following programme of action, which still holds the field, and which should be compared with the defeatist policy of the existing Labour leadership:—

- (1) Local Trades Councils to be formed into Councils of Action, embracing representation from all working-class political and industrial organisations in the localities ; these Councils of Action to have representation at all special trade union conferences called to discuss the Trade Unions Bill.
- (2) These Councils shall organise factory gate meetings, and mass demonstrations, and form Workers' Defence Corps to take all precautions for Labour's campaign to be carried on effectively.
- (3) Federations of Trades Councils shall be organised, or where in existence shall meet at once to co-ordinate the work of the various Councils of Action. Federations to have representation on the General Council during the present crisis.
- (4) Towns' meetings to be arranged to enable all workers and their families to make gigantic official protests against the Bill, and to be kept informed of the day-to-day fight.
- (5) All trade union branches and district committees to pass resolutions demanding that their Executive Committees shall take steps to ensure the following measures being carried out :—
 - (a) *Organised obstruction of all parliamentary business by the Labour Party.*
 - (b) *Immediate preparations by the General Council for a real General Strike, to answer the Government in the only possible manner.*
- (6) All meetings, pamphlets, and tactics as a whole to be linked up with the workers' real weapon of defence and attack—the General Strike.

It is the duty of every worker, seriously bent on the task of taking a real part in this great fight for the very right of trade union organisation, to give the above points serious consideration. If agreed with, they should then form the basis of our work in every organisation in which we have got influence.

NEW ENTENTES FOR OLD

By W. N. EWER

MBRIAND'S visit to London with the President of the Republic seems likely enough (I am writing on the day of their arrival) to mark the beginning of a new phase of European politics—another reshuffling and regrouping of the diplomatic cards.

Not that the chief determining forces have changed at all. Quite on the contrary. The two rivalries which dominate the diplomatic affairs of Europe—the Anglo-Russian and the Franco-Italian—have become even more sharply defined during the past few months. But diplomatic plans, both in London and in Paris, have gone somewhat agley and call for revision. And, since the disappointment has come simultaneously to Downing Street and the Quai d'Orsay, it is not unnatural that adversity should draw them together again.

Sir Austen's Locarno policy—the drawing together of the four great West-European Powers into a *bloc* which would support the British Empire in its conflict with the Soviet Union and with the Nationalist forces of Asia—broke down as one foresaw that it must break down. For the three Continental Powers were, naturally enough, all rather intent upon the pursuit of their own ends than upon sinking their differences for the sake of Great Britain. There was indeed one influence by which he may have hoped to keep them in line. So long as France and Germany and Italy were compelled to seek, either for budgetary or industrial purposes, financial support in the City of London, so long they must, in some measure, accommodate their policy to that of Downing Street.

But if Sir Austen had been counting on that he has been disillusioned. For America has shown a disconcerting willingness to lend money to Continental countries, and an equally disconcerting unwillingness to link her moneylending activities with those of the City. The existence of an alternative, and even

more fruitful, loan-market in Wall Street has destroyed all hope of exercising a financial-political control over Europe from London. And Sir Austen has been confronted with something not unlike a financial Declaration of Independence.

So, in spite of his own trips to Rapallo and Leghorn, in spite of Mr. Churchill's trip to Rome, he has found Signor Mussolini in no way inclined to be subservient. The Duce was useful enough in 1925, when Turkey had to be menaced into the Mosul settlement, and when the debt question had still to be arranged. But when the Volpi agreement was safely made and when Rome had found that Italy could get plenty of money from the States, the Duce began to kick over the traces.

Turkey having proved impervious to the temptations and blandishments used to lure her into the League and away from her friendship with Russia, Downing Street tried hard to persuade Signor Mussolini to go ahead with the plan of an attack on Anatolia. Such an attack would compel Russia either to aid her ally and so embroil herself with Italy, or else to desert her ally—with disastrous results to her own prestige throughout Asia.

But Signor Mussolini had decided that Albania would be a more promising field than Anatolia for expansionist activities. That was a decision doubly unpleasant for Great Britain. It meant the abandoning of all the advantages which might be expected to follow an Italian attack on Turkey. And it meant also new complications in Europe, very threatening to Locarno and the solidarity of the four-Power *bloc*. British diplomacy, therefore, worked very hard, has worked hard up to this very moment, to turn the Duce from his new course. But the result of the effort has been approximately nothing.

In other—and to him less important—matters Signor Mussolini was willing enough to please his friend Sir Austen. He would send a few black-shirts to Shanghai; he would even ratify the Bessarabian Convention. Indeed, to make these gestures suited his purpose very well. It gave the world an impression of Anglo-Italian solidarity: created the belief that England must be backing Italy in her Mediterranean policy. Such a belief was very useful—to Italy.

Therefore Signor Mussolini did these things cheerfully.

But to change his policy, to abandon his plans of Balkan penetration, was another matter. On this he was inflexible. All Chamberlain's representations were met by bland evasions, by dissimulations, or by open snubs, until at last even Sir Austen has begun to understand that Italy is not going to be his catspaw, but prefers to make her own mischief in her own way. The announcement of her new pact with Albania, by which each party binds itself not to discuss their mutual relations with anybody else except in concert with the other, was the final blow. For it is in reality a declaration to the world at large that Rome regards Albania as a Roman province, in whose affairs no one else is to interfere, whose affairs Rome will not even condescend to discuss either with Belgrade, or Paris, or Geneva, or even with London.

If Sir Austen has been disappointed in Rome he has been equally disappointed in Berlin. And here he had largely his own clumsiness and personal incompetence to thank. Probably he has not even yet realised what damage he did by his display of bad temper and bad manners at Geneva in the spring of last year. He ruined then in a week the work which it had taken Lord D'Abernon six years of hard and subtle effort to accomplish. And while he was throwing away the personal ascendancy of British statesmanship in Berlin, economic developments were destroying its financial ascendancy. Germany, with a stabilised budget, was obtaining what foreign capital she needed without being beholden for it in any way to the good offices of Downing Street. Psychologically her diplomacy was shedding the subservience of the post-war period, was beginning to register independence and even self-assertiveness.

When, this last March, Sir Austen suggested to Herr Stresemann that it would be very desirable that no further German credits should be given for Soviet undertakings or for trade with Russia he received a very chilly response. Germany has shown herself in no way sympathetic to British policy in China. And by even more direct methods than these Sir Austen has been given to understand that the entry of the Reich into the League and into the Locarno pacts does not in the least imply that she is willing to enter an anti-Soviet *bloc*, to abandon her friendly relations with Moscow, or to reverse the "Rapallo policy."

Sir Austen's plans for using Italy, for using Germany, have thus both collapsed. The Four-Power *bloc* is non-existent for his purposes. He must revise his plans. And revision, under the circumstances, must mean a bid for the support of France.

Simultaneously, as it happens, M. Briand finds himself impelled to turn to London.

His own policy, dominated by the fear of Italian aggression in the Mediterranean, was to counter-check Italy by an understanding with Germany, which would at one and the same time permit France to give her undivided attention to the South and would force the Duce to think about the security of his Tyrolean frontier in the event of trouble.

M. Briand and Signor Mussolini bid against each other for Germany's friendship. And it looked as though, with the trump card of Rhineland evacuation in his hand, M. Briand had won. But he was not a free agent. He had in the President of the Council a partner who would not let him play that trump card. M. Poincaré, still obsessed by the fear of a German military revival and a war of revenge, with a mind as rigid as his colleague's is flexible, vetoed all plans of rapid evacuation. Without evacuation as an about-to-be-accomplished fact Herr Stresemann could not hope to persuade the German nationalists to accept a rapprochement with France. The Thoiry plan collapsed.

And with that policy in ruins, British support became suddenly again a vital necessity for French diplomacy. M. Briand, cynical and supple, did not cry over the spilt milk of Thoiry. He adapted himself, after his manner, to the new situation. Only a few weeks ago he had been almost ostentatiously cold to Sir Austen at Geneva, had taken no pains to hide his displeasure at the flirtations with Italy. But now he must be as warm as he had been cool. He had seen, in the Albanian negotiations, that the affair with Italy was off, at least for the moment. He saw the opportunity and took it swiftly. The announcement that he would come to London with M. Doumergue was the signal to all who had eyes to see.

The conversations which are now taking place are, then, based on two clear postulates:—

Britain wants French support (and the support of France's protégés) against Russia and in her Asiatic policy.

France wants British support against Italy and in her Mediterranean policy.

But to these postulates must be added two others—equally clear:—

Britain is not eager to do anything that will involve her in open opposition to Italy.

France is not eager to do anything that will involve her in open opposition to Russia.

Each party in fact wants to use the other as much as possible, to be used as little as possible; to gain the maximum and give the minimum. And there is not, as in the earlier entente, the unifying factor of a common enmity. Then Germany was the enemy for both; now it is Russia for the one, Italy for the other.

That means that there must be some very complex as well as some very hard bargaining. Under such circumstances it would be folly to predict results. But agreement, in some form or other, seems probable.

And if there is agreement it will imply a new grouping of European forces. For a new, close and real Anglo-French entente will force a revision of plans and policies not only in Rome and in Berlin, but in every minor capital as well.

[*Note.*—This article was, of course, written before the Arcos raid and the rupture with Russia. But, if that be borne in mind, it needs no modification.—W. N. E.]

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE U.S.S.R.

By A. I. RYKOV

(*Report of the President of the Council of People's Commissars, A. I. Rykov, at the IV. Congress of Soviets of the Soviet Union.*)

COMRADES,—The present Soviet Congress is being held under conditions of an exceedingly tense and disturbed international situation. The foreign policy of our Soviet Union has in recent times developed under conditions of the growth of active hostility towards the Soviet Union in a whole number of countries. The government of the Soviet Union, in carrying out the main principles of our foreign policy, in securing peace, developing and consolidating the economic and political connections with the other countries, had to overcome considerable obstacles. For this reason the Government of the Soviet Union considers it necessary to submit to the Congress as complete a report as possible on that international policy which it has conducted in the last two years.

The Main Factors in International Politics

Where are the main factors of international politics at the present moment?

It seems to me that there are two main factors: the first is China and the second the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

The population of these two enormous States comprises a third of the population of the whole world. Around these States there is at present proceeding the mobilisation of public opinion, the mobilisation both of the hostile and friendly forces. As regards China, the reason for the aggressive mobilisation against the liberation movement of the Chinese people is the fact that China is the main centre of colonial policy. On the territory of China there will be decided, in the very nature of things, the further course of development of imperialism, at any rate in that form in which it has developed in the last decades.

Our State is the object of a hostile attack of capitalism because

it is on the territory of our State that the question of Socialist construction is being solved. The consolidation of economic power, the increase in the political importance of our Soviet Union mean a victory for the Socialist method of organising society. It is precisely for this reason that these two States form the centre point of increasing attacks on the part of the international bourgeoisie.

Recent events have already revealed the methods, the direction and the rate of development of the attacks of the imperialists. It suffices to point to such facts as the Note of Austen Chamberlain to the Soviet Union, the raid on the residence of the Military Attaché of our Embassy in Peking, and a whole number of unheard-of actions against our representatives in other towns in China. *That which has occurred in Peking and Shanghai cannot be described as anything else but a war provocation.*

Chronologically considered, the starting point of the mobilisation of public opinion and of the forces hostile to our Soviet Union is the Note of Austen Chamberlain.

The Note, as far as its contents are concerned, is of quite an unusual character. The Note does not deal with this or that action of the State, but with literary products, with the utterances of a whole number of speakers which do not happen to please the British Government. The British Government therefore thought fit to make the Soviet Government responsible for such "*criminal*" actions. As is known, we replied that the Soviet Government is not a committee of censors, and that therefore we do not understand why what has been written in this or that article or what has been said by this or that speaker should all be booked to our account. In any event, we have never demanded and never shall demand, either from our press or from our speakers, that they say only that which the Right Wing Conservatives of Great Britain, the so-called "Diehards," can agree with in every respect and to which they shall express their approval. The character of the Note itself is so very unusual in international relations that it is hard to believe that that which is said in the Note is the real reason for its despatch.

The Relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union

One can ascertain the real reason for the Note of the Conservative Government only when one follows that action against

our Soviet Union which is being conducted by a considerable portion, if not by the whole, of the Conservative Party.

The chief elements in this propaganda are: First y, the questions of the Tsarist debts; secondly, the question of the solidarity of the working-class of the Soviet Union with the working masses of Great Britain, and especially with the miners' struggle; and thirdly, the annoyance of the imperialists at the sympathy of the masses of China with the Soviet Union which they describe as "participation" by the Soviet Union in the Chinese liberation movement. This discontent of the imperialists is directed against us because the Soviet Union is the first country of an "October Revolution," the first country that has laid the foundations of a new epoch of Socialist development. It is only natural that the experiences of our country have been made use of by other suppressed peoples who are likewise fighting for their emancipation.

I consider it necessary to emphasise that none of these three questions was discussed between our representative and the official British representative. In spite of our repeated proposals to proceed to real negotiations, the present Conservative Government has constantly avoided making these so-called "questions of dispute" the subject of official negotiations. And in spite of this the British Conservatives, basing themselves precisely on these three facts, have conducted such a campaign in Great Britain which is not only a hindrance to the development of our economic and commercial relations, but can, in certain circumstances, lead to a breach. The breaking off of diplomatic relations between two such great States as the Soviet Union and Great Britain, would be bound to have effects on the whole political situation in Europe, would inevitably render the maintenance of peace in Europe more difficult. It must therefore be regarded as criminal to make use of questions which have not been concretely discussed in order to render acute and to break off relations.

"Disputes" over the Labour Question

With regard to the question of the working class in the Soviet Union, its rights and its connection with the Labour Movement of the whole world, everybody, even the Conservatives, have

to proceed from the fact that our Republic is a workers' State, and that precisely therefore, not only the working masses and the workers' organisations, but also the Government of our Union can openly express its fraternal class solidarity with the working class and with the workers of other countries. Any attempt *now* to *force* the working class of the Soviet Union to abandon this natural right or to compel our Government to *limit the freedom of action of the working class* in regard to mutual help and connection with the working class of other countries, proceeds *from the endeavour to change the nature of the Soviet State itself*. It is quite impossible to annihilate the historical fact of the organising by the State of the dictatorship of the proletariat which took place in the October Revolution, and the consequences arising therefrom.

Therefore the attempts to blame the Soviet Government for the *historical fact* which was accomplished in October, 1917, are void of any political realism. We cannot blame Austen Chamberlain for the fact that the capitalist system exists in Great Britain, that the Conservative Party rules in that country, and that therefore he does not sympathise with the Chinese coolies but with the Chinese mandarins and militarists. The platform of Austen Chamberlain of sympathy with the capitalists and mandarins results from the whole position of the Conservative Party in Great Britain. Our platform is : *sympathy with the suppressed workers and suppressed peoples*.

If we say, for instance, that the Conservative Government sympathises with the Nep-people and the private traders in Moscow, I in nowise declare that this represents an interference on the part of Austen Chamberlain in our inner affairs. In the same way one cannot regard our sympathy with the British miners as interference on the part of the Soviet Government in the inner affairs of Great Britain. The State of the dictatorship of the workers, of course, cannot refuse the workers of our Soviet Union the right to organise trade unions and to help the workers of other countries in this or that form as they may desire. The difference between our State and the British State consists before all in the fact that *with us it is unthinkable that at the Congress, let us say, a bill could be introduced for limiting the rights of trade unions : in*

Great Britain this is not only conceivable but is an actual fact. Therein consists the difference in the structure of the two States.

In a workers' State the labour unions are free to do that which they please; *when, however, we forbid them this we cease to be a Government of the workers and peasants.*

During the struggle of the British miners the whole of the working class of the Soviet Union collected money through the trade unions. The Government of the Soviet Unions did not send any money to the British miners.

In order to render plausible the version that the Government of the Soviet Union took part in organising the fight of the miners and similar collisions between capital and labour, the Conservatives place on the Soviet Government the responsibility for appeals, declarations and acts of the workers' organisations which exist on the territory of the Soviet Union as well as those in other countries, among them being not only Communist but also simple democratic organisations which are even hostile to and actively fight against the Communist Movement.

The miners' struggle in Great Britain was a world conflict between capital and labour, a conflict which even bourgeois economists and politicians considered to be unavoidable and for which both parties had made preparations extending over a long period. Therefore, the attempt to ascribe the origin of this fight to the "malicious agitation of Soviet agents" was very impudent. Long before the October revolution the British workers had written so many heroic pages of the fight of the working class that to declare that Soviet agents can organise a strike of such a kind as was the General Strike of the British trade unions, *is simply a calumny against the British working class.*

There is another interesting fact which is characteristic of the impartiality of the British Conservatives. During the fight of the British miners the British Government *declared* itself to be *neutral* in this fight, but hindered the distribution of *relief to starving miners* and their families by workers' organisations, and at the same time gratefully accepted blackleg help for the mineowners by Russian white guardists. Of course this is an affair of the British Government, and we quite understand that the Government of Great Britain acted in accordance with its

class interests. No sensible politician could expect anything else. The workers of our Soviet Union have likewise fulfilled their class duty, and *it is to be expected that they will do precisely the same thing in all other such cases.* The question of our relations to the Labour Movement, *the question that we should forbid our workers to aid the workers of other countries, must be removed from the agenda. In this respect the Soviet Government will not permit any change in its policy.*

Regarding the Debts

The second point is the question of the debts. In this question the Soviet Government has repeatedly declared its standpoint, which to a certain extent found expression in the Treaty with the preceding Government of Great Britain. This Treaty had already been signed by MacDonald, the then Prime Minister of Great Britain, and by the Chairman of our Delegation, Comrade Rakovský.

This Treaty was drawn up with a view to the interests of both countries in accordance with the entire existing situation. It provided the way to the solution of disputed questions and was regarded as advantageous both for Great Britain and for us. With the coming into power of the Conservatives the Treaty was not ratified. It would seem to be quite natural that if the new Conservative Government of Great Britain had had a real and sincere desire to come to an understanding with us, they would have pointed out what they did not agree with in this Treaty which had already been signed, and what in their opinion should be changed, and would have submitted a new draft Treaty.

I must declare that the Soviet Government, up to the present day, has not received any concrete proposal from the Conservatives regarding this or that alteration which is regarded by the Conservatives as necessary. Our representatives in Great Britain have repeatedly proposed to the British Government to proceed to concrete discussion of those new proposals or alterations in the Treaty which can be made by the British Government. *I declare here that during the whole time the British Government has avoided this question and refrained from making any proposals.*

The lack of any concrete proposals on the part of the Conservative Government regarding the methods of a practical settlement of this question to the benefit of both parties must be regarded by us as nothing else but an expectation of a favourable moment by means of which the British Government will succeed in forcing on the Soviet Union the unconditional and one-sided recognition of the debts.

If the British Government, which has assumed the rôle of European attorney for the Tsarist debts, finds it advantageous to wait, it naturally has the right to do so. But such an attitude is, it seems to me, disadvantageous both for the general economic relations between the two countries and for the creditors.

Our Attitude

The Note which we received from the British Government threatened us with a breach. Our Note has sufficiently and officially refuted the assumptions and accusations brought forward by the British Government and laid down the attitude of the Soviet Government in the matter, both as regards the possibility of a breach itself and also the responsibility for the same. Judging from the declarations of some of the Ministers in Great Britain, the only reason a breach has not occurred is because it was regarded by them as inopportune, as both in international relations and in Great Britain itself there existed a whole number of difficulties which compelled the Conservative Government for the moment to refrain from a breach.

The anti-Soviet campaign of the Right Wing of the British Conservatives aiming at breaking off relations still continues. It is therefore very hard to judge what line the Conservative Government will follow in the question of the future relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union.

The Government of the Soviet Union, in seeking to realise its general peace policy, has *never abandoned negotiations and considers the removal of the present strained relations as desirable and possible.*

The Government of the Soviet Union is convinced that, in spite of everything, friendly relations will develop between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the British people, and that the attempt of the British Conservatives to avoid developing economic and political connections with the Soviet Union will not meet with success.

The National Emancipation Movement in China and Imperialism

The national emancipation movement in China is now the most important if not the all-important cause of the discontent with the Soviet Union and the bringing of every possible accusation against it. This discontent is now increasing in connection with the development of the Chinese emancipation movement. It existed formerly and began almost simultaneously with the signing of the Treaty between the Soviet Union and China ; the first Treaty to recognise the full sovereignty of China and which is based upon the complete renunciation of the special privileges and rights which the foreigners enjoy in China. The imperialists saw in this treaty a stimulus to the development of the anti-imperialist movement.

The Intervention in China

Recent events have shown that the imperialists do not intend to consider China as a sovereign State equal with themselves, nor do they intend to permit the Chinese people to turn their backs on the imperialist countries. The position in China is at present characterised not only by the civil war, but also by the participation of nearly all the interested imperialist countries in this war.

This is to be seen from the number of troops and warships which these countries at present have in China. I received yesterday the following communication: In China there are at present 80 British naval units, 55 American, 12 Japanese, 13 French, 12 Italian and one Spanish warship, making altogether 173 warships. This is a tremendous naval squadron. Of land troops there are 15 battalions, one division and three brigades and three artillery divisions.

As a matter of fact, war is already taking place in China. It would be naïve to attempt to point out that the presence of such fighting forces is necessary solely in order to protect the lives of foreigners in China. In intelligible political language the presence of these armed forces means actual intervention.

Not so very long ago, hardly a few months back, one could say that there existed no understanding among the Powers regarding intervention in China. Some powers concealed their hostility to the national-revolution movement and even flirted with it to a certain extent.

Now, however, one can already say that there exists no "essential" difference of opinion between the imperialist States on the question of Chinese policy. It is true occasional reports appear to the effect that this or that Power is not in agreement with the others in regard to this or that point. But on the main question—whether the employment of armed force is necessary against China—there no longer exist any great differences of opinion among the imperialists. Japan also is obviously proceeding in this direction, and in connection with the recent events has increased her armed forces in South China and begun to concentrate considerable armed forces also in the North.

Other weapons in the fight against the national liberation movement are the speculation upon the troops of the militarists of North China, and the tactics of disintegrating the movement for freedom itself. According to newspapers reports, the recent events in China—the *splitting of the national camp, Chiang Kai Shek's coup*—are not taking place without previous preparations behind the scenes on the part of some of the representatives of the imperialist States. All those armies and troops which are concentrated in China are in themselves a provocation to military collisions. This is not only our standpoint but the bourgeoisie also realises this very well. The organ of the French bourgeoisie, *Quotidien*, wrote in its number of January 26 the following :—

The British Foreign Minister is trying to persuade us not to get excited over the British preparations by maintaining that Great Britain's intentions are quite peaceable. We are asked to believe that if seventy-five British warships are in Shanghai, this is only a precautionary measure, that when troops are sent every day from Great Britain and her colonies to China this is only in order to keep up the spirits of the London business people. *We have been long familiar with the system of provocation of Great Britain, of provoking bloodshed in order to have the possibility of throwing the responsibility upon her opponent. If an armed conflict should break out, the blame will probably be thrown on the "Chinese mob."*

It was in such a situation in China that there took place the raid upon a portion of our Embassy in Peking; a raid which had the approval and the previous sanction of the Ambassadors. This proceeding, which is unprecedented in the whole history of the international relations of "civilised" States, has provoked a storm of indignation on the part of public opinion in the Soviet

Union. The Government of the Soviet Union is of the opinion that *the imperialists wish, by means of such unique methods, to draw us into a war against China. I declare* before this Congress, as I have declared at the Congress of the R.S.F.S.R., *that the Soviet Government will not respond to provocation.*

Accusations . . . Propaganda . . . Agents . . .

The Chinese national emancipation movement is developing to the accompaniment of the greatest sympathy for our Soviet Union and for our State. This provides the pretext in order to accuse us of anti-British agitation in China. We have never on any single occasion, however, had any concrete accusation brought against us in this connection. The Soviet Government has repeatedly asked the Conservative Government of Great Britain to point out any actual cases of anti-British action by representatives of the Soviet Union. Up to now the British Government has not been in a position to do this. In addition it must be remarked that we regard China as being a sovereign State just as much as Great Britain, and we believe that we are responsible for our attitude in China to the Chinese and not to the British. Any other state of affairs would be just as wrong as if Chiang-Kai-Shek or the Shanghai authorities sought to make us responsible for the behaviour of our representatives, say, in London.

We are made responsible for the fact that Borodin, a citizen of the Soviet Union, is participating in the events in China. The intrigues against the British are attributed to the activity of Borodin. I must say that Borodin is not our representative in China and has received no authority from the Government of the Soviet Union, so that our Government is not responsible for the actions of Borodin. It is known to us that Ching-Tso-Lin has as military adviser an Englishman named Sutton. I do not believe that this British adviser is working with due energy to awaken the sympathies of Chang-Tso-Lin for our Government. In spite of this I am by no means inclined to accuse the British and Chamberlain with the fact that Mr. Sutton is adviser to Chang-Tso-Lin.

China is a sovereign State, and the Chinese can invite whom

they will to act as advisers and are *not bound to invite only English or Americans. They can invite citizens of the Soviet Union also.*

The friendship between us and China is brought as a charge against us. By attempting to force the Soviet Union to change its attitude to an independent country, China, or by attempting to force China to change her attitude to the Soviet Union, the *Conservatives are violating the sovereignty of these two States.*

The Danger of War

There exists a very great danger in the fact that the bourgeois world underestimates the forces of the national liberation movement which is proceeding in China. In China millions of members of the suppressed classes of this suppressed people have begun to move. This movement has such a strength that it is hardly conceivable that it can be checked with armed divisions or whole armies. Therefore the obstinacy of the imperialists in continuing military intervention in China will inevitably lead to a great imperialist war. This war will be fought on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean, for the hegemony of which several countries are fighting ; hence the extreme probability of this war turning into a world war.

Our Strength is in the Policy of Peace

When I spoke at the Congress of the R.S.F.S.R. regarding the recent events in China, I was asked: "Are there any of our troops in China?" I replied: "No." Thereupon some foreign newspapers interpreted my answer as an indication of the weakness of our Government. It is precisely in the absence of troops in China, *in not employing force against China, there exists the greatest possible guarantee for collaboration and friendship with the Chinese people.* It is precisely the fact that we have no troops in China that makes us stronger there than the other States and places us and our citizens in a safer position than the citizens of those countries which are now carrying out an intervention in China.

Our Embassy was exposed to a raid, but to an organised raid on the part of the organised police and with the sanction of the Ambassadors. But there is hardly a single bourgeois newspaper or a single statesman who will find a case of our Embassy or

our representatives in China having provoked a hostile attitude or hostile actions on the part of the Chinese people. There has not been such a case in China during the existence of the Soviet Republic.

The imperialists justify their bombardment of Nanking and a whole number of armed actions in China by saying that they are defending the sovereignty of their representatives against the Chinese people. I believe that we are in a far better situation, as we do not need to do this, for the inviolability of our representatives is defended by the Chinese people themselves. *If the bourgeoisie represents a peaceful policy as an expression of weakness, to the Soviet Union the policy of peace appears as a proclamation of its strength in all international relations.* Thanks to our peaceful policy the people, the population of the Soviet Union, and the workers of the whole world will come forward with greater enthusiasm and energy for the defence of the Soviet Union in that moment when it is threatened by the "strong" and armed imperialist danger.

The Soviet Union and the League of Nations

The bourgeoisie is at present attempting to use our attitude to the League of Nations for a campaign against us, by charging the Government of the Soviet Union, on account of its refusal to enter the League of Nations, with refusing to co-operate in "peace work" in general. The question of our attitude to the League of Nations can now come to the front in connection with the general international situation as well as in connection with the fact that the "geographical" obstacle to our participation in the work of the Special Commissions of League of Nations has at last been removed.

Is the League of Nations really struggling for peace? As is known, both China and Great Britain are members of the League of Nations. The question arises, what changes have occurred in the relations between these two States as a result of this circumstance? The British armed forces are carrying out in China an intervention just as bad, if not worse, than before the organising of the League of Nations, which has not even brought up for discussion the question of the war in China.

In recent times there has been a whole number of armed collisions, a whole number of wars, a whole series of violations of peace. It suffices to mention the conflict between Yugoslavia and Italy, the Treaty between Italy and Albania, the war in Nicaragua, and so forth. If a war or an attack by a strong State on a weak State is taking place, then the League of Nations is not to be seen. The League of Nations is a tool in the hands of a small group of a few very big imperialist States for dominating all the other States.

Attempts are being made to interpret our non-participation in the League of Nations as being due to our wish not to "struggle for the work of peace." *We are quite prepared to support any real pacifist organisation, but we will not enter organisations of the type of the League of Nations.*

The Disarmament Conference

The League of Nations is endeavouring to prove its "pacifism" by convening a disarmament Conference. Voices are heard to the effect that should the Conference not succeed, it will be mainly because the Government of the Soviet Union is not participating in it. That the work of this Conference is hardly likely to meet with success is already being shown in the process of the preparatory work to this Conference. All this preparatory work goes to prove that *it is not a question of a disarmament Conference, but a Conference to discuss how to maintain with the least expenditure the military rule of those countries which at present still dominate the whole world.*

Our fundamental attitude to the disarmament question has already been repeatedly declared. I believe that I am acting rightly when I once again confirm these declarations in the sense that *we are prepared to accept the most drastic measures for the prevention of war and competition in armaments and call upon the other Powers to do this. We propose that the standing armies be completely abolished, that war industry be done away with and a real control set up consisting of representatives of the people, of the workers, of the trade unions and of the peasants.*

We propose that this control shall extend to the financial means which might be employed for preparation for a war.

These same representatives must be made responsible that not a single kopek be spent on preparations for annihilating one human being by another. *We sincerely call upon all States to do this.* Only recently an exceedingly insolent declaration was made in the British Parliament to the effect that our State is doing much more than others in regard to preparations for chemical warfare. Our press completely refuted these declarations. Now this lie is again being heard in the House of Commons. I declare at the Congress of Soviets of the Soviet Union that there is not a single branch of war industry in which we are not surpassed in means and resources by any West European State. I further declare that we are the only State in Europe or America which, after the imperialist war, is expending on the maintenance of the army considerably less than half of the pre-war expenditure.

Comrades, you can judge from what I have already said how tense international relations are. The underlying fact of all these complications in the sphere of international politics is the struggle of the different capitalist countries and capitalist groups for retaining the old markets and capturing new ones. The events in China and the repeated revolts in other colonial countries prove how serious for capitalism is the question of the future fate of its colonial policy. From the logic of the capitalist development there inevitably arises the necessity of the fight for markets. But the industrial development and the liberation movement in the colonies and in the semi-colonial countries render difficult not only the extension of the markets but even the retention of the old markets. Such a situation will inevitably lead to the greatest international complications.

But this struggle between the various bourgeois countries and their combines by no means excludes attempts on the part of several States to create, in spite of these antagonisms, a united front of capitalism against the Soviet Union.

The Main Principles of the Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union

What, then, are the principles of our policy which we have conducted in the past period and which, in the opinion of the Government, will also be binding for the future?

When we analyse the attitude of the foreign States towards

us, we must keep in mind two chief factors in the so-called "Russian question."

The first factor consists in the growth of economic interest in the Soviet Union, thanks to the consolidation and development of our economic power and thanks to the extension of the market of the Soviet Union.

The second factor consists in the growth of the antagonism (of the ruling political groups) to the Soviet Union, the more the political importance and the political influence of the Soviet Union increase.

Up till recently the economic development of the Soviet Union proceeded without any help of foreign technique. The process of advanced reconstruction, the industrialisation of the country, means a considerable extension of the import of products from industrial countries, mainly of the import of equipments for our factories as well as making use of the experiences of the European and American countries and of the organisation of industry. Under normal political conditions this would open up vast prospects for the countries in question as regards the extension of the Soviet market. At the same time and parallel with the struggle for peace we will, of course, while fully maintaining our Foreign Trade Monopoly, develop our commercial relations and promote in every way the strengthening of technical and concession connections between our State and other countries.

Now with regard to the political Treaties which we have concluded with various countries in the past period and those relations which we have established with them, I must point to that fundamental difference which exists between our political relations, which are determined by Treaties, and those political relations, which are also determined by Treaties, between the West European States. There there prevails the system of so-called groupings of a number of capitalist States by means of which they endeavour to secure their influence and their rule in peace time and common action in war time. In some cases there are already agreements, including military alliances (e.g., Poland and Roumania). *We have not participated and will not participate in any one of these groupings.*

Our treaties bear a so-called two-sided character, *i.e.*, they

are concluded by two States without the participation of any third State or grouping. *With these treaties we are pursuing one single aim: actual peace and guarantee of the neutrality of both parties to the treaty in case of military action.* In this way, with our system of treaty relations we are not only not preparing new military conflicts, as is the case with the system of groupings and coalitions, but on the contrary, *with the help of the neutrality obligations the extent of any possible military conflicts will be localised.*

Germany

In recent times there has been a lively discussion in the press, and especially in the foreign press, regarding the relations between Germany and our Soviet Union. I must say that in the past five years, since the conclusion of the Rapallo Treaty, with us there has been no reason for complaint or any dissatisfaction with those relations which were established between the Soviet Union and Germany.

In connection with the Locarno Conference and the entry of Germany into the League of Nations, the press of a number of countries began to assert that Germany had undertaken pledges to permit the armed forces of other countries to march through German territory in the event of a military conflict between these States and the Soviet Union. These assertions have been repeated even in quite recent times. For this reason the German Government declared again that it had not undertaken any obligation of this kind. This declaration was given officially by the German Foreign Minister, Stresemann, both in the German Reichstag and to the Government of the Soviet Union. The Government of the Soviet Union cannot, of course, believe non-official declarations of the German Government. In our future relations with Germany we shall proceed from the standpoint that in the event of any intrigue against the Soviet Union Germany will not allow herself to be used for this or that armed action against us.

At the same time it is necessary to point out that the economic and cultural connections with Germany are increasing from year to year, and more than with any other country. In the past period the German Government has guaranteed special credits for our industrial orders to Germany. The original amount of the credits was raised quite recently to 315 million marks. At

present all these credits are already exhausted and the orders placed with the German works and factories. This credit has been used entirely for the purchase of machines and the equipment necessary for industrialising our country. All this is a proof that the policy of the Treaty of Rapallo was correct.

Conclusion

From what I have already said the conclusion must be drawn that, along with a whole number of successes of our diplomacy, the whole world situation with regard to the Soviet Union is much more disturbing than was the case at the time of the last Congress. It must be recognised with all clearness that the greater and the sharper the difficulties which the capitalist system experiences in its development, the more doubtful and shaky the so-called stabilisation of capitalism becomes, the more capitalist circles will endeavour to throw a considerable portion of the responsibility for these failures, both in the sphere of international politics and in the sphere of home politics (the fight against the working class) upon the Soviet Republic. To the extent to which the movement in China develops under the sign of friendship and sympathy for our State, and every revolutionary emancipation movement, every Labour movement of the working class proceeds under the same slogan, so will the attacks upon our Soviet Union increase.

It is not by any means due to chance that, precisely at the present time, when imperialism is considerably threatened, the attacks upon our Soviet Union are increasing from day to day. Whether this will lead to military adventures against us, no one can say at present. Upon the long-drawn-out road of the history of the rivalry of two systems, Socialism and capitalism, armed collisions between these systems are, of course, possible.

The Soviet Government will adopt every measure in order not to be taken by surprise.

We will, in the future, also oppose hostile combinations of every sort with our undeviating and firm policy of peace.

But even while consistently carrying out this policy, neither the Government nor any of us here present can guarantee that the territory of Socialism will not be exposed to attack. *For this reason we must be prepared for the worst that may befall.*

INDIA AND BRITAIN

By SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA, M.P.

I HAVE been to India and I have come back. Whilst I was there events were daily happening which would make me pity Great Britain more than India, and after I return I see events happening here which, without the imperialist hold over India, would not have been possible and which are dragging the British working-class on their downward path.

The British race has a reputation for being conservative on the whole and (though several of its members wear different political labels and trade marks), has betrayed its conservatism at every turn of events. At the same time the history of the world and the modern geography of the world give you instances that the British race is enterprising, is daring, and possesses many men and women of revolutionary spirit. I often ask myself, are the British really conservative temperamentally and in their innermost nature, or do they appear conservative as an economic effect of tremendous advantage gained by them through their spirit of enterprise and revolutionary temperament? I feel more inclined towards this latter belief.

Somehow or other, large numbers of members of the working-class have been permitted to believe in the possibility of a stationary life, even in inevitable and gradual progress coming whilst you wait. With the qualities of daring and enterprise and unscrupulousness of method of some of her sons, the economic resources of this island country became so vast in a comparatively poor world that men and women began to feel that their share in the distribution of it, however unjust or unfair it is, would be ample enough for all purposes of life, and this spirit of complacency sustained the whole of the nation for over a century, till it has created a state of mind much akin to the fatalism of their Oriental brethren.

The world's conditions have changed. Capitalism has grown, capitalistic competition has become keener, class interest has become sharper, imperialism has stepped in as a powerful instrument with which to undermine the standard of life in Britain,

and yet through all these changes, in spite of the thunder and quaking shocks of the revolution of Russia and mighty changes in Europe, the habit of the mind of the Briton still drags on in the same groove. He does not realise that what appeared to him to be a stationary condition was nothing but continuous replenishment from inexhaustible sources of loot from abroad. There is neither an assured continuity of economic or political rights, much less an inevitable gradual progress.

The neglect of the British working-class to study British imperialism in its proper light is leading to the accomplishment of two processes, namely, a rapid Britainising of a capitalist master-class in India and a rapid Indianising of the large working-class in Britain. In Britain within the class struggle one sees gigantic efforts on the part of the workers to level up their conditions of life and their political rights to those of the upper classes. Then one travels in India and sees a picture of sharp contrast, a transplanted life of modern European luxury and comfort and a little away from it a stagnant life of the human being, even as it used to be a thousand years ago.

Take your worst slums, your most congested lodging-houses and yet you cannot conceive of that broken-down mud hut, to enter which even a stature of 5 feet of humanity has got to nearly double up. There is no other ventilation or opening for light, and there is even nothing to see inside these huts, which are invariably completely unfurnished. I am not talking now of villages; I am talking of large industrial centres like Nagpur and Cawnpore where exist cotton mills more flourishing than most cotton mills in Lancashire, and where several thousand workers are still consigned to these death-traps.

You struggle here by forming organisations, conducting agitations and fighting for various rights to improve the health of the working-class population and to reduce their death-rate. Then one goes to India, and there is to be seen openly modern Western industrialism, under European or Indian capitalist control, barefacedly worsening the health conditions of the workers, increasing the toll of death till infantile mortality which normally in India would be as high as nearly 200 per 1,000, reaches the appalling figure of 600 to 800 per 1,000 amongst children

born to parents working in factories. Poverty, misery, human degradation seem to be a rightful heritage of the workers in the new industries in the East. The people out there seem to accept it with philosophical calm. The westernised Indian himself looks upon it as something that matters neither seriously nor immediately and which he seriously believes would be remedied as soon as political power is seized by him from the foreign intruder. He does not realise that any nation, in order to wrench power from a foreign conqueror or oppressor, would require national strength and consciousness of tremendous dimensions and this could not be obtained and consolidated without the workers and the peasants in his land being well organised.

On the other hand, in order to alleviate the mental agony of his suffering poor, or simply through the accustomed unfeelingness of the capitalist profiteer, the educated Indian tries to instil a philosophical contentment in the workers and the peasants and to prevent as far as possible any self-consciousness dawning upon them. Thus is accomplished with success a vast experiment of the British imperialist of producing modern goods and services of public utility through human agency at a cost incomparably lower than at home. He also succeeds in personal domination by keeping large masses of humanity as bond-slaves, rigorously tied to their jobs through the necessity of staving off starvation and through the severity of legislative enactments.

In the midst of this process some of us cried out against it in Britain, but in vain, to tell the Briton that his immediate task lay in levelling up the conditions of his fellow workers in India. But the appeal failed to touch the British worker. His leaders and his organisations worked like machines that were invented and perfected before the advent of economic imperialism and peril, and proved incapable of devoting themselves to alter their conditions.

An almost conceited view was taken that the low level of the Indian was well deserved and that the higher level of the British workers was something that was permanently secure by his own merit. The shrewd capitalist class on the other hand awaited stabilisation of conditions till the difference between two standards of human life under its control were well marked and were capable

of being brought to play their part under one and the same common imperial commercialism. Then, by exerting the ordinary pressure of a competitive system of life he compels the British worker to level down to the economic position of the Indian worker, which process will naturally continue till a common level is reached, either one as low as that of the Indian, or one as high as that to which the British organisations assist the Indian workers to reach.

For the last four years the cry of the Indian workers went out unheeded by British ears to secure for them trade union rights similar to their own and to save them from proposals which were not conferring special rights for the Indian workers but which were tightening the bonds of serfdom upon them.

Here once again the British worker dreamt that his own position was secure for ever up to a certain stage, and it would be the lookout of the Indian worker to safely reach that stage of advancement. However, under economic imperialism such dreams are soon shattered and to-day the challenge goes forth to the British workers to level down to the serfdom of the Indian workers. I see therefore two rapid developments, the Britainising of a master-class in India and the Indianising of the working-class of Britain. To me it is as clear as daylight that the primary duty of the British workers is to form an international solidarity with the Indian and Oriental workers and to level them up for the sake of securing a world standard and not to look upon such an act of solidarity as a mere spasmodic expression of internationalism or as an act of secondary charity from the stronger to the weaker group.

More words are useless and unnecessary; events will prove the correctness or otherwise of this forecast.

THE WORKING CLASS AS THE CHAMPION OF DEMOCRACY

(From "What to do," 1902)

By N. LENIN

WE have seen that the most far-reaching political agitation, and consequently also the organisation of all-round political exposures, undoubtedly form the most necessary and the most urgent item of the work, if this work is to have a really social democratic character. We have, however, drawn this conclusion because we started out only from the most pressing need of the working class for political knowledge and political education. But such a conception would be too narrow; it would disregard the general democratic aims of every social democracy and particularly of the present Russian social democracy. In order to make this rule as concretely clear as possible, we will try to attack the question from a side which lies "nearest" to the economists, namely, from the practical side. We all agree that it is necessary to develop the political consciousness of the working class. But the question arises *how* to do it and what is required to attain it. The economic struggle merely "pushes" the worker against the question of the relation of the government to the working class, and *however much we might labour at* the task of "giving a political character to the economic struggle," we would *never succeed* in developing the political consciousness of the worker within the limits of this task (up to the stage of social democratic political consciousness), *for these limits themselves are too narrow*. Martynov's formula is, therefore, of value to us, not because it illustrates Martynov's capacity of confusing an issue, but because it gives plastic expression to the fundamental fallacies of all economists, namely, the conviction that it is possible to develop the political consciousness of the workers *from within*, so to say, out of the economic struggle, that is, starting solely

(or chiefly) from this struggle, relying solely (or chiefly) on this struggle. Such a conception is fundamentally wrong, and for the very reason indeed that the economists who are angry with us for our polemics against them do not want to go sufficiently deep into the source of the differences of opinion, and such a situation arises that we literally misunderstand each other and do not talk the same language.

Political class consciousness can be imparted to the workers *only from outside*, that is, outside the economic struggle, outside the sphere of the relation of the workers to the employers. The only realm from which this knowledge can be derived is the realm of the relation of *all* classes and sections to the State and the government, the realm of the reciprocal relationship between all the different classes. Therefore, with regard to the question: "What is to be done in order to impart political education to the workers?" we cannot always give the reply, "We must go into the ranks of the working class," a reply with which the "practical" men in most cases content themselves, not to speak of the "practical" men who incline towards "economism." In order to impart political education to the *workers*, the social democrats must go to *all the classes of the people*, must send out battalions of their army *in every direction*.

We purposely choose such a sharp formulation, we purposely express ourselves in rough and simplified terms, not with the least desire of talking paradoxically, but to "push" the economists into giving adequate attention to the aims, which they unpardonably neglect, to the difference between trade unionist and social democratic politics, which they do not want to understand. We request our readers not to become hasty and to give us a hearing to the end.

Let us take a social democratic circle of the type that has been most prevalent in recent years and examine its work. It has "connections with the workers" and contents itself with issuing leaflets in which the wretched condition in the factories, the favouring of the capitalists by the government and the infamous acts of the police are denounced; in the meetings with the workers the conversation never or almost never goes beyond the limits of these themes. Lectures and discussions on the history of the

revolutionary movement, on the questions of the home and foreign politics of our government, on the questions relating to the economic development of Russia and of Europe, as well as on the present condition of this or that class, &c., are very rare occurrences; a systematic establishment and expansion of the connections with the other social classes is never thought of. In most of these cases, the ideal of a socialist or a political leader which floats before the eyes of the members of such circles is rather the secretary of a trade union. For the secretary of any, let us say, of an English trade union always helps the workers to carry on their economic struggle, he makes exposures in the factories, discusses the injustice of the laws and measures preventing the freedom of strikes and the forming of strike pickets, explains the preconceived bias of the arbitrators from the bourgeois classes, &c., &c. In short, every secretary of a trade union carries on and helps to carry on "the economic struggle against the employers and the government." It cannot be sufficiently emphasised that *this is not yet* social democratism, that the ideal of a social democrat must not be the secretary of a trade union, but *the tribune of the people*, who understands how to react against each and every manifestation of arbitrary action and oppression, wherever it may occur, whatever class or section it may affect, who understands how to combine all these manifestations into one complete picture of police arbitrariness and capitalist exploitation, who knows how to take advantage of every trifle in order to formulate before the *whole world* his socialistic convictions and his democratic demands, in order to bring home to every one the historical world significance of the struggle of the proletariat for freedom. Let us compare, for instance, men like Robert Knight (the well-known secretary and leader of one of the most powerful English trade unions) and Wilhelm Liebknecht, and try to apply to them the contrasts with which Martynov defines his own differences with the *Iskra*. It will be found—I begin to turn over the pages of Martynov's article—that R. Knight rather "appealed to the masses, to known concrete actions," while W. Liebknecht concerned himself more "with the revolutionary elucidation of the character of the entire present regime or its partial manifestations"; that R. Knight "formulated the

immediate demands and pointed out the means of their realisation," while W. Liebknecht, who also did this, did not scorn "at the same time to lead the activities of the different opposition parties," and "to dictate to them a positive programme of action"; that Knight aimed especially "at giving as political a character as possible to the economic struggle itself," and excellently understood how "to place such concrete demands before the government as produced certain tangible results," while W. Liebknecht occupied himself more with "one-sided revelations"; that Knight attached more importance to "the course of the grim struggle of everyday life," but Liebknecht "to the propaganda of brilliant ideas"; that W. Liebknecht made the newspaper which he conducted more particularly "an organ of the revolutionary opposition," "which unmasks our regime and, above all, the political laws in so far as they collide with the interests of the most varied sections of the people," whereas Knight "worked for the cause of the workers in close organic alliance with the struggle of the proletariat" ("close organic alliance" is to be understood in the sense of that adoration of spontaneity which is found in Kritschewsky and Martynov) and "narrowed down his sphere of work," because he was naturally convinced, just like Martynov, that he "was thereby enhancing his efficiency." In short, it will be found that Martynov degrades Socialism *de facto* to trade unionism, even though, of course, he does not do so because he bears any ill-will towards social democracy, but simply because he has been in somewhat of a hurry to go beyond Plechanov instead of taking the pains to grasp Plechanov.

Let us, however, come back to our main theme. We said that a social democrat who does not merely do lip-homage to an all-round development of the political consciousness of the proletariat must go "to all the classes of the people." Here arise the questions: How is that to be achieved? Have we the power to achieve it? Does a congenial soil for such a work exist in all other classes? Will not this mean a deviation, or lead to a deviation from the class point of view? Let us dwell on these questions.

"Go to all the classes of the people" we must, as theoreticians as well as propagandists, as agitators as well as organisers. Nobody doubts that the theoretical task of the social democrats must be

the study of all the peculiarities of the social and political condition of each single class. Yet in this respect very little is being done, disproportionately little in comparison with the work devoted to the study of the peculiarities of factory life. In these committees and circles one can come across people who go deeply into the study of some branch of the iron industry, but almost no case is known in which the members of the organisations (who, as is often the case, are compelled for some special reason to give up their practical work) would devote themselves to the collecting of materials on some daily problem of our public and political life, to a question which could provide an opportunity of doing social democratic work among other sections of the people. If the argument is the insufficient preparation of most of the present-day leaders of the Labour movement, then it must also be applied in this sense to the preparation, for it is equally bound up with the "economic" conception of the close organic alliance with the struggle of the proletariat. The main point, however, is, of course, *propaganda and agitation* in all sections of the people.

This task will become much easier for the West European social democrats through mass meetings and conferences which everyone can attend; will become facilitated through the parliament, where he can speak before the representatives of *all* classes. We have control neither over parliament nor freedom of holding meetings, yet we surely understand how to bring about a gathering of the workers who want to hear a *social democrat*. We must also understand how to hold meetings with the representatives of all classes of the people who want to hear a *democrat*. For he is not a social democrat who forgets indeed that "the Communists support every revolutionary movement," who forgets that we are for that reason in duty bound to demonstrate and to display *the general democratic aims before the whole nation*, without concealing for even a moment our socialistic convictions. He is not a social democrat who in practice forgets his duty of going beyond all others in formulating, in bringing to a point, and in solving *every* general democratic problem.

"Everybody agrees with it," interrupts the impatient reader. The new instructions for editing the *Rabotscheyo Dyelo*, which were

accepted by the last conference, say directly: "All events and manifestations of public and political life must serve as the occasion for political propaganda and agitation which affect either the proletariat directly as a special class or as an *advance-guard of all revolutionary forces for the struggle for freedom.*" (Italics by us.) Yes, they are perfectly correct and very good words, and we would have been absolutely satisfied had the *Rabotscheyo Dyelo* grasped it, had they not told other things behind these words which contradict them. It is not yet enough to call themselves "Vanguard." It must also be acted on in such a way that *all* the remaining troops see and are compelled to recognise that we are marching in the forefront. And thus we ask our readers: Are the representatives of the remaining "troops" such fools that they would take us seriously at our word of "advance-guard"? This picture must be realised concretely. To the "troops" of the educated Russian radicals or constitutionalists comes a social democrat and explains: We are the advance-guard, now we stand before such and such a task of giving a political character to the economic struggle itself. Any radical or constitutionalist who has some sense in him (and among the Russian radicals and liberal constitutionalists there are quite a good number with clear brains) will have only a smile left for such a speech and will say (only to himself, of course, for he is in most cases a clever diplomat): "Pretty naïve is this 'advance-guard'! It does not even understand once that it is rather our task—the task of the progressive representatives of the bourgeois democracy—to give a political character to this very same economic struggle of the workers. We also, like any other West-European bourgeois, want to draw the workers into politics, but only into trade unionist and not social democratic politics. The trade unionist politics of the working class are essentially the bourgeois politics of the working class. The formulation of this task by this 'advance-guard' is just the formulation of trade unionist politics! They may therefore call themselves social democrats as much as they like. Indeed, I am surely not a child to rage myself in a fury for the sake of a name! Only they should not be allowed to fall under the influence of these mischievous, orthodox dogmatists, they should leave the 'freedom of criticism' to those

who unconsciously drive the social democrats on to the high road of trade unionism ! ”

The light smile of our constitutionalists will, however, turn into a roar of laughter if they come to know that the social democrats, who are talked of at random by the social democracy as advance-guard in our time of absolute rule of the spontaneity of our movement, fear nothing more than the “under-estimation of the elements of spontaneity” and are afraid to “under-estimate the significance of the cruel everyday struggle compared with the propaganda of splendid and perfected ideas,” &c. ! An advance-guard which trembles thinking that clear-sightedness might out-run spontaneity, which fears to lay down a courageous “plan” that might compel recognition from those who think differently ! Do not mix up the word “advance-guard” with “rear-guard.”

In fact, one thinks deeply about the following considerations of Martynov. He tells us on page 42 that the tactics of unmasking of the *Iskra* is one-sided, that however much we want to sow hatred and suspicion against the government we would fail to reach the goal as long as we fail to develop a sufficient social activity for the overthrow of the government. This, incidentally, is the anxiety already well known to us for an increase in the activities of the masses together with a zeal to reduce our own activities. But that is not the point here. Martynov speaks here about the revolutionary forces (for the overthrow). And at what conclusions does he arrive ? As the various sections of the society in ordinary times march divided and thus, considering this, “it is clear that we social democrats cannot simultaneously lead the activities of the various opposition sections, cannot dictate to them a positive programme of action, cannot show them with what means they must fight for their interests day in and day out . . . The liberal sections will themselves take care of that active fight for their immediate interests which they will place in relation to our political regime.” Martynov who thus began with speaking about revolutionary activities, about the active fight for the overthrow of absolutism, comes very soon to the trade union forces, to the effective fight for immediate interests ! It is self-evident that we cannot lead the fight of the students, liberals, &c., for their

"immediate interests," but the talk was not about that, honoured economist! The argument was on the possible and necessary participation of the different strata of society in the overthrow of absolutism, and *this* "effective activity" of the various opposition sections we *can*, nay, we absolutely must, lead if we want to become an "advance-guard." That our students, our liberals, &c., "would be placed in relation to our political regime," for this, not only they themselves will take care, but, before all, the police and the officers of the absolute government will alone take care of it. But "we" must, if we want to become progressive democrats, undertake the task of bringing the idea of the worthlessness of the entire political regime to the people who are actually unsatisfied only with the conditions of their universities or zemstvos, &c. *We* must undertake the task of organising such an all-round political struggle under the leadership of *our* party that all existing opposing sections can come to help this fight and this party as far as possible and can actually help us. *We* must produce out of the practitants of the social democracy such political leaders who would be able to lead all manifestations of this all-round struggle, who would be able at the right moment "to dictate the positive programme of action"—both to the rebellious students as well as to the dissatisfied people of the zemstvos, to the indignant sectarians, to the neglected public teachers, &c., &c. Martynov's assertion is therefore *completely wrong* that "we can come out against him only in the negative rôle of an accuser . . . we can *only* destroy their hopes on the different government commissions." (Italics by us.) Martynov shows us with these words that he *has not the faintest idea* about the real rôle of the revolutionary "advance-guard." If the reader takes this into account then the *real significance* of the following concluding words will become clear to him: "The *Iskra* is the organ of the revolutionary opposition, which unmasks the situation in our country and especially the political situation, in so far as it collides with the interests of the various strata of the people. But we work and will continue to work for the cause of the workers in close organic alliance with the struggle of the proletariat. By narrowing our sphere of action, we only complicate our effect." The real meaning of this conclusion is that the *Iskra* wants to *raise* the trade unionist

politics of the working class (to which, through wrong understanding, insufficient preparation or conviction, the practical men so often restrict themselves) to social democratic politics. The *Rabotichye Dyelo*, however, want to *bring down* social democratic politics to trade unionist politics. Thereby it solemnly and sacredly declares that this is a "thoroughly consistent stand for the common cause." *O sancta simplicitas!* (O holy innocence!)

Let us go farther. Have we the power to spread our propaganda and agitation in *all* classes of the people. Naturally, yes. Our economists who want to deny it are apt to overlook the gigantic step forward which our movement has made since about 1894-1901. Like genuine "Kvostists" they move only too often with the ideas of the long past period of the beginning of the movement. At that time we had at our disposal remarkably few forces, at that time the decision to concentrate solely on the activities of the workers and to sharply reject every deviation from it was natural and justified; at that time the whole task was to gain a firm footing in the working class. Now, a huge quantity of forces has been drawn into the movement, all the best representatives of the young generation of the educated class now come to us, now everywhere in the provinces there must be people who have already taken part or want to take part in the movement, people who incline towards social democracy (whereas in 1894 the Russian Social Democrats could be counted on the fingers).

One of the fundamental political and organisational weaknesses of our movement is that we *do not know* how to engage all these forces, to give a suitable work to all. The overwhelming majority of these forces have entirely no possibility "to go into the ranks of the workers," so that there can be no question about the danger of the removal of the forces from our basic work. In order to impart real, all-round and living political knowledge to the workers, one requires "our people," social democrats, everywhere, in all places, in every section of the society, in all positions which allow us to catch hold of the interior motive springs of our state mechanism. Such men are not only necessary for propaganda and agitation but even more for organisational work.

Is there any basis for working in all classes of the people?

He who does not perceive it lags in his determination again behind the elementary progress of the masses. The working-class movement produces afterwards, just as before, dissatisfaction in the one, hope for the support of the opposition in the other, the consciousness of the impossibility of absolutism and its inevitable fall in the third. We would have been "politicians and social democrats" only in words (as very, very often the case is) had we not been conscious of the task of using all possible expressions of dissatisfaction, of gathering and developing all seeds of the smallest, germinating protest, quite apart from the fact that the entire masses of millions of the toiling peasantry, the small traders, the petty hand-workers, &c., have always a willing ear for the preaching of a somewhat tactful social democrat. But could anybody name only one class of the population where there could not be persons, groups or circles who were dissatisfied with the deprivation of rights and autocracy and therefore would not be accessible for the propaganda of the social democrats as spokesmen of the immediate general democratic demands? But he who wants to realise concretely this political agitation of the social democrat in *all* classes and sections of the people, he is referred to the *political exposures* in the broad sense of the word as the most important (but naturally not the only) means for this agitation.

"We must," I wrote in the article "With which to begin?" (*Iskra*, No. 4, May, 1901), "awaken the zeal for *political exposures* in all sections of the people, even those only to some extent conscious. One should not be led into error because the voice of the political exposures to-day sound so weak, rare and timid. The reason for it is by no means to be sought in a general capitulation to police arbitrariness. The cause lies therein, that the people who are ready and are in a position to expose have not the tribune wherefrom they could speak, have not the audience who would passionately hear and encourage the speaker, so that they do not discover the force in the people to which it would be worth bringing the complaints against the 'all-powerful' Russian Government . . . We can and we must create a tribune for characterising the Tsarist Government; such a tribune must be the social democratic paper."

Such an ideal audience for political revelations is especially the working class, which before everything else needs all-round and living political knowledge; which most of all is capable of transforming this knowledge into active fight even when it promises no "tangible results." A platform for such an unmasking for the interests of the entire masses can only be an all-Russian paper. "A movement is impossible in modern Europe without a political organ which deserves the name of 'political.'" In this respect, Russia also belongs undoubtedly to modern Europe. The Press has long ago become a power in our country—otherwise the Government would never spend thousands and thousands of roubles to bribe or subsidise so many Katkovs and Mestscherskys. It is nothing new in Tsarist Russia that the illegal Press is breaking the shackles of the censor and compelling the legal and the conservative organs to speak frankly about it.

That happened in the 'seventies as well as in the 'fifties of the last century. How much broader and deeper are now the strata of the people, who are ready to read an illegal Press and to learn from it "how to live and to die," to make use of the words of a worker who sent a letter to the *Iskra* (No. 7)? Political exposures are indeed just as much a declaration of war against the government as the economic exposures are a war declaration against the factory owners. And this declaration of war has a greater moral significance; the more sweeping and the more energetic this campaign of revelation is, the more numerous and determined the social *class* is who *declares the war in order to begin the war*. Political exposures are therefore in themselves one of the most powerful means for the disintegration of the hostile regime, the means by which the accidental and transitory allies of the enemy can be frightened off, the means by which hatred and mistrust can be sowed among the permanent members of the absolute government.

In our time, that party can only become the advance guard of the revolutionary forces which is really able to organise all-national revelations. This word "all-national" has a very big purport. Most of the unmaskers from the non-working class (and in order to become the advance guard one must draw the other classes) are sober politicians and cold-blooded men of action. They are

very well aware that it is not quite without danger to "complain," even against a petty official, not to speak of against the "all-powerful" Russian Government. They will only come to us with their complaints when they see that the complaints really accomplish something, when we prove to be a *political power*. In order to become such in the eyes of outsiders we must work much and unflinchingly for increasing our determination, our initiative and power of action; in order to win it it is not enough merely to stick a label "advance guard" on the theory and practice of the rear guard.

But if we must regard the organisation of really all-national exposures as our task, in what then will consist the class-character of our movement? asks us the exaggerated admirer of the "close organic alliance with the struggle of the proletariat." Just in the very fact that the organisation of this exposure comes from us, social democrats; in the fact that the elucidation of all the questions arising through the agitation will be given in the firm social-democratic spirit, without any concessions to the intentional or unintentional distortion of Marxism; in the fact that this all-round political agitation will be led by a single party, in which the offensive against the government will be united in the name of the people with the revolutionary education of the proletariat, besides the preservation of its political autonomy, as well as with the leading of the economic struggle of the working class, making use of those spontaneous collisions of the proletariat with their exploiters which always set on their feet more and more strata of the proletariat and bring them to us!

The World of Labour

CANADA

The Working-Class Movement

THERE has been very little written about the organisation of labour in Canada. If there were more we might hear less about the Commonwealth of Free Nations from some of our Imperial labour statesmen. Occasionally the *bona fide* representatives of class-conscious Canadian workers write to an English labour paper with the intention of correcting glaring misstatements which the Imperial labour statesmen make on returning from their Rotarian itineraries. For any other information one must go to Canada or procure the *Gray Book* issued yearly by the Government department at Ottawa.

Of the two and three-quarter million persons listed as workers in the official statistics for 1924, a million are said to be engaged in agriculture. What proportion of these are technically proletarians is not certain : they are not organised in unions of employees. A quarter of a million workers are absorbed in building trades ; about the same number, but rather less, in transportation ; half a million are engaged in manufactures of one kind or another, machinery for the most part ; and less than a hundred thousand in the mines. Of organised workers, transportation employees make up practically 50 per cent., 29 per cent. on the railways alone. Building and mining industries each account for about 10 per cent. of the total membership of the trade unions ; metal trades, paper and printing, and clothing, boots and shoes, each approximately 5 per cent. For the purpose of discussion the trade unions of Canadian workers may be divided into three groups—the international unions, the Catholic unions, and the militant unions.

The term "international" is generally used on the continent of North America for those unions which have no official connection with European labour ; that is to say, it excludes the Mexican Confederation and applies to those organisations such as the Railway Brotherhoods, the various bodies grouped in the American Federation of Labour, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, having branches in the States, Canada and in Newfoundland.

The Railway Brotherhoods for numerical reasons demand priority. They fall into two sharply distinct groups. The Brotherhoods of Locomotive Engineers, of Railroad Trainmen, of Railway and Steamship Clerks, of Railway Carmen, of Maintenance of Way Employees, together with the Order of Railroad Telegraphists and the Order of Railroad Conductors are collectively the aristocracy of Canadian labour. They occupy the social position and enjoy the remuneration of the salariat. In Montreal a railway conductor and a university professor get the same salary : school teaching may be classed among the unskilled trades, and in the province of Quebec rightly so.

These organisations are not affiliated to the American Federation of Labour : it is too radical for them. As quite a separate entity stands the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees. Mostly composed of yardsmen, carmen and maintenance of way workers—about ten thousand in all—it is class-conscious rather than craft-conscious. In the sense that it has a branch at Buffalo it is international, though primarily an indigenous Canadian growth. It responded immediately to the financial appeal of the British Unions during the General Strike ; and its leaders are alive to the burning problem of Canadian labour—the enrolment of the unskilled.

Of the bodies included within the American Federation of Labour, the two most important in Canada are the International Association of Machinists and the United Mine Workers of America (Cape Breton, District 26 and Alberta District 18). The International Fur Workers' Union, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the International Association of Sheet Metal Workers, the International Union of Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers, the United Textile Workers of America, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners—all these have branches in Canada. The boot and shoe workers, and the brewing, flour and soft drink unions come within the A. F. of L. Officially the A. F. of L. exclude any organisation affiliated to either the Moscow or the Amsterdam International. However, the Canadian branches are affiliated with a few local unions in an all-Canadian Trades and Labour Congress, which is nominally affiliated to Amsterdam. There is another superficial difference between the branches of the A. F. of L. in the States and in Canada. The Canadian Trades and Labour Congress gives verbal support to the Canadian Labour Party, while the A. F. of L. in the States indifferently endorses the candidates of both the bourgeois parties. The difference is only nominal. While the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress pays lip service to the principle of independent working-class political action, it editorially boycotts its only child when a general election is in progress. Like its American parent, it is a thoroughly corrupt bureaucracy. Like their sister branches in the States, the Canadian branches of the A. F. of L. are at one accord with their capitalist masters in stemming the rising tide of Communism. Two quotations, of a type that are featured in any number of the *Montreal Gazette* or the *Montreal Daily Star* will illustrate this bitterness :—

The Convention of the International Association of Machinists sustained the action of the president and general executive board in suspending from the organisation seven members of the Toledo Lodge, No. 105, who were also members of the Workers' Party and the Trades Union Educational League. (*Gray Book*, Ottawa, 1925.)

A more recent cutting from a New Brunswick daily runs :—

The international executive of the International Fur Worker's Union in session here (at Montreal) expelled from its international board A. Gross, fifth vice-president and New York business agent. The expulsion is the first step taken by the heads of this union to rid their organisation of alleged Communists, and is the result of an investigation ordered by the American Federation of Labour.¹

¹ January 18, 1927.

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America are international in spirit as well as in name. They are far more radical in tendency than the A. F. of L., chiefly because they number among their ranks a large sprinkling of Jewish immigrants bringing Marxist traditions from Europe. There is a branch in Montreal which is openly sympathetic to the Communist Party of Canada. They are not numerically important.

In Quebec Province we encounter a phenomenon whose nearest parallel is to be found in Bavaria, Belgium and Poland. The Catholic Unions of Quebec are a feature of the Labour Movement unique as far as America is concerned. Their interest lies in the forcible illustration they afford of the racial and religious difficulties with which effective working-class organisation is beset in Canada. In 1901 the Bishop of Quebec settled a strike in the boot and shoe industry. Following on this, the first Catholic Union was formed at Chicoutimi on the basis of the encyclicals of Leo XIIth. This was the embryo of the present Catholic Federation of Pulp and Paper Factory Employees. Officially we are told that the promoters were encouraged by the clergy who saw in these Christian brotherhoods a means of harmonising the apparent conflict between capital and labour. Actually the bulk of the clergy and the Catholic hierarchy were as bitterly antagonistic as they have been elsewhere towards the A. F. of L. for its endorsement of secular education. A Right Wing in the Church was prepared to excommunicate the leaders. In the end, milder counsels prevailed. To-day, in addition to federations of boot and shoe operatives and pulp and paper employees, there are federations of printing trade and of building trade employees.

In spite of the hostility of the Church with its ultra-montanist traditions in Quebec, the bulk of the French-speaking workers in Eastern Canada are, like the miners of Cape Breton, in the A. F. of L. The Catholic unions exist only in Quebec. Their total membership is about 30,000 and they are slowly growing with the support of the shrewd and astute Archbishop Gautier. Aside from a lock-out in the boot and shoe trade, when the employers tried unsuccessfully to break up the union, they have had a tranquil history. Each lodge has a chaplain: proceedings open with prayer and on Labour Day they visit the shrine of St. Joseph.

In a somewhat anomalous position—a survival from pre-congress days—we have in Quebec a group of what may be called national Protestant unions. The Canadian Federation of Labour includes the Amalgamated Carpenters of Canada, the Canadian Electrical Trades Union, the Canadian Federation of Bricklayers, Plasterers, &c. Altogether they only number 10,000, and they are a local rather than a national movement.

Under the title "militant unions," the One Big Union of Manitoba and the I. W. W. may be included. The O. B. U. originated in Calgary in 1919. It gained great impetus from the Winnipeg Strike and is still the labour movement of the Prairie Provinces. It claims to have members in all provinces of the Dominion except Prince Edward Island. But as an industrial organisation its effective strength is confined to Winnipeg. Its actual membership is not available. Sharing the tendency to underground activity to which all radical bodies are forced on the American continent, it refuses to supply statistical information to Ottawa. The nucleus of its organisation was

composed of seceding branches of the A. F. of L., believing in industrial unionism as a step towards class unionism, like the I. W. W., from whom they differ in certain details such as a firm adherence to political action, an issue on which the rival Detroit and Chicago schools of the I. W. W. are still at loggerheads. Under the impulse of the combined brutality and hypocrisy of the Canadian bourgeoisie during the Winnipeg Strike they made a splendid beginning for an all-Canada working-class movement. The imperialist Press propaganda represented the strike as due to the machinations of foreign agents, but one of the main issues was the throwing off of American influence, than which the imperialist Press feared nothing more. The participants were for the most part ex-service men, and the entire local police had to be replaced because of their solid refusal to break up the meetings of their comrades. When the North-West Mounted Police were called in to frame up a disorder, and the strike leaders thrown into jail, there were three counts of seditious libels against J. S. Woodsworth, the present Labour member at Ottawa. Two were simply quotations without comment from the book of Isaiah, the other quotations from the 1918 election programme of the British Labour Party. To complete the irony of the situation, the imperialists at Ottawa rushed in forty minutes through both houses legislation permitting the deportation of persons not registered as Canadian citizens, if suspected of political heresy. As an Englishman enjoys British citizenship, he cannot become a naturalised Canadian as an American can if he wishes. The "forty minutes' legislation," as it is now called, seems specially designed to get rid of awkward people from the "dear old country."

Since the Strike the O. B. U. has figured very little in the public eye, except in as far as its political offspring the Independent Labour Party of Canada has the only two working-class representatives in the Dominion House. If one may judge from its publications, it is not free from bourgeois cranks, zoophilists and vegetarians. It has not of late escaped the suspicion of internal corruption to which every organisation with funds of its own is open in America.

The I. W. W. claims ten thousand members in Canada. This estimate is probably generous. They are to be found in the Lumber Camps, where the O. B. U. also recruits members. The Lumber Workers Industrial Union of Canada is the only union in Canada affiliated to the Third International. It was on this specific issue that it split off from the O. B. U., which, though Marxist in sentiment, is in practice cold to Moscow and antagonistic to the Communist Party of Canada.

Meanwhile the latter turns the other cheek to the A. F. of L. It trusts in the inexorable logic of capitalism to transform the official organisation of the working class of Canada into a militant organisation. Whether the A. F. of L. will continue to undermine every effort put forward by outside influences to organise the unskilled and badly paid is difficult to decide, for no concerted effort has been made or major issue has yet arisen. A succession of incidents like the Passaic Strike might override the present Junta, recapitulating the reverberations of the great Dock Strike in the history of the British Movement. One thing is certain : in the world of Labour Canada is already part of the United States.

A discussion of labour organisation in Canada, however, would be incomplete without some reference to the racial question. The few Amerindians who are industrialised are at present unorganised. There are, however, many negro porters on the Canadian railways and there is a proportionately large Mongolian proletariat in British Columbia. The class-conscious Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees to which reference has been made receives negro members. As far as Canada is concerned, negro workers are practically confined to the railways. The Sleeping-Car and Porters' Union (negro) of the U.S. has no Canadian locals. There are three Japanese unions officially listed in Canada—all in British Columbia. They are the Fishermen's Association of Port Essington, the Fishermen's Benevolent Society of Steveston, and the Japanese Workers' Union of Vancouver. These are quite isolated from the Canadian branches of the A. F. of L., whose attitude is typified by Article IX of the platform of the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress—"exclusion of all Asiatics." The position is thus analogous to that which exists in the United States, where the Amerindian is practically unorganised, though there are about a million of the Mexican Indian race. There are Mongolian unions in the States, but not affiliated to the A. F. of L. The Texas Federation has granted affiliation to two large exclusively negro unions (Longshoremen's and Barbers'); but though the A. F. of L. does not explicitly exclude coloured labour, its policy is consistently an all-white one and many of its constituent bodies have specific provisions to that end.

THOMAS PAGE.

BOOK REVIEWS

CHINA THROUGH NATIONALIST SPECTACLES

China in Revolt. By T'ang Leang-Li. Foreword by Dr. Tsai Yuan-Pei, Chancellor of the National University of Peking. Preface by the Hon. Bertrand Russell. (Noel Douglas, 7s. 6d.)

THE record of foreign aggression in China contained in Mr. T'ang's book is based on a large number of authorities, English, American, French and Chinese. It shows, with a great variety of quotations and references, how by the use of military force and Christian missionaries conditions were imposed upon the Chinese through which they became a subject race ruled by foreign settlers; how foreign domination has been maintained by control of taxation, by the extra-territorial privileges of foreigners, by armed troops and naval forces in China,

by the establishment and operation within her borders of foreign post offices, by the erection and operation of wireless stations, by the refusal to permit parcel posts entering China to be examined by Chinese Customs officials, by the pernicious practice of certain legations at Peking granting asylum to Chinese officials whose arrest has been ordered on a charge of high treason. (Page 55.)

The third chapter of Part II is a description of the way in which missionaries were used as the tools of European penetration. Christian teaching and the opium trade were legalised by the same treaty of 1858.

Both came to stay in China in consequence of China's defeat in her attempt to shut out the most dangerous drug and, as she considered, the most vicious mischief-makers imaginable. In China's eyes both evils were intimately connected. The early missionaries had either direct connections with the opium trade, like Robert Morrison and Charles Gutzlaff, or strongly advocated its introduction into China, like Wells Williams. In return, the opium trade financed missionary enterprise. The firm Talbot, Olyphant & Co., dealers, among others, in opium, for instance, provided in 1836 a brig for the purpose of aiding missionaries in circulating religious books on China's coast. (Page 58.)

In a later period Christian missionary activities became the opening wedge for Western Imperialism; and the loss of China's dependencies such as Annam and Tonkin, the session of Kiaochow to Germany, of Port Arthur to Russia, of Wei-hai-wei to England, and of Kwangchow Bay to France "bore a very close relation to missionary activities in the interior of China."

Even more striking at the present moment than the account of the methods by which foreign (and particularly British) control was secured in the nineteenth century is the forecast of the means to be adopted for maintaining that control to-day. This is given in a passage quoted from Putnam Weale, a man who was once a supporter of Chinese nationalism. The following remarkable sentences were written apparently nearly two years ago:—

Everything points to measures of force and little to settlement by negotiation . . . While no doubt international action would lead to as unsatisfactory a position as it did in 1900, owing to the jealousies inevitable in a divided command, the action of a single Power, amply supplied with steam transport, could be made overwhelming in very few weeks. It is calculated by

experts that five divisions of troops, or 100,000 men, together with a flotilla of light craft, would bring about decisive results five times as fast as in the wars of 1842 and 1860. . . . Canton could be captured by one battalion of European infantry, adequately supported by gunboats, just as it was captured in the *Arrow* (second Opium) War seventy years ago in a single attack. Even the expenditure involved by such military operations would not offer difficulties. Assuming an outlay of £150,000 a day for two years, bankers have calculated that this total of 100 millions sterling could be covered by the mortgage of the Chinese railway system, provided a further 50 millions were invested in extensions and improvements, giving an additional trackage of 5,000 miles to the present 7,000. (Quoted, page 135.)

So, very soon after the Shanghai and Shameen massacres of 1925, the whole campaign of intervention had been "calculated" by experts and bankers for the joint benefit of finance and heavy industry.

As a record of foreign domination in China, Mr. T'ang's book supplies valuable information. As a study of the Chinese revolution it contributes very little to a real understanding of the economic conditions out of which the struggle has developed. It is the plea of a Nationalist, but of a Nationalist who sees in pre-capitalist China "a kind of Utopia" and in modern China—

a land of peasant proprietorship, a civilisation based on reason and justice; the inhabitants of which need no far-fetched doctrines such as those of Marx, but who, in practice as well as in theory, believe in the saying that "all men between the four seas are brothers." (Page 123.)

The author in fact almost completely ignores the class issue, both within China itself and in the relation of the Chinese revolution to the international struggle. All through the book China is "she"—an imaginary unit which seems to mean sometimes the Peking government, sometimes the Nationalists, sometimes the Chinese students and sometimes "the people."

At the time of the Versailles Treaty, for example, "China felt betrayed by her traditional friend America," and the Chinese delegates "bowing to the supreme will of the Chinese people" refused to sign the treaty, thus showing—

China's readiness to stand alone, and her willingness to fight her own battle, in the interest of humanity and justice." (Page 107.)

What can be the meaning of such a sentence? The working masses of China, at the time of the Versailles Treaty, were unorganised and therefore inarticulate. It was the bourgeois and petty bourgeois groups who resisted the Japanese encroachment in Shantung; and it is surely for these groups that Mr. T'ang speaks when he refers to the massacre of workers in May, 1925, as "the insult of Shanghai"; when he repeatedly asserts that the Chinese intelligentsia is "the real power" in China; and when he says:—

It is preposterous to think that shrewd and hard-headed people, like the Chinese merchants and bankers, would be willing, simply at the bidding of Bolshevik schoolboys and coolies, to sacrifice their earnings and livelihood, which in Shanghai alone were estimated at £300,000 a day, or that Chang Tso-lin, in contributing to the agitators' fund, had been impelled by a belief in the class struggle. (Page 123.)

Yet as a Nationalist Mr. T'ang fully recognises that Russia has become "China's best friend," although he completely fails to make it clear that the

Russian Government's support of the Nationalist struggle has its roots in the international working-class movement and is based on what he calls the "far-fetched doctrines" of Marx.

The last chapter, written a year later than the rest of the book, reviews recent developments; and here the author's failure to analyse the conflict of economic interests or to realise the part played by the working class leads him to see as the most significant result of the struggle the fact that "Young China" has "emerged by her own efforts as a Great Power," and to interpret the events of 1926-27 as the "concluding and victorious phase" of the Republican Revolution which started in 1911.

E. B.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Problem of Private Benevolence in the Modern State.* By the Rt. Rev. Dr. Hensley Henson, D.D. (Lord Bishop of Durham). (Longmans, Green, 30 pp., 1s.)
- Trade Union Law for Laymen.* Cyril Asquith, Barrister-at-Law, with a foreword by the Rt. Hon. Sir John Simon, P.C. (Cassell, 2s.)
- The League of Nations and the World's Workers.* By Kathleen Innes, B.A. (1s. 6d.)
- Coal. A Challenge to the National Conscience.* Edited by Allen Porter. (Hogarth Press, 2s. 6d.)
- The World Policy of Germany, 1890-1912.* Otto Hammann. (Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 12s. 6d.)
- Capital for Labour.* By W. Francis and Bertram Austin, with forewords by W. L. Hitchens and Arthur Pugh. (Ernest Benn, 142 pp., 3s. 6d.)
- Agriculture.* By H. B. Pointing and Emile Burns, with foreword by R. B. Walker. (L.R.D. Labour and Capital Series. No. XI. 6d.)
- What's What in China.* (L.R.D. Labour White Paper. No. 34. 1d.)
- The Trade Union Bill.* By W. H. Thompson, foreword by George Hicks. (L.R.D. Labour White Papers. No. 35. 1d.)
- Communism.* By H. J. Laski. (Home University Library, 250 pp., 2s.)
- That Pint Pot.* By a Frothblower. (John Bellows, Gloucester, 78 pp., 2s.)
- Our Taxes as They are and As They Ought to Be.* Robert Jones, D.Sc. (The Fabian Society, 30 pp., 3d.)
- Jeremy Bentham.* (Fabian Biographical Series, 3d.)
- The Conditions of Industrial Peace.* J. A. Hobson. (George Allen & Unwin, 123 pp., 4s. 6d.)
- Oil.* A novel. By Upton Sinclair. (Published by the Author, Long Beach, California, 570 pp., \$2.50.)
- Rudolf Steiner and the Crisis in Human Affairs.* By Arnold Freeman. (Anthroposophical Society, 28 pp., 6d.)
- The Adventure.* And other Papers. By Fridjof Nansen. (The Hogarth Press, 82 pp., 4s. 6d.)
- Havelock Wilson Exposed.* By S. Atchkanov. (Transport Workers' Minority Movement, 1d.)
- The Provincial Economic Council of Kwantung.* (Chinese News Service, Canton.)
- Polish Economic Conditions in 1926.* Stefan Starzynski. (Ministry of Finance, Warsaw.)
- Economics for Nicodemus.* J. C. McKerron. (Longmans, Green, 59 pp., 2s.)



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Telephone: Museum 1311

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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
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w 14695

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

July, 1927

Number 7

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Published at
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The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : SLOANE 5412.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

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SINCE the provocation of the lawless Arcos raid proclaimed the open leadership of the Fascist governmental forces in Britain, the world imperialist offensive, of which the British Government is the centre and driving force, has been pressed forward at an accelerated pace, and has already created a situation of general international crisis. Two decisive diplomatic ruptures, plus one ultimatum, have followed in quick succession from the British Imperialists within three weeks of the raid, and given the character of a formal declaration to the whole offensive. The first is the rupture with the Nationalist Government of China. The second is the rupture with the Soviet Union. The third is the dispatch of warships and the threatening Note to Egypt. It is impossible to fail to see the character of the direction in which the offensive is conducted (the working class and the nations fighting for freedom), or the close succession and connection of the dates. On May 12 took place the Arcos raid. On May 17 came the final rupture with the Chinese National Government, centred at Wuhan, in a Note of premature insolence and cynical triumph. On May 24 came the open rupture with the Soviet Union, declared by the Prime Minister in the most crowded Parliamentary sitting since the formation of the Government—thus indicating the recognised gravity of the event—and confirmed in the Note of May 26. On May 30 came the Note and dispatch of warships to Egypt. At

the same time the Trade Union Bill has been pushed through its various stages with the liberal use of the guillotine, and with the deliberate maintenance of obscurity in its clauses to ensure the widest dictatorial powers to the Government in action. Thus the offensive on every front is being pushed forward with the utmost speed.

A LONGSIDE these direct major blows of the offensive (against the Soviet Union, China, the colonial peoples, the working class), has taken place a general intensifying of the international situation, a heightening of the war atmosphere, a strengthening of reactionary and lawless forces, and a worsening of economic conditions for the working class. The British declaration of rupture with the Soviet Union on May 24 has been the signal to the reactionary forces all over the world. It was followed at once by Mussolini's aggressive militarist declaration of May 26, proclaiming the end of Locarnist pacific pretensions on the part of the Powers, and demanding five million Italians in arms ; by the violent reactionary police campaign against Communism in France, and by the Polish murder of the Soviet Minister (along the familiar lines of current British Imperialist policy, as at Shanghai and Peking) on June 7. The tendencies of war-crisis in the situation in Italy and the Balkans, and in the East European Border States, are intensified by the general unrest, which opens the way to any arbitrary and sudden action with less danger of interference or even with hope of encouragement if it falls in line with the larger plans of British Imperialism or can be established as a bargaining price for support. The League of Nations remains inactive, being reserved for its principal purpose of the war on the Soviet Union, and only used in lesser issues if it is to the interest of one of the Powers to use it. China and Egypt no more concern it than Corfu or Vilna, Morocco or Syria did before. At home the wage attack is continued with the engineering employers' refusal of the engineers' demands, and with the wholesale savage cuts of the miners' wages in the leading districts. In China the war is carried forward to a new and crucial stage by the posting of troops and aeroplanes at Peking and Tientsin openly to support Chang-Tso-Lin against the Nationalist advance. On every side the critical character of the

situation increases, and on every side the direct provoker and fomenter of war and crisis is the British Government with its ally, Italian Fascism.

IT is attempted in British official propaganda to indicate that the rupture with the Soviet Union has no wider significance and is no prelude to further acts. The British Official Wireless, immediately after the rupture, informed the world that it was "an isolated measure which will have no bearing on the general line of British Foreign policy." The assurance was received with unconcealed scepticism throughout the European Press. The type of assurance scattered wholesale by Chamberlain during the past two years that the dominant anti-Soviet character of British foreign policy is a myth, deceives no one any more than the pre-war assurances of the harmless character of the Entente or the mythical character of the supposed encirclement of Germany. And indeed the suggestion that the rupture with the Soviet Union can be an isolated incident, and not a first-class political act bearing on the whole international situation, is in direct contradiction to Chamberlain's own statement a year ago, when he was explaining the reasons against a rupture at that time. He said then :—

All Europe is perplexed and harassed by economic and social problems; and it is subject to political uncertainties and a sense of political insecurity which reacts upon economic conditions in a disadvantageous manner, and it must be the object of statesmanship in all countries to alleviate, and if possible to remove these difficulties. If we break off diplomatic relations with Russia, we would not only introduce a new and disturbing issue into British domestic policy, but we would introduce a new and disturbing issue in Europe. . . .

The issue is whether we should terminate diplomatic relations and a trade agreement which has been in force for some time. I believe that if we do so it will do this country no good. It will create division where we seek union, and, echoed abroad, it will increase the uncertainty, the fear, and the instability of European conditions which it ought to be our chief object to remove.—A. Chamberlain in the House of Commons, June 25, 1926.

This is Chamberlain's own description of the policy which he has now carried out. The description which applied to June, 1926, applies still more strongly to June, 1927. The only difference is that then the British Government had still to deal with the miners' resistance, whereas now, after the desertion and defeat

of the miners and the treacherous submission of the reformist leaders to the Trade Union Bill, they consider themselves free to go ahead with their world campaign.

THERE are deeper causes than isolated incidents which lie behind the increasing drive to crisis and war, primarily on the part of Britain, but also throughout capitalist Europe, and make certain its extension. The "economic and social problems," the "uncertainty, fear, and instability of European conditions," of which Chamberlain speaks, are only symptoms of the capitalist crisis which, nine years after the war, so far from disappearing, is gathering fresh force in certain respects, and, from the very conditions of stabilisation and partial recovery achieved, assumes new forms and growing intensity. Indeed, what is developing is no longer the old post-war crisis, although it inherits certain features and problems from this. It is in reality a *New Capitalist Crisis*, developing continuously out of the old, but possessing its independent character, and no longer merely a sequel, but the prelude of new war problems. Production has approached and even exceeded pre-war levels, the power of production very much so : but this has only led to stronger economic conflicts resulting from the increased productive power, tariff-wars, price-wars, cartels and blocs, monopolies and restriction, as well as the pressure of the new German and Italian Imperialism to secure colonial re-partition. All these are evidence of the expansion of the powers of production beyond the possibility of organisation within capitalist limits. The pre-war situation is reproduced at a more advanced stage, with the addition of the inheritance of the very much greater inequality and contradictions, social and national, resulting from the last war. With this automatically goes the armed race once anew, only this time on an enlarged plane, as the modern conception of mobilisation involves the whole powers and resources of the organised State. The European instability and drive to war is the reflection of European capitalist decline, and the leading rôle of Britain as the centre of world-disturbance and organiser of violent, desperate measures, reflects the position of Britain as the centre of capitalist decline.

TO this extent, however, the situation would still only be a renewal of imperialist conflict on top of the already disorganised position resulting from the last war. But there are two new factors of even greater importance. The first is the intensification of the colonial struggles for independence following on the weakening of the Empire centres, and the beginning of the successful defensive wars against imperialism. The emergence of Nationalist Turkey as an independent force capable of smashing the slavery Treaty of Sèvres and replacing it by Lausanne was the first clear evidence of this ; the mass struggle in India and Egypt, the wars in Morocco and Syria, though defeated for the time being, have carried on the new era ; the present war in China is the greatest struggle of the new forces, the victory of which will have a determining influence on the struggle against imperialism all over the world. The second is the winning through and consolidation of the Soviet Union, entirely outside the whole imperialist sphere, not only as an unbroken fortress of working-class power, but in addition as an independent economic force and demonstration of the power of socialist construction. The mere existence of the Soviet Union, demonstrating the possibility of working-class victory, was already a problem for the capitalist world, which, when violent attempts at overthrow failed, it was hoped to undermine by economic penetration. But when this failed also against the unshaken socialist foundations and trade monopoly, then every continued year of peaceful existence and economic advance of the Soviet Union becomes a direct menace to capitalist Europe. The contrast of socialist advance, of rapidly advancing standards every year of the whole population, and cultural and scientific progress, against the capitalist decline, declining standards of the whole population, and cultural anarchy and demoralisation of Western Europe, writes too plainly the doom of capitalism and character of the future era. The growing testimony of Labour Delegations from every country reveals that a point has been reached at which even many reformists are compelled to admit the evidence of their own eyes. As this contrast grows stronger, the reversion of capitalism to the original policy of war becomes pronounced, just at the same time as the whole line of direction of the Soviet Union is obviously most pacific.

This is most clearly evidenced in declining British capitalism which has least basis of hope for recovery in its own strength, and therefore most concentrates on striking down the enemies in its path as the line of salvation (as in the war on Germany), and sees now in the forces of the future, the Soviet Union, China, and the advancing working class, the engineers of its downfall that must be struck down at all costs. This basic situation, and not any infantile nonsense about documents, lies behind the whole line of British policy. British capitalism, as still the leading force of declining capitalism, seeks to transform the growing imperialist conflicts and antagonisms in Europe into a concentration on what is for it the major issue, the united front against the Revolution. The realisation of this task is, however, not so simple ; and the interplay of these forces constitutes the special character of the present period.

THE character of the present situation is illustrated in certain respects by the proceedings of the recent Geneva Economic Conference. The Geneva International Economic Conference, while admittedly in itself of no practical importance, fell significantly at the present juncture for two reasons: first, that it showed, as much by its silences as by its actual reports, the insoluble contradictions of capitalist organisation in relation to modern world conditions, and the inability even to attempt to provide an answer, and thus afforded in fact a picture of capitalist anarchy and antagonisms on the eve of war; and second, because it provided a direct confrontation of the capitalist world and the Soviet Union. For the first time for five years representatives of the Soviet Union and of the capitalist world met in public conference. But the difference from Genoa and The Hague was very great. The period of famine, disorganisation, and immediate effects of the blockade was over. The Soviet representatives were able to show a record of positive achievement, of rapid advance, and above all of visibly and rapidly improving conditions for all workers, which was in direct contrast to the capitalist experience. Faced with these facts, the capitalist representatives and their "labour" lackeys made every effort to deny the record, to cast doubts upon it or

to suggest reservations (as in the overtime controversy, which ended in smashing discomfiture for the capitalist apologists). In every case these efforts failed before the exact and substantiated evidence which the Soviet representatives were able to bring forward. The vague accusations and slanders drawn from imagination, habitual in the social democratic and capitalist press, broke down when confronted with realities. In this sense the outcome, though not the intention, of the Geneva Conference was a triumph of socialism—all the more so, that the so-called "Socialists" of the Second International were revealed in the same camp with "their" capitalist patrons against the one socialist state.

BUT even more important than this contrast was the direct demonstration of capitalist anarchy. The reports prepared for the Conference revealed a situation whose character disposes effectively of the common argument of war-destruction, &c. ("necessary to pay for the war," "all must share in the burden"), as the cause of post-war impoverishment and crisis. The essential fact brought out by these reports is that between 1913 and 1925 world population is found to have increased 5 per cent., while the production of food and raw materials has increased between 16 and 18 per cent. Thus there is no natural basis whatever for impoverishment, but instead every basis for a largely improved standard of living; and this is leaving out of account the progress of technical power and invention in industry. When this is taken into account, the advance should have been prodigious. Even in Europe, where the inequality of capitalist development already shows itself in relation to world conditions and there has been actual decline of standards, the same proportion of figures obtains: an increase in population of 1 per cent. and in the production of food and raw materials of 5 per cent. Never before has the failure been so clearly and inescapably brought out as purely and solely a failure of *organisation* and nothing else—the failure of capitalism to organise production and distribution. So it comes that we find an official organ of capitalist blindness such as *The Times* compelled to describe the situation in terms some of which might have fallen out of a socialist pamphlet:—

When we turn to the causes of avoidable impoverishment, the first striking fact that emerges is that in its enduring effects the dislocation caused by the war has been more serious than its actual destruction. *It is not material destruction* (for most of what was consumed during the war was made during the war, and "reconstruction" is practically complete) nor shortages of raw material, nor inadequacy of sea or land transport that now occupy the foreground. *It is no inadequacy either of the resources of nature or of man's capacity to exploit them.* It is all in one form or another a maladjustment of supply and demand. *It is no insufficiency of productive power,* but a series of impediments which have prevented its full utilisation. (*The Times*, May 4, 1927.)

When a leading organ of capitalism has to describe the world situation in these terms, capitalism is writing its own condemnation.

THE situation to which Marx threw his forward analysis, and which is the inevitable outcome of capitalist development (the stifling of capitalism in the limitations of its own property relations, with the growth of the powers of production) is here come alive in the capitalist world, forcing recognition in its external facts from the capitalists themselves, and subjected to analysis—in a thoroughly superficial empirical form—by their economists (who have hitherto contented themselves with the much easier task of refuting Marx professorially on paper, but are now finding the real world a much harder nut to crack, since it has a knack of fulfilling all the Marxist predictions and disregarding all the professorial economics). "It is all a maladjustment of supply and demand." "Dislocation." "It is no insufficiency of productive power, but a series of impediments which have prevented its full utilisation." Precisely. In these muddled, would-be "scientific" terms the breakdown of capitalist organisation is described as unmistakably as, in the similar polite jargon, poverty is described as "under-consumption" and starvation as "mal-nutrition." What is "supply and demand"? Translated into exact terms, it is simply commodity economy, or the organisation (actually anarchy) of production on the basis of private ownership and trade, which is the presupposition and starting point of capitalism. What is the "maladjustment of supply and demand"? Simply the breakdown of commodity economy, which corresponds to the conditions of small individual

production, and is wholly incapable of organising the gigantic modern world forces of production. Commodity economy inevitably develops, through the stages of small-scale and large-scale capitalism, to trusts and monopolies, which, because they are equally based on private ownership and production for profit, are also incapable of socially organising production, and can only lead to gigantic conflicts, throttling of production, concentration of wealth and mass-poverty, wars and chaos, thus in turn leading through the class struggle to the socialist organisation of production as the only way out for humanity. This was the issue that confronted the Geneva Conference.

WHAT is the answer that the spokesmen of capitalist economy endeavour to present? Their principal champion came forward in the person of Professor Cassel. He placed his finger on the spot and pronounced the evil of the existing economic situation to be Monopoly (Report on "Recent Monopolistic Tendencies in Trade and Industry"). The free flow of exchange is held up by Monopoly. Why capitalism breeds Monopoly, whether Monopoly does not inevitably develop out of Free Capitalism, making childish and futile the professorial injunctions to return to the simple Free Trade and Competition of their economic textbooks, in place of realising that the only way forward now lies beyond Monopoly to Socialism—these questions it does not occur to the learned professor to consider. It is only necessary to compare the profound and basic treatment of Monopoly in Lenin's *Imperialism*, written eleven years ago, with the scrappy, casual, superficial approach of the Professor to a few obvious phenomena, eleven years later, with a much greater wealth of material and development to draw on, which there is no attempt to understand, to see the gulf that lies between Marxist and bourgeois economic science. For Lenin, Monopoly is a stage in capitalist development, arising out of preceding conditions for intelligible and traceable reasons, intimately bound up with a whole social and political epoch, producing its characteristic phenomena in state organisation, economic policy, foreign policy, international relations, class structure and politics, and giving rise to new problems and

indications of the line of advance to a new stage succeeding it. For the professor, the facts of monopoly and monopolist restriction are treated in isolation with no attempt to consider their meaning and place in the whole line of development; they represent a certain vicious tendency or policy pursued by certain politicians, business men, and labour leaders in ignorance of economic law, and condemned in the name of economic principles. This un-historical medicine-man type of treatment only reveals the inability of one stage (the stage of liberal capitalism, on the conditions of which the traditional economic school has been built up, treating its temporary historically conditioned phenomena as universal principles of human society) to understand the next stage or get outside its own limitations and think dialectically, *i.e.*, scientifically, instead of from the absolute throne of its own eternal rightness.

IN his lecture to the Geneva Conference Professor Cassel declared (*The Times*, May 5, 1927) that the apparent contradiction between productive power and consumption, *i.e.*, between the concentrated monopoly of the means of production and the impoverishment of the masses, was a delusion and non-existent; the difficulty lay, not in concentration and impoverishment inevitably arising out of capitalism, but simply in certain artificial barriers to free exchange. "To argue that the productive capacity of the world had exceeded its purchasing power was pure nonsense. The 'purchasing power' of the world was simply the total product of its industry." Here we have a typical piece of empty formal nonsense of the bourgeois economic school, whose principal task is to shut its eyes to clamant realities. Because in the simple primitive trading community, on the imagination of which, with the aid of some Crusoe fictions, their textbooks are based, every producer is to the exact extent that he produces for sale also a consumer and buyer or at least a potential buyer, therefore it is supposed that this simple formula can be applied to the conditions of capitalism, where the mass of working producers are cut off from consuming more than a portion of what they produce, and still more to advanced Monopolist Capitalism or Imperialism, where the concentration of wealth in the hands

of a few trusts and mass-impoverishment has reached such a point as to create a block in the whole process and permanent inability to use the full powers of production save temporarily through the mechanism of a war or similar catastrophe. What is the conclusion drawn from this? "The only cure for poverty was more intense production." The unemployed know something of this. Once again, what is true—in this case—of natural economy, is not true of *capitalist* economy, where increased production only intensifies the crisis and does not solve poverty. The whole failure of bourgeois economics consists in this—its failure to see capitalist society from outside as a historical stage with its own laws, and consequent jumbling of examples and lessons from any and every mode of production into a supposed set of universal principles (the monkey's stick as "capital") instead of seeking to find the *distinctive* laws of *capitalist* development.

WHAT, then, is Professor Cassel's proposal to deal with the evils of Monopoly? If he finds in Monopoly the enemy, how does he propose to fight it, since it is not in fact possible to fight Monopoly to-day without fighting the whole of modern capitalism? On this question he is discreet. He proposes simply "the removal of monopolist tendencies." By this he means in practice simply the removal of certain trade barriers, legislative advantages to monopolies, &c. But these are in fact only the *results* and symptoms of the monopolist stage of capitalism, and not its cause. The Trusts promote legislation to secure and advance their interests, but such legislation is not the cause of the Trusts. The cause of the Trusts lies in the process of concentration of capital and working out of competition. But if Professor Cassel proposes to reverse certain legislation that expresses the policy of the Trusts, how does he propose to do this, since the Trusts control the State? To this question no answer is attempted, and indeed none can be within the limits of capitalist-serving economics. The assembled monopolists at Geneva, of the industrial, financial, and political worlds, might well listen with polite applause to this so-called "ruthless analysis," which could not hurt a hair of their heads.

BUT the real meaning of this attack on "Monopoly" by a faithful servant of the trust magnates soon becomes clear when it is examined a little further. For the real attack is not so much against the big monopolists as against the small ones—against the inconvenience of excessive customs boundaries to the international operations of Big Capital at its present stage, and against the trade union restrictions that hinder further degradation of the workers' conditions. It is the tariffs of the small countries, which are attempting to promote and develop their independent industry, instead of submitting to penetration and domination by the big enterprises of the Powers—it is essentially these tariffs that are causing the present commotion about "uneconomic" customs boundaries, "anachronistic" small economic units, &c. The Bankers' Manifesto of Anglo-American finance attacked roundly the vicious tariff walls of Continental Europe, but attempted no word against the much higher tariff walls of the United States. The super-trusts and combinations of to-day, often trans-national in character, find that they need a larger sphere for their operations. Hence the new trend of agitation against tariffs. They no longer need tariffs for their own maintenance, though prepared to use them for fighting purposes (as in the French increased tariff alongside the Geneva resolutions). The movement to "European Free Trade," like the movement to "Imperial Free Trade," is not a movement to Free Trade, but simply to a larger customs union, *i.e.*, to a larger basis of operations corresponding to the increased scale of capital. Thus the propaganda here conducted against "monopolist tendencies" is in reality the propaganda of the highest forms of monopoly.

THIS actual character is even clearer in the reference to the working class. For Professor Cassel went on to make clear that by "monopolist tendencies" responsible for restricted production and high prices, he meant not only "trade barriers and industrial combinations," but also "the monopolist tendencies of trade unions which had forced up wages in many cases to an uneconomic level." Here the plain rôle of the pirate ship's chaplain shows through all the formulas of the supposed pure theorist. The starvation standards of the masses

of the workers in Europe are to be brought further down for the benefit of the millionaires. That is the practical policy. The workers, who are already too poor to buy the products the idle machinery could produce, and remain unemployed and lacking goods, are to be further impoverished, and all will be well. The notorious "prosperity" produced in the coal industry by the driving down of the miners is to be reproduced all over European industry. This is the orthodox policy for the ills of the economic situation. The "freedom of movement of capital" which Professor Cassel advocates means in fact the freedom of the trusts and monopolies to exercise every weapon of their power, to smash every potential rival, to bleed the consumers, and to drive down and exploit the workers to the last ounce. But the "freedom of movement of labour" which he advocates with such conspicuous impartiality alongside, means the freedom of the blackleg, the smashing of the trade unions, the cutting of wages, the destruction of standards, and the reduction of the workers to a broken submissive collection of units. Thus in the end the policy here advocated in the name of pure science and after all the formulas is simply the policy of Baldwin, the policy of wage-cutting and union-smashing, which is the current line of monopolist capitalism in Europe in the face of the intensified international conflict.

BUT the "Labour" representatives of the Second International and Amsterdam were no better than the direct capitalist spokesmen at Geneva. They identified themselves completely with the interests of capitalism and with the views of the capitalist spokesmen and Governments. The decisions of the Conference receive the full approval of these "Labour" representatives; the Amsterdam International actually has the brazenness to claim that these decisions are a mere repetition of the policy of themselves and the Second International (like the valet who considers his master owes everything to him):—

The diagnosis was correctly made years ago by the working class, although it is only now that it is solemnly embodied in official minutes. . . . *These twenty-four pages of resolutions and recommendations do not contain anything which has not long since been quite*

clear to labour leaders. (I.F.T.U. Press Reports, Economic Supplement, June 2, 1927.)

The joint declaration of the Second International and Amsterdam International on the eve of the Geneva Conference contains a series of recommendations, all of which are in complete harmony with the essentials of current capitalist policy: Removal of impediments to trade and commerce; Reduction of tariffs; European Customs Union leading to International Economic Organisation through the League of Nations; Standardisation of international labour conditions through the class-co-operation mechanism of the International Labour Office; International control of cartels; Rationalisation; Agricultural developments and credits; Formation of permanent International Economic Office of the League of Nations. These constitute the "working-class" line of solution for the present crisis of capitalism.

THE position of these "Labour" spokesmen was rapidly brought to the test when the Soviet delegates, who acted throughout as representatives, not only of the Soviet Union, but of the international working class, put forward their proposals for the crisis. After pointing out clearly the basic contradictions of capitalism underlying the whole crisis, and which could only be solved by Socialism, by the victory of the working class, they proceeded to put forward certain immediate proposals which could at any rate afford temporary relief to certain gross visible evils. In these proposals they touched on just those crucial realities of the situation and of the policies of imperialism, which it was the policy of the Conference and the "Labour" representatives to slur over in diplomatic silence. They proposed: (1) Cancelling of war debts, reparations and the Dawes plan; (2) Increased wages; (3) Eight-hour day, and six hours for heavy and dangerous trades, including mines; (4) Full trade union rights and strike rights; (5) Social maintenance of unemployed and victims of rationalisation, by increased taxation of wealth and reduction of expenditure on militarism and bureaucracy; (6) Fight against monopolist high prices; (7) Removal of immigration restrictions; (8) Abolition of Mandates and

Protectorates, withdrawal of troops from all colonies and recognition of right of self-determination of all peoples; (9) End of Chinese intervention; (10) Full economic and political relations with the Soviet Union; (11) Total disarmament to be carried out under workers' control commissions.

THESE proposals naturally placed the "Labour" spokesmen in a dilemma. They could not support them without committing themselves to fight capitalism, when their whole policy is unity with capitalism. They could not oppose them without opposing the most elementary demands of the working-class struggle and displaying themselves as complete servants of their capitalist and imperialist masters. They attempted to meet the position by uniting with the capitalists in an attack on the Soviet Union (the Jouhaux-Loucheur attack); but this attack broke down in the light of facts. The immediate effect was a split and confusion in the ranks of the reformists. On the Commissions they began to vote in opposite directions. The notorious traitor and disrupter of the working-class, Mertens, came out with a noisy speech, addressing the capitalists "from the other side of the barricades." On the Industry Commission, Jouhaux, Mertens and others voted with the Soviet Delegation against the Rationalisation resolution; while Pugh and others abstained. But by the final session all was in order again, and the capitalists had their servants once more in hand. The Soviet Delegation stood out alone in opposing the capitalist resolutions against a solid united front of capitalists and reformists. This picture of comedy-drama in Geneva is full of significance for the future rôle of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, when the crisis breaks into open struggle and future war.

THE basic delusion of the reformist "Labour" approach to the crisis is the notion that the crisis of capitalism can be met by "international economic organisation"—of the capitalists. For them the international cartel is the line of solution of imperialist conflict; they call for an International

Economic Organisation corresponding to the League of Nations which shall control the international cartels, organise world economy and inaugurate the reign of peace. The fallacy is exactly the same as in the case of the League of Nations. They imagine that a coming together of imperialist forces means an end of imperialist conflicts. Not at all. It only provides a new manoeuvring ground for imperialist conflicts, plus a uniting ground for action against the working class. The basis of imperialist conflicts lies deeper than the presence or absence of an organisation and an office. The anarchy of capitalism is not due to lack of a central organ, but to the fundamentally anarchic character of the property basis of capitalist organisation, which makes impossible social or rational organisation until that property basis is destroyed. The international cartels are not beginnings of international organisation, but temporary phenomena in the growth of monopolist capitalism and its conflicts (just as the 114 pre-war international cartels did not diminish the growing imperialist conflict, as the utopian pacifists of that day expected, but were a part of the growing tension). The majority of the so-called international cartels are not in fact international so much as trans-national, *i.e.*, uniting a larger bloc of nations in competition with others, as the European Steel Cartel confronting the American Steel Trust, &c. Here the international cartel represents the most intense developed form of imperialist conflict. Even where for a short time a fully international cartel may be formed, the conflict will be found to continue between the constituent powers within the cartel. In the same way on the political field, the League of Nations is not even a nominal world organisation, but essentially a West European capitalist bloc confronting Pan-America on the one side and the Soviet Union and colonial nations on the other. But the evil of the reformist propaganda of pacifism through the League of Nations, and economic settlement and rational organisation through international capitalism, lies in the fact that, under the cover of this talk, the realities of imperialist conflict (the facing of which would destroy the whole reformist basis) are endeavoured to be concealed and slurred over, and the workers hypnotised into facile hopes and failure to prepare for the struggles in front.

FOR while the talk is of "International Economic Organisation," "International Peace," "International Labour Standards," &c., the reality which these phrases mean in practice is only co-operation with capitalism. But this reality makes all the talk a lie. For the unity with capitalism makes certain the rapid advance to war, since the freer and more unimpeded the development of a given period of capitalist production, the more rapid the advance to war under the present conditions of imperialism. While the reformists spread their lulling talk of pacifism, and common pacific ideals of capital and labour alike, the capitalists hurry forward with their war preparations. And when the struggle comes, the same unity with capitalism makes impossible effective resistance, since such resistance, although noisily talked about by the reformists beforehand, can only be carried out by a strongly prepared independent revolutionary working-class movement. (In this connection Bramley's last words at Amsterdam before his death, when trying to face the question, may be recalled: "It is no use talking about fighting militarism and war if we are not prepared to accept its ultimate issue—revolutionary action.") Thus the reformist leaders who talk eloquently of peace and international organisation, &c., are in reality attaching the workers to "their" capitalists all the time, and thereby in reality drawing the workers, not into a policy of peace and international organisation, but into a policy of international competition, wage-cutting, lowered standards and war.

THE economic and political forces of capitalism to-day are driving straight to war more rapidly than any one would have ventured to predict five years ago. The series of colonial wars culminating in the war on China led by British Imperialism are the prelude to imperialist war. At the present moment the highest point of crisis since 1920 is developing with the supreme attempt of the British bourgeoisie to gather the united forces of capitalism for war on the Soviet Union. At the same time the sharpening of imperialist conflict and drive to war is no less clear. The partial stabilisation and "recovery" of capitalism on the economic field by the driving down of the workers has simply meant the hastening

of the advance to war. This is the essence of the new phase of capitalist crisis, shown in the intensified economic conflict, the international reaction and the threat of war. The home offensive of the Trade Union Bill is an integral part of the situation. The Trade Union Bill is not only a phase in the home struggle, but is also in its effect as direct an act of war-preparation as the building of a fleet. In it is embodied the attempt to strangle the possibility of working-class action against the threat of war. The Universal Mobilisation Bill in France, the Charter of Labour in Italy, and the Trade Union Bill in Britain, all bear this war significance about them. And it is just here that the failure of the reformist leaders to resist these measures, the acquiescence and veiled co-operation in Britain, the open co-operation in Italy, and the direct sponsorship in France, all pave the way for the warmongers no less than their propaganda of pacifist illusions. The fight against war only has meaning in closest relation with the whole fight against capitalism. It is bound up with the actual situation. The fight against war is not an abstract question of the future. It means the fight against the imperialist war that is now going on in China; it means the fight against the threat of war on the Soviet Union; and it means the fight to smash by action the Trade Union Bill that is seeking to paralyse the possibility of working-class action in any future political crisis.

R. P. D.

THE TRADE UNION BILL AND THE BREAK WITH RUSSIA

By J. R. CAMPBELL

THE campaign of the Trade Union and Labour bureaucracy against the Trade Union Bill has evoked very little enthusiasm in the country. The whole character of the campaign shows quite clearly that the bureaucracy had no intention of fighting the Bill, but were simply concentrating on making political capital out of it in view of the next general election.

The lack of enthusiasm which has characterised the campaign will not be altogether disappointing to the bureaucracy. They will use it as one of the reasons why it was impossible to undertake drastic action against the Bill, yet everyone will recognise that the lack of enthusiasm was largely a consequence of their own policy.

The decision not to prepare for a general strike against the Bill and the announcement right at the very start of the campaign that on no account would they go beyond a propaganda campaign only encouraged the Government and discouraged the workers. The large number of Trade Union Conferences which were held up and down the country were divided into two parts, firstly, a legal explanation of the meaning of the Bill, and, secondly, an explanation by some trade union officials as to why the trade union leaders could not take more drastic action against the Bill than they were taking.

In fighting against the idea of direct action against the Bill the bureaucrats found themselves singularly devoid of argument. Of course, they did not hesitate to outline in the sharpest possible way the many difficulties which would face the working class if they undertake action against the Bill. This argument, if properly understood, means the abandonment of the working-class struggle in the present period altogether. Capitalism to-day is in a state of decline. For seven years the Trade Union leaders have waited for the great trade boom which was to enable them once again to fight on a rising market. The trade boom and the rising market

show no signs of appearing and it ought to be plain to the dullest minds that the depression in British industry is permanent under capitalism, and the workers must learn to fight the difficult circumstances of this depression or submit to a progressive worsening of their conditions of life and labour.

Naturally one of the arguments in great favour with the bureaucracy was that the workers were whipped and would not respond to the call for action. Vivid descriptions were given at many conferences of the very small percentage of workers who attend their Trade Union branch and so on. Those statements are perfectly true, but they have really no bearing on the question as to whether the workers will fight or not. If one had taken a survey of the branches before the general strike of 1926, one would have noted the small proportion of members attending those Trade Union branches. There is not the slightest doubt that if the General Council had succeeded in getting a compromise with the Prime Minister on the Sunday previous to the general strike and had called that strike off, that one of the reasons for calling off the strike which they would have adduced would have been the poor attendance at Trade Union branches, yet when the strike was called we saw that not only trade unionists who did not attend their branch meetings regularly but also hundreds of thousands of non-unionists were prepared for the struggle against the capitalist class. The argument that the workers are whipped is therefore a delusion. Before the General Council can put the responsibility for no action on the shoulders of the workers it ought to call for action. If the workers do not respond then the responsibility rests on their shoulders, but what the General Council feared in view of its experiment of 1926 was not that the workers would not respond but that they would respond only too well.

Another resource was to paint as black a picture as possible of the defeat of the general strike and the consequent destruction of trade unionism which would inevitably follow from such a defeat. Yet the same people who have argued this have told the workers a month or so previous that the Bill was aimed at the destruction of trade unionism and if the Bill passed the Trade Union Movement as an effective force would exist no more.

If a tenth part of what the bureaucrats said about the Trade Union Bill was true, then the whole weight of the working class should have been thrown into the scale against the Bill. Another feature of the campaign was the stifling of local initiative. If the setting up of local campaign committees had been left to the initiative of the local Trades Councils and Labour Parties they would probably have developed those bodies into Councils of Action which would not only have mobilised the workers for the campaign locally but would also have brought pressure on the General Council. In order to prevent this, the General Council placed the campaign committees as much as possible under the control of permanent Trade Union officials, many of them removed from the local life of the district in which they had control. The general effect was to stifle the initiative of the rank and file and prevent the demonstrations against the Bill being as good as they might otherwise have been. In addition, the conferences which were held to discuss the Bill were in the hands of a machine which was determined to prevent any expression of rank and file opinion, and the result of those conferences was to disgust instead of to inspire the active workers who attended them.

Generally the trump card of the bureaucracy was to urge that the workers should work for the next general election. This was an argument that was speedily exposed by the Communist Party and the Minority Movement, and many of those who were peddling it were amazed to find it greeted with derisive laughter by the workers.

The Bill is now well on its way to the Statute Book and it may be passed before these lines appear, and the workers have now the truth before them of the Communist Party statement that nothing short of a real general strike would be effective against the Bill.

If the General Council had called upon the workers to prepare for such a strike, if they had given the local organisations of the workers a free hand, the possibilities of such a strike being effective against the Bill were very considerable indeed.

The attitude of the Trade Union bureaucracy towards Russia has been even worse than their attitude on the Trade Union Bill. The day before the Arcos raid the General Council was actually

considering the breaking up of the Anglo-Russian Committee because of the interview with Comrade Tomsy, of the Russian Unions, dealing with the situation in Great Britain, which had appeared in various papers. When the Government did break off relations, the Labour Party and Trade Union bureaucracy in particular maintained a cowardly silence until some time after the break when they issued a manifesto deploring the loss of trade. All through in such parts of their speeches as they have devoted to this question their arguments against the break have been purely the arguments of traders. They have said: "We do not like Mussolini or Kemal Pasha: yet we trade with Italy and Turkey. Why should we not trade with Russia? Is Russian money not as good as Turkish or Italian money?"

One can understand such an argument in the mouth of Sir Allan Smith, but it is disgusting in the mouths of representatives of the working class. It is true the British workers would derive considerable advantages from a continuance of diplomatic relations with Russia, but the great majority of workers who stand behind the Labour Party are anxious to support Soviet Russia not because the support of Soviet Russia means more trade, but because Soviet Russia is a Workers' State building up Socialism which it is the duty of the workers in every country of the world to defend. The idea that the workers are only concerned with trade and not concerned with defending the Soviet Republic as a Workers' State is a slander on the British Labour Movement.

Equally pitiful and confused has been the attitude of the bureaucracy towards the executions in Soviet Russia. We have had wails about "the reintroduction of the terror shocking the whole civilised world," *i.e.*, the gentlemen who write the editorials in the trustified press of capitalism. The whole argument of the Labour bureaucracy shows that they are unable to distinguish between the use of force to defend a Workers' State and the use of force to destroy a Workers' State; both to their minds appear to be equally reprehensible. The rank and file workers, on the contrary, have speedily seen through the hypocrisy of this attitude. They see that the same capitalists which welcome the execution of Trade Union leaders in Shanghai as a means of restoring "law and order" condemn the execution of white conspirators

in Russia. There was no doubt whatever that the people who were shot were shot because of their connection with a conspiracy which had not only caused the assassination of Comrade Voikoff but which had caused many other workers to lose their lives in various parts of Russia. They were executed not for revenge but because of definite actions which were proved against them.

The whole attitude of the bureaucracy shows the extreme danger with which it will be faced in Great Britain if a warlike situation develops. If the leaders of the Labour Movement can be stampeded to side with the capitalist class because the Soviet State is taking measures of self-defence, what is their attitude likely to be should a war break out against Soviet Russia and the events surrounding the outbreak of that war be appropriately distorted by the lie agencies of the capitalist class? If our Trade Union leaders succumb so easily to capitalist propaganda now, what may be their attitude when the war situation becomes more tense?

The bureaucracy has refused in connection with the Russian situation to expose the war plans of the imperialists in relation to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and to link up the campaign against the Trade Union Bill with a campaign against the U.S.S.R. The only thing left to the workers in those circumstances is to proceed beyond the bureaucracy which is intent on sabotaging a campaign in defence of the U.S.S.R., to set up local Councils of Action and to undertake the campaign in every way possible themselves. As we have said, by the time these lines appear the Trade Union Bill will probably have passed the House of Commons. The leaders who paralysed mass resistance to this Bill will utilise the situation created by this Bill in order to justify their refusal to undertake any action either to increase wages or to thwart the warlike plans of the Government in relation to Russia and China.

Undoubtedly the Bill will make the situation of the working class more difficult, but not altogether hopeless, given a reasonable measure of solidarity. The experience of the war showed by the munitions strike on the Clyde, in England, and by strikes of South Wales miners under the Munitions Act, that a determined working class can successfully resist laws calculated to shackle

the Trade Union Movement. In the present period, however, the trade unions require to be supplemented by strong Factory Committees based on the workshop and capable of taking speedy action particularly in cases of war where the Trade Union Movement would be too slow to move.

Even if the political strike becomes illegal the workers cannot abandon the weapon of the political strike, but must, on the contrary, develop their unions, build up their factory committees and prepare their organisations for a general strike directed against a warlike policy of the Government because in countries like England the general strike is still a possible weapon against a war, provided the education and the organisation of the workers are prepared beforehand.

One thing however is absolutely necessary if the working class are successfully to resist the war period, and that is that as rapidly as possible the present defeatist trade union bureaucracy should be replaced by a cadre of leaders who will do everything in their power to mobilise the whole strength of the working class against the capitalist class and the capitalist State whether such action is allowed by capitalist Law or not.

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THE LABOUR MONTHLY, 162 Buckingham Palace Rd., London, S.W.1

AFTER THE BREAK

By W. N. EWER

THE rupture of diplomatic relations with Russia was not, of course, in any real sense, a result of the Arcos raid. Whether that was a provocative act, deliberately designed in order to force the hands of the more inert Cabinet ministers, or whether it was an act of blind hatred and stupidity, the available evidence is insufficient to show. Either hypothesis is tenable in view of the known facts.

Nor does it much matter which is correct. For the raid, as I say, was merely the occasion, not the cause : as the Serajevo murder was not the cause of the World War, nor the Boston Tea Party of the American Revolution, nor the Dey's historic fan-slap of the French conquest of Algiers.

A rupture of relations had been inevitable from the moment of the rejection of the Ponsonby-Rakovsky treaty in 1924 and the Tory return to power on the "Zinovieff letter." In one sense, indeed, it followed immediately on those incidents. For to describe the relations between Chesham House and Downing Street during the past two and a-half years as "diplomatic" or "normal" is absurd. Frigidly formal intercourse on routine matters, punctuated by occasional querulous complaint or insolent accusation, scarcely constitutes a diplomatic relationship.

When the Tories came to power there were many optimists who, with an air of knowing all about it, confidently foretold that within six months Treaty negotiations would be resumed. Pressed for explanation of this curious belief they found refuge in mysterious hints about "industrialists' pressure" and in assurances of the "you'll see" type. This was a strange delusion. But it had one justification. It was based on the perfectly sound assumption that the position in which Anglo-Soviet relations found themselves after the Red Letter affair was completely unstable. There was no possibility of continued equilibrium. Either they must get worse or they must get better. The optimists, temperamentally unwilling to face the prospect of their getting worse, created a myth for their own comfort.

They should have been disillusioned. But optimism is an all but incurable disease. And to-day these same knowledgeable people are suffering from this same comfortable assurance and are infecting others with their malady.

"Within six months," I have been gravely assured within the past week, "they will be starting negotiations for a renewal of relations." Birkenhead's speech is pointed to as evidence. And in support of it are all the old familiar third-hand rumours. "X has heard from Y that a Cabinet minister remarked to Z that perhaps if . . ." And so on.

So these incurable optimists comfort the Labour movement. And anyone who talks hard sense is dismissed as an alarmist. Precisely as in the years before 1914.

The position created by the breach is not more stable, but less stable, than that which preceded it. Again a change must come : and again it will be inevitably a change for the worse.

The Government and the Tory party have achieved nothing by the break beyond a momentary satisfaction of their emotional cravings. The motives which compelled them to this folly still operate, and must produce their effects in action. They mean not a decrease but an intensification of hostility.

Mr. Baldwin and his colleagues have publicly declared Soviet Russia to be the enemy of this country. That is the meaning of their gesture. And if Russia is the enemy, they must logically, and will certainly, do everything in their power to weaken and to injure her. The final objective of the campaign which opened with Jix's Moorgate offensive can only be the total overthrow of the Soviet régime. And, indeed, the Tory Press now begins openly to admit this.

For the moment, maybe, they do not contemplate open war. They believe that they can achieve their end by other means. They are again in one of those moods of confident expectation that have affected them ever since 1917. They are again assured—on Heaven knows what curiously accumulated evidence—that the downfall of the Soviet Government is imminent.

If all foreign credits can be stopped, runs the thesis now favoured in high places, the economic situation in Russia will soon become desperate : an infuriated peasantry will rise : and the

Bolsheviks will vanish in a welter of pogroms, making room for a government which will gladly acknowledge the Tsar's debts and the Divine Right of the British ruling class.

Mr. Leslie Urquhart was enouncing the economic part of this interesting proposition a year ago. The critical moment, in his judgment, was then to be the late summer of 1926. He has presumably postponed the performance.

The remaining portion—the belief in impending risings in the Ukraine and the Caucasus—is of more intriguing origin. One knows of certain conversations in Paris with the "Foreign Minister" of Mr. Levitsky's self-styled "Directory of the Ukrainian Republic." One knows of strange activities in connection with the "Committee for the Liberation of the Caucasus." These professional emigrés, one surmises, inspired by a lively sense of favours to come, have given rosy reports of the situation: and have been eagerly believed. The credulity of British diplomats, military attachés, and—shall we say "agents"—has been proof against much chastening experience.

For the moment their hope centres in the financial blockade—if Germany can be cajoled or coerced into agreement—in the Levitskys and their like, and—though this a little more doubtfully than a month ago—in the "Bolshevik failure in China."

The real danger will come when these facile hopes are disappointed: when Soviet trade with other countries goes on in spite of all efforts to sabotage it: when the Levitskys fail to deliver the goods: when it is realised that the walls of Moscow have not fallen at the blast of Sir Austen's little trumpet.

What then? Already the language of war is used. Already the Tory Press speaks of Russia and Russians as it spoke of Germany and Germans not before but *during* the war. The hate campaign grows more savage every day. The atmosphere is being created in which the news of a declaration of war would be greeted with rapturous hysteria in every Tory club and every Primrose League lodge in the country.

Mr. Baldwin may protest, Sir Austen may protest, that the Government has no intention of going to war. They may quite conceivably believe what they say. But Sir Edward Grey would have said so at any moment from 1906 to 1914. Protestations are

not worth twopence halfpenny. Their actions, like Sir Edward's, are creating a situation out of which war springs naturally and inevitably.

The politicians made their protestations of peace before 1914. But the soldiers and the sailors got ready for a German war. And I would lay heavy money that to-day the War Office, the Admiralty and the Air Ministry are very busy with their plans for a Russian war. For a variety of Russian wars, I suspect. There would be one plan for a war in defence of "gallant little Esthonia": another for a war to safeguard India from the Afghans or the Tibetans: another for Manchurian possibilities; all these plans quite possibly interlocking and correlating, as did the pre-1914 plans for the aiding of France and for the conquest of Mesopotamia.

I would wager, too, that we shall soon have outward and visible signs of these plans: that there will be new concentrations on the Indian frontier and a general strengthening of the army in Asia: that there will be "need" for an increase in the R.A.F. garrison of Iraq: that the Navy will show a remarkable interest in the Baltic. These things will follow the Arcos raid just as Rosyth and the Expeditionary Force followed the making of the Entente. And, like Rosyth and the Expeditionary Force, they will be the prelude to war.

Just as the diplomatic rupture followed logically and inexorably upon the raid, so war, though at a somewhat longer interval, will follow upon the break. You cannot isolate events and by professions of good will prevent them from having consequences. The sterilisation of actions is not to be achieved by words.

The sequence runs logically from the rejection of the treaty to the Chamberlain Note, from the Chamberlain Note to the Arcos raid, from the Arcos raid to the rupture. It is no haphazard or accidental series, but a continuous movement in one direction and to one end. That end is war. War will come as certainly as harvest follows sowing unless the stream of events is dammed, not by futile words, but by effective action.

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION TURNS LEFT

By EARL BROWDER

[The following article was sent to us from Hankow on April 10, 1927. In spite of the long interval before it was received, it has lost none of its interest. Comrade Browder is the American representative on the international delegation that has been investigating conditions in China, and his first-hand picture of the experiences of the delegation and of the actual history of the split in the Kuomintang provides material that is entirely new in this country.—Ed.]

WITH the reorganisation of the Chinese National Government on March 11 at Hankow, and the immediately following capture of Nanking and Shanghai by the Revolutionary Army, the Chinese revolution has definitely entered a new phase of its development. This new phase is a deepening and intensification of the revolution, at the moment of military victory, when all observers concede that it is but a matter of months when all inner-China will be in the hands of the Nationalist Government.

The new personnel of the Government, established on March 11, includes participation of the Chinese Communist Party. The Ministry of Agriculture is headed by *Tan Ping-shan*, just returned from Moscow, where he represented the Chinese party at the recent Plenum of the E.C.C.I. The Ministry of Labour is in the hands of *Sou Cheu-isen*, chairman of the All-China Labour Federation, chairman of the Chinese Seamen's Union, leader of the famous Hongkong Strike, and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Appointment of Communists to head these two posts signals a deepening of the social phases, the foundation of the Chinese revolution.

This turn to the left by the Chinese revolution undoubtedly comes as a surprise and shock to American and British imperialism. The diplomats of Downing Street and the White House had been flirting with the right-wing of the Kuomintang, and undoubtedly thought that their protégés in the Nationalist movement were prepared to step in and seize power just at this moment of

military victory. It must be rather disconcerting to them to have events move in exactly the opposite direction. Their chagrin was expressed by the spilling of the blood of hundreds of Chinese men, women, and children by British and American gunboats shelling Nanking and Weichow.

It must be stated that the imperialists had reasons for their reactionary hopes. On March 20, 1926, while the Kuomintang was still confined within the Province of Kwantung so far as power was concerned, where British guns could reach every strategic point within a few hours, the right-wing in the party executed a *coup d'état*, under the leadership of General Chiang Kai-shek, head of the military forces and the Whampoa Military Academy. From that time on, Chiang Kai-shek assumed all power in the party, expelled the Communists from all official positions, and forced the elected Chairman of the party, Wang Ching-wei, into exile. British and American newspapers suddenly began to speak in a different and more friendly tone about the Nationalist Government. And when Chiang Kai-shek became Marshal of the Northern Expedition, which swept through China in the summer of 1926, and occupied the Wu-Han cities in November, the imperialists thought the right-wing was completely in power in the Kuomintang.

Under such conditions, how was it possible to effect such a radical change as we now see in the Kuomintang? How was the right-wing defeated? And what is the present danger of a military coup against the Nationalist Government? What are the perspectives of the Chinese Revolution? The following is an attempt to find the answer to these questions in the expressions of the Chinese masses themselves :—

The Development of Revolutionary Forces

It was when the Northern Expedition of the Revolutionary Army marched from Kwantung, through Honan, Kiangsi and Hupeh, that the forces were prepared which have now overthrown the dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek in the Kuomintang. These military victories have been hailed by bourgeois writers as "miraculous"; but the "miracle" lay in the revolutionary masses of the occupied provinces, who were only waiting the opportunity to rise against their militarist rulers. In many places, indeed, the

army did not have to fight, finding that the mere news of their advance had been taken as the signal for the uprising of the people, who drove out the militarists.

Close behind the advancing army came the organisation of the workers into the All-China Labour Federation, and the peasants into the Peasants' Union. In less than a year, more than a million new members of the trade unions, and seven million peasants in the Peasants' Union, were mobilised. With this organisation began the real process of revolution—destruction of the basis of power of militarism, the landlords, corrupt magistrates and gentry of the villages—and an enormous widening of the basis of the revolutionary power. From Canton, under the guns of British Hongkong and close to the sea coast, the National Government moved to Wu-Han (Hankow), having under its feet a solid ground of half of China, with the many-million masses organised under its direction. Once more it became possible to openly struggle against the forces of counter-revolution entrenched within the revolution itself.

Beginning of the Struggle Against Chiang Kai-shek

The issue upon which the struggle between right and left began was, strangely enough, the question of moving the seat of Government to Wu-Han. After agreeing to the move, Chiang Kai-shek caused the official heads of the Government to stop in Nanchang, Kiangsi, while the majority of the Kuomintang Central Committee were in Wu-Han, with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Communications, and Justice. Delay followed delay in completing the move. The Central Committee members in Wu-Han set up a Joint Conference to transact Government affairs. Chiang Kai-shek in Nanchang, after greeting the Joint Conference and making proposals to it, changed his mind and denounced it as an illegal body. After negotiations, it was agreed in Nanchang to move to Wu-Han on February 9; when that date arrived, postponement was again made until the 16th; on that date it was again postponed. Whereupon, at an enlarged Joint Conference in Wu-Han, it was decided that the Central Kuomintang and the Nationalist Government should both begin office to succeed the Joint Conference without further waiting. But Chiang Kai-shek sent out a telegram over the country

declaring that the Central Committee had not moved to Wu-Han. At the same time, the Kuomintang was circulated with telegrams stating that the Plenary Conference of the Central Executive Committee had been cancelled.

Here was a definite struggle. The Central Kuomintang, openly challenged by Chiang Kai-shek, began to open its ears to the complaints pouring in from the people's organisations against this budding militarist. Suddenly the party awoke to what had been going on. Already, on March 15, the Hupeh Trade Union Executive issued a public denunciation of Chiang Kai-shek. On March 16, the Executive Committee of Hupeh Kuomintang issued a long statement, indicating Chiang Kai-shek as a counter-revolutionary. This statement, published in the *Min Kuo Jih Pao*, Hankow, March 16, 1927, contains the following declarations:—

The party has lost its power, and all the power has gone to the hands of a dictator and the highest organisation of the party has lost its functions.

Help the Central Executive Committee to overthrow the condition of usurpation, to restore the spirit of democracy, to make all party members obey the orders of the party. All political and military affairs should be unified under the direction of the party. . . . Every person no matter who he is should submit to the power of the party. . . . Only the oppressed masses are the supervisor of the party. Only the principles of Chung Li (Sun Yat Sen) and his spirit are the director of the party. . . .

Now it is time for us to manifest the power of the party. Whether our party will even exist depends entirely upon whether we can make the power of the party felt.

On March 25, a special issue of the Kuomintang official daily paper, *Min Kuo Jih Pao*, for the discussion of the party situation, contained an article entitled: "Arise, revolutionary masses, and unite together to overthrow Chiang Kai-shek." Some paragraphs from this article follow:—

Chiang Kai-shek, who proclaims himself the genuine follower of the President, has proved himself counter-revolutionary. His reactionary movements in the past are too numerous to give an exhaustive account.

Immediately after he left the Whampoa Academy, he colluded with a handful of students to stabilise his own position and power. He secretly helped the Sunyatsenist Association to disturbance, causing the Chung Shan cruiser incident on March 20, last year,

and the departure of Comrade Wang Ching-wei, who is the only successor of the President and who is most respected by the revolutionary masses. He prevented also the Central Kuomintang and the Nationalist Government to remove to Hupeh, monopolising the party affairs, violating the party regulations, destroying the party organisation, frustrating the party discipline, and practising dictatorship.

After describing how Chiang Kai-shek had, by appointment, taken possession of all departments of the party through his personal friends, the article continues:—

He secretly employed men to destroy the various provincial, sectional, and overseas party organisations, despatching soldiers to disperse the Canton Municipal Kuomintang, and harbouring all reactionary elements. . . . Since the revolutionary army occupied Kiangsi, he has dispersed the Kiangsi Provincial Kuomintang with no reasons, and supported the old and indiscreet Chang Ching Kiang and Wong Fu. . . . He has entered into collusion with the Fengtien and Shantung militarists to frustrate the diplomatic policy of the Nationalist Government, disavowing the reclamation of Hankow and Kiukiang with the purpose of compromising with the imperialists. . . . He has also changed the diplomatic policy, severing relations with Russia, entering into intimacy with Japan, and defaming the Russian advisors. . . . He intimidated the Central Executive Committee with military force, and secretly ordered Ni Pi, party representative of the First Division, to murder Chen Tsan Yen, chairman of the General Labour Union at Kanchow. . . . He dispersed the Nanchang Municipal Party, and ordered the arrest of its supervision committee; he attacked the Nanchang Students' Union, and ordered the arrest of its committee; butchered four responsible members of the Kiukiang Municipal Party and General Labour Union; devastated the Political Department of the Sixth Army; and secretly ordered the prohibition of the Hankow *Min Kuo Jih Pao* and *Chow Kwong Pao*.

. . . What is the difference between Chiang Kai-shek's murdering the workers at Kiukiang, and Wu Pei-fu's murdering the workers of Kin Han Railway; and between his poisoning party members and Chang Tsung-chang's killing the Nationalists at Tientsin?

To speak frankly, Chiang Kai-shek is no longer a Kuomintang member, for he has fundamentally overthrown the President's policy of alliance with Russia, and the Peasant and Labour policies. He is not worthy to be a follower of the President. He is not worthy to be a man. . . .

Our present demand is to request the Central Kuomintang to remove him from the office of Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army, abrogate his authority as Executive Committeeman

and as Principal of the Central Politico-Military Academy, and summon him for investigation and punishment.

Reaction in Kiangsi Province

While these events were going on, the International Workers Delegation arrived in Canton. After two weeks there, during which great demonstrations were organised with the participation of all sections of Revolutionary China under the slogan: "Unite with the revolutionary proletariat of the imperialist countries," the Delegation started to Hankow overland, a twenty-five-day journey by way of Nanchang, through Kiangsi Province. On this trip we came into close contact with the work of reaction going on within the Kuomintang. Upon our arrival in Hankow, on March 31, I was requested to put these experiences into writing, which I did that same day. The document was published in Chinese, in the *Min Kuo Jih Pao*, a few days later. I quote from it:—

At Nankan (March 17) we met the Kuomintang representative. Replying to our question, "Can you tell us anything about the neighbouring districts?" he answered, "I can tell you that at Kanchow conditions are very reactionary." He reiterated the news of the murder of Chen Tsan-yen, chairman of the Hankow General Trade Union, stated that he had worked in Kanchow and knew the conditions, that the reaction there controlled the Kuomintang District Committee, the Women's Emancipation League, the Bureau of Education, and the Merchants' Association, and also had a branch of the "Narrow Nationalists" organisation connected with Shanghai. These forces had become very aggressive since the arrival of Li Pin (or Ni Pi), Commissioner of the Provincial Kuomintang to the First Division stationed in Kanchow. The comrade who gave us the report concluded: "This act is a coup directed against the policy of Sun Yat Sen."

We arrived at Kanchow the evening of March 19. We were met by a delegation with banners, who sent cards to us on the boat. But unlike every other city to which we had come, there were no cards from the trade unions, but only from merchants' associations and local Kuomintang. We asked the acting magistrate and party representative to visit us on the boat; we told them the purposes of our Delegation, and then expressed surprise that for the first time we were not met by representatives of all revolutionary organisations, the workers and peasants being absent here. In reply to our questions, we were informed that "There was formerly a General Trade Union here but it does not exist any more because it refused to register. The trade unions are not dissolved, but only transformed into preparatory organisations until they properly register." After many

questions as to reasons for closing down the trade unions, we were finally informed of the local official version of the killing of Chen Tsai-yen, which was, that the unions made excessive demands, therefore registration was refused; "preparatory organisations" have no right to make demands, collect dues, or organise defence corps, but Chen refused to obey these rules; the magistrate asked Chen to come and settle the dispute, a quarrel ensued, Chen threatened the magistrate with a revolver, whereupon an officer entered and shot Chen; all this occurred on March 6. This was the version of the acting magistrate and the local representative of the Kuomintang at Kanchow.

Later we got in touch with trade union leaders. They informed us that Chen had been arrested during a trade union meeting by soldiers, who stated that they were acting in the name of Marshal Chiang Kai-shek; the workers were afraid that danger threatened Chen and tried to follow to the magistrate's office, but armed soldiers turned them back with a threat to fire upon them. The next morning Chen's body was found with eighteen bullets in it; a photograph of the body was shown to us, which showed the body completely riddled with bullets. The trade union leaders told us that Chen was completely unarmed when arrested. They categorically denied the stories of excessive demands of 400 per cent. and 500 per cent. wage increases, and stated that all demands had been carefully graduated according to the economic possibilities, the very highest being 50 per cent. They stated that several more union officials were threatened with the fate of Chen, and have been in hiding ever since. The trade unions must hold their meetings secretly, all premises being occupied by troops.

Next day, March 20, at a conference on our boat with leaders of all local trade unions, the above statements were repeated and corroborated. We were further informed that two days previously an Election Conference of the Kuomintang had been held, from which the workers and peasants had all been expelled, on the grounds that they were not qualified to participate in political matters. The Provincial Kuomintang representative (Hu Chi Shung) had approved this action. The trade union leader reporting this declared: "The Kuomintang of this city now represents only the mandarins and capitalists because the workers and peasants have no voice whatever."

The story of how we witnessed the suppressed revolutionary forces of Kanchow emerge, during our thirty-six hours there, and again assume supremacy, is extremely interesting but belongs to another place. Here we wish first to get a picture of how reaction was at work within the Kuomintang itself.

On March 25, evening, we arrived in Nanchang. On the 26th, Comrade Tom Mann and myself, on behalf of the Delegation, visited the General Headquarters of the National Army, and the Pro-

vincial Government. At the General Headquarters we were received by General Chang Chun very courteously; he expressed the sorrow of Marshal Chiang Kai-shek not to be able to meet us here, and invited the Delegation to a banquet in the name of the Marshal, jointly with the Provincial Government. He then discussed the Chinese revolution with us, in the course of which he made statements differing from any we had before heard in China, the most important being: "Our problems are entirely peculiar to China and have no relation to the problems of revolution in any other country; the Chinese revolution is not a part of the world revolution. On this point there are serious differences of opinion in the Kuomintang."

At the Provincial Government we were met by the Chairman of the Executive, Mr. Li Lieh-chun. He also discussed with us the Chinese revolution, along the same lines as General Chang, with the addition of saying that the differences of opinion within the party were about the "adjustment" and "modification" of the programme of the Kuomintang necessary to "meet realities"; he also stated that the great need of the moment was a strong military leader.

It must be added, that at the banquet that evening both General Chang and Mr. Li spoke, and while not contradicting anything said in the morning interviews, their speeches were different in tone, being along the lines of welcoming the assistance of the world Labour movement to the Chinese revolution.

On March 29, at Kiukiang, we were accompanied throughout our stay by an officer, local representative of General Headquarters, whose name I have lost. Just before our boat left, he came on board to bring us a basket of fruit, for which we thanked him kindly. He then conversed with us for twenty minutes, being interpreted by Dr. Taipoo Chen of our company. The line of his remarks was: The first necessity of the Chinese revolution is to obtain military victory; in order to achieve this, a strong leader must be found who can personally hold the loyalty of the entire army; such a man is Marshal Chiang Kai-shek; unfortunately, there have arisen sharp differences within the party, which threaten its unity; this unity can be preserved only, also, by a strong man, in order to avoid divided counsels.

A Chinese "Napoleon"?

Now it had become clear what was the political significance of the struggle between Nanchang and Hankow over the location of the seat of Government. From Nanchang, the reaction could base itself, first, upon its control of the Provincial apparatus, and from there, move to its second, and more fundamental base, contact with the imperialist forces in Shanghai and the Northern

generals with whom it was negotiating. Hankow (Wu-Han cities), on the other hand, is the centre of the most intense revolutionary spirit and organisation, and already the location from which was functioning the apparatus of the Kuomintang Government, which it was necessary for the reaction to disrupt.

The magic of military glory surrounding the name of the Commander-in-Chief of the victorious Revolutionary Armies was relied upon to sway the masses away from the leadership of the Central Kuomintang. Further, it was expected that again, as on March 20, 1926, military pressure would intimidate the Central Committee, and cause it to submit. The strategy of reaction was the production of a Chinese Napoleon.

Already I have indicated the forces that checkmated this strategy. The Central Kuomintang, through the Northern Expedition, had emerged from the narrow confines of Kwantung Province; there had been an enormous release of revolutionary forces, in the organisation of eight million peasants and workers in the conquered Provinces; the masses had learned that their own revolutionary energy and initiative was the basis of the military victories; and, above all, the army itself had been largely transformed, through the work of the revolutionary Political Section, into an army of conscious revolutionists, connecting itself everywhere with the trade unions and peasant unions, so that it could no longer be used as a blind tool by those holding military command at the top.

In China, in the midst of revolution, the army is necessarily the immediately decisive factor. What is the attitude of the army, therefore, in this inner struggle? A few of my own contacts with the army will indicate what is going on:—

(1) At Whampoa Military Academy, last year, the stronghold of Chiang Kai-shek, the International Workers' Delegation was received by a wildly enthusiastic demonstration of 5,000 cadets, who sang "The Internationale" and shouted in unison slogans which included, "Follow the advice of the Communist International."

(2) At Kanchow, where reaction had crushed the Labour movement by means of a division, newly recruited from Northern deserters, another division, consisting of experienced revolutionary

troops and politically-trained leaders, arriving in Kanchow just a few days ahead of the International Delegation, used our visit to arrange a public demonstration for the trade unions, brought them out of their illegality under the protection of the army, and completely reversed the local situation in a few hours.

(3) At Nanchang, under the nose of General Headquarters, the local garrison staged a demonstration for the International Delegation, at which a private soldier spoke in public defiance of the policy of Chiang Kai-shek; later, the garrison protected the trade unions in a mass meeting, violating the martial law proclaimed by the reaction, at which the slogan was proclaimed: "Down with the reaction which controls the Provincial Kuomintang."

(4) On April 8, the Wuchang Political-Military Academy, jointly with the staff of the Political Section of the army, gave a reception to the International Delegation, delegates of the Indian National Party, to the new Labour Minister, and to the head of the Peasants' Union. The meeting, opened by the chairman of the National Government, cheered the speech of Kou Yu-han, editor of the *Min Kuo Jih Pao*, denouncing Chiang Kai-shek and demanding his removal and trial before the party. All assembled soldiers and leaders of people's organisations joined in the slogan: "Down with Chiang Kai-shek."

* * * *

Since writing the above, I attended the celebration of the establishment of the new National Government, the new Hupeh Government, and welcome to Wang Ching-wei, leader of the Kuomintang, exiled last year by Chiang Kai-shek and now returned on the request of the Central Committee. Here also, the slogan was: "Down with Chiang Kai-shek."

Yesterday (April 10) was published a joint statement by Wang Ching-wei and Chen Tu-shiu, secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, issued at Shanghai on April 5, of which the following are extracts:—

The Communist Party of China always has recognised frankly and honestly that the Kuomintang and the Three People's Principles laid down by our late leader, Sun Yat-sen, are the foundation of the Nationalist movement. It is only counter-revolutionaries who seek

to overthrow the San Min principles of the Kuomintang, and it is only counter-revolutionaries who seek to split the Nationalist front. . . .

It is true that the Communist Party and the Kuomintang have different programmes, but the essential points for the members of both parties is that they be guided by the spirit of earnest co-operation in their struggle for a free united China. Those who understand the Communist Party conception of the revolution and the Communist Party attitude toward the Kuomintang, will certainly not doubt the wisdom of Sun Yat-sen in saying that the two parties should co-operate.

* * * *

At the present moment it is already clear that the masses have rallied with enthusiasm to the newly reorganised Nationalist Government. And while the struggle to purify the party internally grows more intense, at the same time the military expedition to the North, toward Peking, proceeds without delay. Within the territory, and also beyond, the organisation of the trade unions and peasant unions grows, sweeping the country like a prairie-fire. The flames of revolution are burning deep and high in China. The revolution will be carried through.

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SELLING RAPIDLY

THE HOME POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION

By A. I. RYKOV

*(Report of the President of the Council of the People's Commissaries at
the Fourth Soviet Congress of the U.S.S.R.)*

COMRADES, at the present time, it is impossible to give even a superficial characterisation of the internal situation and the home policy of the Soviet Union, without touching on the chief economic questions which have taken the most important place in the activities of the Government during the whole time that has elapsed. At the moment when the civil war came to an end and the country was on the threshold of peaceful economic construction on the basis of the new economic policy, Lenin said at the Eighth All-Russian Soviet Congress at the end of 1920 :—

This is the beginning of the happiest epoch in which there will be less and less politics, in which we shall speak about politics less frequently and at less length, but in which the engineers and agriculturalists will speak more.

And again:

We have undoubtedly learnt politics. In this field we shall not be defeated, in this field we have a firm foundation. As regards economics, however, our position is bad. From now onwards, the best policy of all is less politics. Encourage the engineers and the agriculturalists, learn from them, test their work, turn the congresses and the consultations not into organs for assemblies of the people, but into organs for testing actual results, into organs in which we can learn the right methods of economic construction.

If we put aside the difficulties in our foreign policy, Lenin's statement at the Eighth Congress is still more justified now than it was at the time when these words were spoken ; for the power of the working class has established itself still more firmly, nothing threatens the whole system of the Soviets within the country, economic construction has entered on a new and higher phase of its development.

In the time which has elapsed since the great October, the chief support of the October achievements—the alliance between

the workers and the peasants—has become consolidated. The consolidation of the alliance between the workers and peasants, the joint action of both classes and the harmony in politics resulting therefrom, should now ensure a successful advance on the lines of the transformation of our whole economics on to the basis of the latest achievements of world science and world technique.

In our circumstances, with the concentration of transport, the credit system and almost the whole of industry in the hands of the State, with the nationalisation of the land and the non-existence of a land-owning class and a class of large bourgeoisie, this transformation is identical with the construction of Socialism. The construction of a Socialist society is a lengthy process which will demand many years. Every step along this path will raise the economic and cultural level of the country and the well-being of the masses of the people, especially of those strata whose position is least stable.

I. The Policy of Industrialisation

At this Congress, the question of the way to construct Socialism should be discussed. What path leads to Socialism? The path of industrialisation. Industrialisation alone increases the productivity of social work many hundredfold, adds to the well-being of the masses and provides the possibility of turning to account the inexhaustible wealth of our country in the interest of those masses.

It is hardly necessary to bring special proof that industrialisation is the very thing which forms the foundation of the construction of Socialism—especially in our country which carried out the October revolution. Industrialisation was not “thought out” by the October revolution, it is a natural development of history. The analysis of history has given the founders of scientific communism the possibility of proving irrefutably that the development of the material productive forces, which are characterised by the existence of a large manufacturing and mining industry and an industrial proletariat, leads inevitably to Socialism replacing the capitalist economic system. Industrialisation means, in our circumstances, a transition, let us say, from torches to electricity,

from the wooden plough to the tractor, from ignorance to culture. In the Soviet State, however, it is not merely a case of the development of productive forces as such, independently of the social forms of the classes and of the direction taken by that development, but of the construction of a new economic organisation, the Socialist one.

Industrialisation which, in its completed form, means the organisation of Soviet economics, will lead to the complete wiping out of class distinctions and at the same time to the abolition of the abyss which yawns between rural and urban life, and which is the historical legacy of a past many centuries long.

In order to throw light on the concrete changes which have taken place in our economics during the last few years, I will quote the following numerical data of the Gosplan (Institution for Systematic Economy) of the Soviet Union:—

	1923-24	1924-25	1925-26	1926-27
Total production (in million pre-war roubles)	12,272	14,619	18,306	20,166
Industrial production as percentage of total production	27·8	34·8	38·2	41·0
Agricultural production as percentage of total production	72·2	65·2	61·8	59·0
Production of means of production as percentage of industrial production	51·7	52·6	54·4	56·1
Percentage of the workers occupied in industry, commerce, and transport out of the whole working population	9·3	9·7	11·0	11·5

In order to give a complete picture of the change in the construction of the national economy of the Soviet Union, I will give data as to the rate of the development of industry and agriculture and the level they have reached as compared with 1913. It must be remarked, however, that we still have no exact and finally confirmed data for determining the level of production in the last few years as compared with that in 1913, as they vary according to the basis on which they are founded. But these variations in calculations, which only lie within very narrow limits, do not change the essential general trend of the development in the least.

Economic year		Level of production in percent- age of 1913 (pre-war prices)		Rate of development in a year	
		Agriculture	Industry	Agriculture	Industry
1923-24	..	72·3	44·1	6·5	32·8
1924-25	..	77·9	65·6	7·6	48·9
1925-26	..	92·3	90·3	18·6	37·7
1926-27	..	97·2	106·6	5·3	18·1

(According to the calculations of the Supreme Council for National Economy, the growth of industry in the economic year 1926-27 will amount to more than 20 per cent.)

We must, of course, take into consideration that the level of industrial production during the years of the civil war was much lower than that of agriculture; this explains to a considerable extent the rapid rate of the development of industrial production in the last few years. In the years which have just passed, industry has caught up the growth of agricultural production and is now on a somewhat higher level than agriculture (as compared with 1913).

The data I have provided are a numerical expression of the fact that the country is developing on the lines of industrialisation. We must not, of course, over-estimate the significance of this fact, for we are only at the beginning of the lengthy period of development, in the course of which the final transformation of our *agrarian*-industrial country into an *industrial*-agrarian one must take place.

Of course another way is thinkable, that at which the bourgeoisie of Western Europe and America aims, the way of a "division of Labour" between our State and the capitalist States surrounding it, in which the Soviet Union would have to remain an agrarian country exporting grain and raw materials and buying industrial products abroad. This form of development, however, leads the colonies to fight with elementary force against their mother countries and has already led to insurrection in a number of cases. This way would lead, on the one hand, to the servile subjugation of our whole national economy to foreign capital and, on the other hand, to making a permanency of the economic and cultural backwardness of our country. This way means the complete renunciation of the construction of Socialism in our

The Home Policy of the Soviet Union 431

country, and also of the actual, certain economic progress of the country.

The inadequate development of industry impresses the whole industry of the Soviet Union with the stamp of backwardness. This must be pointed out most decidedly. In our country, in which the dessiatine only yields one-half or one-third as much as does agriculture in the advanced bourgeois countries, in our country where the factories and works are badly equipped and do not guarantee to the population the necessary quantity of cheap and good wares, a further development of industry is only possible along the lines of industrialisation; this development can and must only proceed simultaneously in industry and agriculture.

We must recognise that the first years during which industrialisation is carried out are particularly difficult ones for the whole country.

The chief difficulties arise from the temporary disproportion between the positive results arrived at immediately by industrialisation and the necessary outlay which, in our circumstances of general lack of means, necessarily produces a certain tension in the whole economics of the country. For instance, we begin to construct the Dnieprostroi, the railway between Turkestan and Siberia (Semireshensk railway), the Volga-Don canal. For all this together we shall have to spend some hundreds of millions of roubles (not less than 350 to 400 million roubles). In the scheme for the next five years, this outlay is a "minus" as regards the achievement of immediate results; as long as the works mentioned are not completed (this will take longer than the five years under consideration) the country will have no actual profit from them. This, of course, imposes a considerable burden on the country. The Government has resolved to construct a number of large works (large foundries, machinery works, &c.) in the current year.

II. Is the Rate at which our Industrialisation is Proceeding Adapted to our Strength?

Is the rate of industrialisation, of reconstruction, which we have adopted, in proportion to our strength? The present increase

of prices of industrial products is of course largely due to the lack of sufficiently good organisation in industry, to the large extra costs, &c. The most important cause of this increase of prices and the one which it is most difficult to do away with, is the worn-out condition and backwardness of our industrial equipment. The renewal and repair of the equipment of industry was entirely neglected or only undertaken to a very small extent ever since the imperialist war and until two or three years ago (not to mention the fact that the civil war was responsible for a direct destruction of that equipment).

Our whole industry is extremely backward as regards its technique. This has made it imperative that we should make up for past omission as quickly as possible and re-equip industry in the shortest possible time.

In this respect, things are not at their best as regards *transport* and especially *railways*. Railway traffic is developing at a tremendous rate and, on some lines, has far exceeded the pre-war standards. In order to make any progress in the domain of transport, it is also necessary to invest large sums in the work. Whereas at present the capital invested in transport and housing is less than invested in industry, we must in future avoid the great discrepancy which exists between industry on the one hand, housing and transport on the other hand, otherwise the insufficient development of transport and housing may act as a drag on the development of our whole economics.

The total picture of the growth of the investment of capital both in industry and in other branches of national economy may be seen from the following table:—

*Investment of Capital in the National Economy of the Soviet Union
according to the Data of the Gosplan*

(In millions of Tchervonetz roubles)

			1924-25	1925-26	(Estimate) 1926-27
Industry .. .. .	..	..	385·0	780·1	917·8
Electricity .. .. .	..	..	39·0	109·0	153·0
Transport .. .. .	..	..	104·1	223·0	278·7
Agriculture .. .. .	..	..	272·3	349·8	509·4
Housing .. .. .	..	..	203·3	309·0	373·8
Other purposes .. .. .	..	..	137·3	247·8	312·2
Total .. .. .	..	..	1,141·0	2,018·7	2,544·9

In this respect we should remark that in the sum estimated for industry in 1926-27 (917·8 millions) a reserve of thirty million roubles has not been considered, that, in the outlay for electricity in the economic year 1924-25 only the money was reckoned which was allocated from the Budget and that further, under "other purposes," the investment of capital for post, telegraph and telephone, for municipal economics, the local construction of roads, elevators and refrigerators, hospitals, schools and buildings for People's Commissariats are to be understood.

These figures testify to the tremendous efforts which are being made by the country in undertaking such investments, and the great burden which it places on the whole economics and populations. Is the pace indicated by these columns of figures adapted to our strength and are we capable of keeping it up?

This year we are faced by the duty of carrying through a considerably extended programme of capital investment. The experiences of the last six months justify us in anticipating with every probability that in this year we shall succeed in avoiding the difficulties encountered last year.

The whole situation gives us reason to hope that the economic development which relies on a succession of good harvests, will take a more favourable course this year than last. Our arrangements for the provision of grain are fairly satisfactory. The condition of the money and currency market gives us no cause for anxiety, and we have not been obliged (as in the previous year) to resort to a supplementary issue of money in order to carry out the programme we have laid down. On April 1, the sum of money in circulation was about the same as on October 1 (October 1, 1926, 1,343·1 million roubles; on April 1, 1,346·5 million roubles); now there is not only no sign of a sudden fluctuation of the rouble but there are signs of our system of money becoming consolidated and of an increase in the purchasing power of the *tchervonetz*.

At the time of the Congress (to put it more exactly, in the first six months) we have already succeeded in accumulating about sixty million roubles.

The *monopoly of foreign trade* has had a considerable influence in this struggle for a favourable balance of our foreign

trade and to consolidate our position with regard to currency. From time to time, rumours are circulated abroad that our attitude towards the foreign trade monopoly is changing or must change. I take this opportunity of stating categorically that our foreign trade monopoly is one of the chief pillars of the whole economic policy of the Government and that no weakening of the monopoly can be admitted. The monopoly of foreign trade not only guarantees the possibility of a systematic management of all our relations in foreign trade but also protects the interests of the working population of the Soviet Union. The existence of the monopoly makes it possible for the Government to organise and develop our foreign trade in such a way that it can satisfy the requirements of the workers to the full.

I return to the question as to whether our *investment of capital* is adapted to our strength. Although there are no external, visible signs of general disorder in the economic situation of our country, we nevertheless sometimes hear complaints that the system might be overstrained. Here, at the Soviet Congress, we must not conceal the fact that this plan involves, of course, a great strain, but it would be quite impossible for our country to extricate itself from its extreme backwardness and to become a country of culture, wealth, and industry without making tremendous efforts.

We must start from the premiss that the immediate task of the Soviet Union is the creation of conditions of living for the workers and peasants which recall those of Tsarist times as little as possible. Unfortunately, we are still obliged to compare the wages of the worker with pre-war wages and the present situation of the peasantry with that in which they lived under the Tsar. We must put an end to the need for this comparison as quickly as possible by leaving the standard of living of Tsarist Russia far behind. It would, of course, be possible for us to use the money which we are spending this year on the Dnieprostroi and the Semirechensk railway, by distributing it to the poor in the villages and the unemployed in the towns or to spend the hundreds of millions of roubles intended for investment in industry on, let us say, a campaign against the destitution of children. What would be the result? Only that the distress we

should have tried to combat in so simple a way, would increase still more in the next years. For this reason, the policy adopted by the Government in this respect during the last two years, seems to me absolutely right.

In this respect it is worth while to call attention to the instructions given by the Third Soviet Congress with regard to the development of industry:—

In connection with the steadily growing requirements of the Soviet Union and with all the requirements of the development and intensification of agriculture and its increased capability of production, we must not only maintain the rate of expansion entered on by State industry, but we must intensify it, with the imperative preliminary condition, however, that the expansion is carried out in a strictly systematic order corresponding to the financial possibilities and requirements of the country, above all of peasant farming, and in keeping with the actual improvement of the quality of the products

It is impossible at the present time to carry on economic work without a well thought out plan of economic development calculated for many years. It will take five years to construct the Semirechensk railway or the Dnieprostroi. If we proceed with the construction of the Volga-Don canal, it also will require no less time. A number of other works of construction will also require long periods. The Gosplan has now made a preliminary sketch of five years' plan which will be laid before the Government for examination in the immediate future. From this plan it is evident that the measure of the investment of capital in national economy during the next five years will amount to about fifteen to twenty milliard roubles.

To what purposes and in what way these means are to be invested, how much of them is to be devoted to agriculture, how much to industry, and how much to transport, is at present one of the most important and most difficult questions of our economic reconstruction.

III. Industrialisation and the Economic "Smytchka" of the Working Class with the Peasantry

After the slogan of the industrialisation of the country had been issued, many persons formed the opinion that this slogan was a spear-head directed against agriculture. In order to prove how utterly unfounded is such a view, I quote the figures of the

expenditure on *agriculture* in the last economic years from 1923-24 to 1926-27.

According to the estimates of the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, according to the local budgets, according to the financing of agriculture by extraordinary allocations, including the expenditure on the irrigation of Trans-Caucasia and Turkestan, the allocations from the State Budget alone and from local means amounted to 114.5 million roubles in 1923-24, to 239.9 million roubles in 1924-25, to 309.7 million roubles in 1925-26 and to 335.8 million roubles in 1926-27.

Thus, in four years, we have spent more than a milliard roubles on the requirements of agriculture out of the State Budget and of local budgets. Apart from this, agriculture receives money through the system of agricultural credit. These sums amount to 203 million roubles this year. We see from this that 550 million roubles will be spent on agriculture in the current economic year, a sum which is twice as high as the sum allocated in 1913.

The capital invested in agriculture through the Central Cotton Committee, the Sugar Trust and other organisations, the economic expenditure of which on agriculture amounts to many millions of roubles, is not included in the particulars given.

There is no doubt that the outlay mentioned is insufficient. It must be quite categorically admitted that our agriculture is not capable of developing with the necessary rapidity by itself, without the help of the State.

The need for this help from the State is being felt particularly acutely at present, because agriculture also has come to the end of its period of "reconstruction," in the sense that the peasantry, in view of its backward technique, cannot continue to develop agriculture—especially in the thickly populated districts—in spite of their having completely appropriated the whole of the land which was previously private property and is now in the hands of the peasantry and in spite of their exhaustive use of all the extensive methods of agriculture.

The chief trouble in the villages is the so-called surplus population, *i.e.*, those hands who cannot find employment in agriculture itself. This over-population is the result of our

extraordinary backwardness in agriculture. This backwardness is expressed in the very low produce of our harvests which is two or three times below the norm of the yield of the harvests in foreign countries where agriculture is practised on modern lines. Whereas with us, fifty to sixty poods of rye to the dessiatine are regarded as a good harvest, 140 to 150 poods are by no means rare abroad.

Signs are making themselves felt at present which indicate that something is wrong in the domain of cattle-breeding and of the cultivation of raw materials. The Government has taken a number of measures directed towards overcoming the perceptible delay in the development of cattle-breeding and of the cultivation of raw materials.

It would, however, be incorrect to regard the wrong policy concerning the prices of raw materials last year as the only cause of the difficulties in the matter of raw materials. It is indisputable that fairly serious mistakes were committed in this respect, but they are not the only basis of the difficulties by which we are faced in the whole question of raw materials. Only think! In Belgium the harvest produces seventy-two poods of flax per dessiatine, in our country it only yields sixteen to eighteen poods. In the districts where flax is grown, almost all the suitable land has already been taken into cultivation. In order to make further progress, we must cultivate new land in these districts, but there is no new land. We shall not, therefore, achieve great results, in view of the present level of agriculture, of the existing area under cultivation, of the yield of sixteen to eighteen poods. Measures must be taken at once to introduce organic changes into the system of agriculture itself. We must ensure a transition from the threefold to a manifold rotation of crops, the use of better seed, improved manuring, &c. If we cannot equal the Belgians, we must at least, as quickly as possible, raise our production per dessiatine to half what is achieved by the Belgians.

Agriculture is at present carried on to a considerable extent on the lines of natural farming. This is particularly to be seen in the fact of the accumulation of so-called "invisible" stores of grain. The Central Statistical Office has given information in which it states that the possible measure of this accumulation

in kind on July 1 was something approaching 700 million poods. This is rather more than the stores which were reported by statistics in the pre-war time.

These stores indicate an undoubted improvement in the well-being of the peasantry. They form a reserve in agriculture in the event of elementary catastrophes, bad harvests, and drought. By ensuring agriculture against such misfortunes, the peasants insure at the same time the whole national economy, the whole country.

This form of storing up in kind is the result, firstly of the elementary nature and the instability of peasant farming, which insures itself against elementary catastrophes in this way, and secondly of the insufficient connection between town and village. The chief cause which prevents the development of the connection between town and village, between industry and agriculture, is the unfavourable relation between the prices of agricultural products and industrial products. The reduction of the prices of industrial products, at which all the Soviet organs are working with all energy, is an absolutely indispensable preliminary both for the general improvement of the position of the mass of the people in general and of the peasantry in particular and also for ensuring on this basis the necessary economic *Smychka* between town and village, and the most rapid development of agriculture.

Some comrades consider it a contradiction that on the one hand we set ourselves the task of promoting the progressive forms of the development of agriculture, the general use of machines in agriculture and the transition to more perfected methods of the cultivation of the soil whilst, on the other hand, we wish to support our policy on the masses of the poor and middle peasantry, as we have done in the past. I must strongly emphasise that there is no contradiction in this. In the villages the Government has relied on the masses of the poor and middle peasants and will continue to do so in the future. Our policy, which is directed towards limiting the growth of the Kulaks and their efforts at exploitation, remains unshaken.

The development of agriculture on the basis of a higher technique will only be successful if the whole mass of the middle

and poor peasants is included in the process of intensification, of the qualitative growth of agriculture. The social position of the poor peasant makes him the nearest neighbour of the worker. Our whole policy is directed towards helping the poor peasant to get his farming on its feet and to lift him out of his poverty. We rely on the poor peasant, but it is by no means our object, in supporting him, to keep him a poor peasant in the village for ever. In our country there will be less poor peasants in the villages every year. The *co-operatives* are, and always have been, the chief method of organising the peasants in the fight against poverty and to improve their farming. We are now trying to popularise the use of improved machines, improved seed and manures in the villages. All this, of course, costs money, and it is not every peasant who can buy them, not only among the poor but perhaps even among the middle peasants. If the middle and poor peasantry refuses to organise itself in co-operatives, the Kulak elements, the rich peasants, will introduce this re-organisation in their farming, will make use of tractors and become a stratum out of which may, in the end, develop landed proprietors.

When we speak of co-operatives, we must not fail to refer to a very important fact in our economic life, *i.e.*, the successful way in which private capital has been driven out from important branches of trade. Whilst, in former times, the private trader had almost the whole retail trade and something like half the wholesale trade in his hands, so that he was in reality the master of the market, the private trader has now been ousted to a considerable extent during the past two years, thanks to the increased activities of the co-operatives and of the trading organisations of the State. In 1924, the private trader took 22 per cent of the turnover in wholesale trade, and in this year only 10 per cent.; in retail trade his share fell from 60 to 40 per cent., 60 per cent. now being in the hands of the co-operatives and of State trading. The private trader has also, to a certain extent, been driven out of the domain of the trade in grain. Whereas last year the private loads of grain transported to the consumers by rail amounted to 20 per cent., the amount fell this year to 5 per cent. and in the course of a few months to 2 per cent.

Comrades, I started my report with Lenin's words about the importance of agriculturalists, engineers and technicians in our economic work. Now that we have proceeded to carry out industrialisation, the question of technicians from the intellectual class has acquired special significance. We have proceeded to the reconstruction of the industry, transport and agriculture and the whole economics of the country on the basis of modern technique. Decisive results in this work can only be achieved if, firstly, cadres of people are found who are sufficiently instructed in the domain of these achievements and who are able to apply them practically and, secondly, if these cadres work with the sincerity, the energy and the devotion to the interests of the workers which is due to the task of constructing Socialism.

No satisfactory solution has hitherto been found to the question of our whole work being carried out by the intellectuals. We have endeavoured to enlist all the intellectuals living in our country in the work, we have enlarged the universities and provided them with students from among the workers and peasants, but the need for specialists grows much faster than these new cadres. In a number of cases we resort to making use of the experiences of Western Europe and America by employing Western European technicians for our work, a very costly experiment.

In the future the technical workers must take more responsibility, must take a greater share in economic construction. In accordance with this, their duties and rights in our economic bodies must be more definitely determined. In connection with the new, special tasks of the economic development of the Soviet Union, the share taken by the intellectuals, the specialists and the technicians in our regulating organs, must grow. In connection with this, however, it is particularly necessary to emphasise that the strengthening of the part taken by the specialists must in no circumstances be allowed to lead to a renewal of the caste interests in which the intellectuals of former times were brought up.

Still a few words, comrades, on the *campaign against bureaucratism* which is being carried on by the Government, especially by the inspection of workers and peasants. Lenin spoke innumerable times, we have all spoken, about the necessity of fighting against bureaucratism. It is our duty to construct

an apparatus for the administration of the State which is cheap, which answers its purpose and which appeals to the broad masses. I must admit that the experience of the past years convinces us that this work presents tremendous difficulties. It is far more difficult than it seemed to be at first. Not until the last few years have there been any signs of some success in this campaign against bureaucracy. These achievements are the result of our having arrived at a more active and direct participation of the masses in the work of our Soviet and economic organs through the Soviets and through a number of other organisations.

At this Congress, we can boast of having accomplished much in this field. After the Third Soviet Congress, the share taken by the peasants and the workers both in the Soviet elections and in the work of the Soviets and further in the work of the co-operatives, increased greatly. The greatest increase of political activity was shown by the working class and the middle and poor strata of the peasant population. About half a million peasants and workers are now enrolled in the work of our institutions for administering the law. Through the last measures in the domain of financial politics, a financial foundation has been laid for the local Soviets and their budget now amounts to 1,700 million roubles.

Comrades, we have set ourselves tasks of extraordinary difficulty. In the course of two years we have fulfilled them with more or less success. The only and most important pledge that the Government of our country does not commit the mistakes which can and must be avoided lies in the fact that the Government's programme of work, every step it takes, all its economic measures are discussed throughout the system of the Soviets from the highest to the lowest. The Soviet system—the system of the all-embracing form of the organisation of the workers—must be turned into a laboratory in which all the best representatives of the workers and peasants are constantly being promoted and in which they take an active part in the whole construction of our Soviet Union. We can only fulfil the tremendous task of constructing Socialism in our backward country with the help of the whole population, of the whole mass of the workers and peasants numbering many millions.

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INDIA

Trade Union Congress

THE Seventh Annual Session of the All-Indian Trade Union Congress was held at Delhi on March 12 and 13. Owing to the short notice on which it was called and the existence of a split in the trade union movement in Bengal, the number of delegates attending was less than fifty, although the number of affiliated unions had increased since the last Congress from fifty-two to fifty-seven.

Before delivering his address, the President, Rai Saheb Chandrika Prasaed, extended the hearty greetings and welcome of the Congress to Mr. S. Saklatvala, M.P., who was present. The President dealt in his address with the deplorable conditions of the working masses of India. Discussing the position of trade unionism, he said that the caste system had become rigid and was now a serious obstacle in the way of Indian advance.

Prior to Saklatvala's visit, several leaders of the British trade union movement had been in India propagating the idea of forming an Indian Labour Party on the model of the British Labour Party. This proposal had been seriously entertained at the preceding Congress Session, but this year the proposal was severely condemned. The main objection to forming such a party was that, even if the legislatures were not a farce, the vast majority of Indian workers had no vote.

The following are some of the chief resolutions passed by the Congress:—

(1) This Congress extends its cordial welcome and greetings of Indian workers to Mr. S. Saklatvala, M.P., and takes this opportunity of thanking him publicly for his valiant fight in the cause of millions of Indian workers and peasants, and thanks the electors of North Battersea for returning him to Parliament for the purpose of carrying on a united fight for British and Indian workers.

(2) (a) This Congress puts on record its whole-hearted approval of the magnificent advance made by the people of China towards the attainment of National freedom and in pursuit of the principle of self-determination. The Congress warmly appreciates the valuable work that has been done by the trade unions and peasants' organisations which, under the leadership of Kuomintang, have frustrated the aggressive designs of the united imperialistic powers. The Congress, while pledging its full support to the movement of liberation in China, expresses its firm conviction that the cause of Indian Nationalism and the struggle of the working classes against exploitation should

profit from the example of solidarity of the Nationalist movement and the workers and peasants' organisations as set by China.

(b) This Congress vehemently protests against the action of the Indian Government in furthering the aims of imperialism by sending Indian troops to China, and calls upon the Government of India to recall all such troops.

(3) This Congress is of opinion that legislation shall immediately be passed providing for all workers working in factories, mines, tea, coffee and rubber plantations, and in all other organised trades and industries:—

(a) Adult franchise.

(b) An eight-hour day.

(c) Machinery for fixing minimum wages.

(d) Sickness and unemployment insurance.

(e) Old-age pensions and pensions for widows and orphans.

(f) Maternity benefits.

(g) Weekly payment of wages.

(4) This Congress reaffirms its old resolution protesting against the system of fines prevailing in industrial and commercial firms and railways, and requests the Government of India to pass legislation making illegal all agreements between the employers and the employed enabling the employers to make deductions on account of fines from the wages or salaries of the employed.

(5) This Congress deplores the practice of the employment of women working underground, and requests the Government to prohibit it immediately.

(6) This Congress urges that Sundays be observed as full holidays, and rules for granting leave on full pay be made for all mines in India.

(7) This Congress views with approval the efforts which have been made by the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee to bring about unity between the International Federation of Trade Unions and Red International of Labour Unions, and expresses a hope that the international unity will soon be achieved, and regrets its inability to consider joining the international movement till such unity is achieved.

SOUTH AFRICA

Trade Unions and the I.F.T.U.

IN South Africa there exist organisations for white workers which no coloured worker can join, and there are also special organisations of coloured workers. At the head of the white organisations is the *South African Trades Union Congress* with a membership of 20,000, while the organisations of the coloured workers are bound together by the "Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers," which has a membership of 30,000 to 40,000 workers.

The South African Trades Union Congress

A few years ago the South African Industrial Federation (which is now defunct) joined the Amsterdam International. In its day it was the organisation of the white workers, but although it had ceased to exist its name remained on the books of the Amsterdam International.

Now at the 1926 Congress of the South African T.U.C. (white workers) the question of this affiliation to the Amsterdam International was reopened, and a resolution was passed emphasising the fact that the T.U.C. was not affiliated to an international organisation, and demanding that the Amster-

dam International take its name from the lists. In answer to the demand the following original reply came from Amsterdam :—

We cannot carry out your wish . . . because an organisation can only be struck off the lists of the Amsterdam International after a resolution has been passed by a competent authority of that organisation.

It thus follows that in order that the South African T.U.C. may be struck off the lists of the Amsterdam International, the old "Industrial Federation" must be resuscitated! Amsterdam's answer needs no comment. It has had the opportunity of entering in relations with another Trade Union Centre which, in the person of its leader, shows itself better disposed towards relations with Amsterdam. Let us consider the circumstances of Amsterdam's change of front.

The Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (I.C.U.)

The membership of this organisation consists of both native and immigrant coloured workers. Until recently it was a revolutionary organisation, pursuing a militant class-war policy, standing to the left of the South African T.U.C. (white workers), and having, amongst its leading officials, several Communists. At the last conference it was decided to endeavour to enter into relations with the British T.U.C.

It must, however, be admitted that at the national conference of the Union the reformists quantitatively achieved a success. They waged a heated war on the Communists in order to obtain complete hold of the trade union machinery, and then changed the goal from class-war to that of class-collaboration. By means of various intrigues the reformists have rooted themselves to the organisation.

Already in November of last year it became known that the I.C.U. had expressed a desire to become affiliated to the Amsterdam International. Militant workers at once protested and pointed out the incompatibility of the revolutionary colonial workers with the reformist Amsterdam International. But the Press Report of the I.F.T.U. showed that application for affiliation had already been received from the I.C.U.

The reformist leaders, of course, could not wangle the entry into the Amsterdam International without a fight. The Communists opposed the move to their utmost, and, naturally, the reformists have done everything possible to exclude them from the Union. On December 16, at Port Elizabeth, a national meeting of the Union was called. Kadalie attacked the Communist Party, and urged the refusal of an invitation to the Brussels Anti-Imperialist Conference, which was a "Bolshevik affair, financed from Moscow." Kadalie's proposals were accepted (only thirteen people took part in the meeting), and the three Communists who had leading posts in the Union were sacked after refusing to desert their party. It was also decided to ignore the Brussels Conference.

Since then it has been interesting to find in the London *Lansbury's Weekly* an article by Kadalie in which the Brussels Conference against Colonial Repression (Lansbury was chairman) was bitterly attacked.

With the Communists and militants thus shut out from the union, relations with the Amsterdam International were much easier, and the

International decided on recommending the entry of the Union into its respectable fold.

The result is that the Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers is taking the place of the old Industrial Federation (as the *New Statesman* pointed out), and the good feeling that exists between Amsterdam and the coloured workers is explained by the fact that "*the new trade union leaders are really more moderate than the white South Africans.*"

Kadalie now declares that "the Union is a right-thinking organisation," that "strikes are a weakening, useless, old-fashioned method of fighting," and the Union can only achieve its end by constitutional means. He declares that if he were "by chance" deprived of his work in the Union he would "immediately build up a separate organisation," and so achieve his end nevertheless.

The campaign of Kadalie and Co. against the Communists continues. Not only single members, but whole sections are expelled from the Union if they oppose the "Clear out the Reds" campaign.

The question of unity between the white and the coloured workers has not been broached from either side. The white unions are averse from the proposal of unity, and while formerly the coloured unions supported unity the position to-day, with Kadalie as leader, is uncertain.

The Congress of White Unions

The Annual Congress took place in April, the agenda of which contained the following points:—

- (1) Relations with I.L.O. in Geneva. The E.C. asked the organisations whether the I.L.O. should be combated or supported.
- (2) Declaration of solidarity with workers and peasants of China. The E.C. proposed an appeal to the workers in favour of the recognition of the rights of all oppressed colonial peoples, and a demand for self-determination.
- (3) The trade unions must exercise pressure on the Government to bring about a simplification and improvement of the methods of working the Arbitration Commission.
- (4) *Unemployment.* The Congress wishes to put the following demands to the Government:—
 - [(a) A maximum working week for all workers of 44 hours.
 - (b) State employment bureaux to work only under the wage rates of the trade unions.
 - (c) The subsidising of single industries to go only so far as is necessary to maintain in those industries the present demand for labour.
 - (d) Compulsory regulation of apprenticeships.
- (5) *Organisation.* The E.C. proposed the following:—
 - (a) Unification of all trade unions in South Africa into one Federation.
 - (b) Reorganisation of unions on the basis of industry.
 - (c) Fight for the acknowledgment of trade unions by the Government in the direction of all technical institutions, technical schools, &c

The previous Congress carried a resolution in favour of one single trade union international, and in support of the Anglo-Russian Committee. The agenda of this year's Congress did not contain a single reference to the unity of the international trade union movement.

The question of the I.L.O. only gained interest after the I.C.U. had affiliated to the Amsterdam International, and had also decided to send Kadalie to Geneva as a representative of the whole of the working class of South Africa. *Forward*, the organ of the white workers' unions, wrote in this connection that Kadalie would not represent the interests of the workers but the capitalists, and that the T.U.C. could not have connections with the I.L.O., as it was a capitalist organisation.

The organisation took its stand at the Brussels Conference against the oppression of colonial peoples. The motion of the executive recognising the rights of colonial peoples and to demand self-determination marks a step forward.

As appears from the last report of the party conference of the C.P.S.A. the influence of the Communists in the trade unions (white workers) has grown. Thirty trade union delegates took part in the party conference.

CHINA

The Fifth Conference of the Communist Party

THE history of the Communist Party of China during the past two years can be divided into four periods. The first period extends from the fourth party conference to the rebellion of Kuo Sun Ling, in December, 1925. It is characterised by the rise of the movement to its highest point at the time of the shootings in Shanghai on May 30, 1925. While the proletariat was fighting for the hegemony in the revolutionary movement, it was still possible, even at this time, to observe the beginnings of bourgeois defection. The Communist Party waged war on the bourgeois tendencies voiced by Tai Tsi Tao, and as a step in the right direction accentuated the opposition to British imperialism.

The next period dates from December, 1925, to the retreat of the National army from the heights of Hankow. It is a period remarkable for the recession of the revolutionary movement. Class differences within the revolutionary movement began to be more manifest, the bourgeoisie was busy organising its political parties, and Chiang Kai Shek appeared as the armed disciple of the bourgeois precepts of Tai Tsi Tao. The Canton Conference of the Kuomintang, in May, 1926, was wholly under the influence of Chiang Kai Shek. The Communist Party retreated through lack of forces, inadequate preparations; and, it must be admitted, many mistakes were made at Hankow.

The third period extends to the occupation of Shanghai by the Nationalist forces and is again characterised by a rise in the revolutionary movement. The workers' movement developed a broad foundation, for organisation of the peasants was established, and the struggle against foreign imperialism increased. The expedition to the north was the result of collaboration between the workers and the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless the class

differences were intensified, and at Shanghai there was a complete rupture between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the latter revealing pronounced anti-revolutionary tendencies. Chiang distinguished himself as the executioner of militant workers.

The fourth period (since the *coup* of Chiang Kai Shek) is altogether different from the preceding ones in that the bourgeoisie has fallen out of the revolutionary front. The result has been a consolidation of the united front of the proletariat, the peasantry, and the petit-bourgeoisie.

From an historical point of view the defection of the Chinese bourgeoisie is no new departure. In history this has invariably happened. The Chinese bourgeoisie is opposed to the feudalists and militarists, but favours a compromise with the foreign imperialists, from whom it hopes to receive rewards and favours. The participation of the petit-bourgeoisie in the revolution has, of course, been characterised by vacillation. The fifth party conference decided, however, that the proletariat must make concessions to the petit-bourgeoisie in order to ensure its support. The task of the Communist Party in China consists of drawing the petit-bourgeoisie within the folds of the Kuomintang.

The question of Shanghai is also a problem of the mutual relations of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The proletariat of Shanghai fought splendidly, but it must be borne in mind that the city is not only a centre of the proletariat but also a very important stronghold of the bourgeoisie. Even combined with the petit-bourgeoisie, the proletariat of Shanghai is still too weak. The opinion prevails that Shanghai cannot become the basis of the national revolution. Indeed, it is said that it will only be possible to deal imperialism at Shanghai a decisive blow when the national revolution has taken firm footing all over China. This essentially mechanical theory of determinism is not devoid of certain elements of truth.

The military forms of the Nationalist movement did not originate in the revolutionary masses themselves. The armed force of the people is not yet organised. The present armed forces of the National Government have developed out of the old militarist army and consist partly of peasants and partly of the mob. The commanders of these forces are descendants of the landlord class. Therefore the army is a doubtful force. For the revolutionary army it is essential that the proportion of riff-raff in the ranks and the proportion of landlords' sons among the commanders be materially reduced. The vacillations of the army have their social bases.

Amongst many other sections of the Report which was submitted to the Party Conference is one dealing with the relations of the Communist Party of China to the Kuomintang. As the Kuomintang is a revolutionary league of many classes it was essential that the proletarian party should enter it. At present the Kuomintang is a union of three classes: the workers, the peasants, and the petit-bourgeoisie. This union will be strong so long as it is in a position to satisfy the requirements of the classes it represents—the peasant class in particular—and, of course, providing that the bourgeoisie under Chiang Kai Shek does not succeed in subordinating it.

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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London-Caledonian Press Ltd.
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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

August, 1927

Number 8

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NOTES of the MONTH

Gathering Storm—New Nine Months—Intensified Attack—Foreign Office Policy—War Preparations—Home Attack—New Period—Transformation of Bourgeois Policy—General Strike Influence—E.P.A. Precedent—"Repeal" Promises of E.P.A.—"Nullifying" the Trade Unions Act—House of Lords Reform—Aim Against Socialism—Differences only of Tactics—Forcing Labour Party to Illegality—MacDonald's Impotence—Labour Party Supports Lords—"Left" Bombast—"Left" and Revolution—Present Defeatism—Prepare!

THE present situation is a situation of gathering storm. At no time since the war have the thunder-clouds been so heavy and threatening. The British bourgeoisie is openly and avowedly marshalling every force at its command, above ground and underground, to deliver what it hopes will prove a smashing assault on the working-class movement at home and abroad. The policy of the British Government is summed up in the statement of the Home Secretary that "in the near future all the nations in the world will have to combine to stamp out the belief and propaganda" of what he calls Bolshevism, by which he means the organised struggle and movement of the working class and of the subject nations. The signs of offensive preparation and action are open and evident on every hand. The war in China, the military and naval preparations, the diplomatic intrigues and fostering of counter-revolution in Europe; and at the same time the Trade Unions Act and House of Lords scheming at home: all these are signs that point as clearly as the time-fuse of a bomb in one direction, and in one direction only, the direction of war on the workers and counter-revolution. The worsening economic situation, shown in the renewed (actually never broken) coal crisis, and the sharpening imperialist antagonism, shown in the Geneva Naval Conference, as well as the weakening and political discredit of the Government at home, all hasten the crisis. The

British Government, and entire British governing machine, is consciously preparing, organising and driving in the direction of international war, civil war, and counter-revolution. This is not only a question of the present immediate crisis, but of the whole period in front. And the British working-class movement is still witnessing every step of this preparation passive and unprepared, as in the days before the General Strike.

IT is a situation in many ways comparable to the nine months preceding the General Strike—only this time on a world scale, and threatening to lead to a crisis so many times greater than the General Strike as to leave it by comparison no more than a preparatory incident. Then, as now, the strategic and offensive preparations of the Government, despite all the secrecy of details, were manifest and unmistakable in their main outlines. Then it was the O.M.S., the Civil Commissioners, and the ideological preparation of the Samuel Report; now it is the break with the Soviet Union, the Fascist coups and secret negotiations in Europe, the Trade Unions Act and constitutional changes, and the ideological preparation of anti-Soviet propaganda and forgeries and anti-Red propaganda in the Labour Movement. Then, as now, the intentions of the Government, despite a formal accompaniment of official pacifist sentiments, were unmistakably proclaimed in the militant utterances of a Birkenhead, a Churchill, or a Joynson-Hicks, no less than in the more veiled, but no less menacing, declarations of a Baldwin or a Chamberlain. And then, as now, the reformist leadership of the Labour Movement professed to the last to refuse to believe in the approach of the crisis, preached the old empty pacifist, legalist, constitutional illusions without facing the consequences of the new facts confronting them, vetoed and sabotaged all preparation to meet the open attack as provocative or unnecessary, and assisted the Government campaign of ideological preparation by accepting and spreading the propaganda of calumny and defeatism. Then it was the propaganda of defeat, of acceptance of wage-reductions, attacks on the miners, veto of preparation, and condemnation of workers' defence or the united front. To-day, it is attacks on the Soviet Union, appeals to surrender, condemnation of workers' self-

defence against counter-revolutionary agents, passive acceptance of the Trade Unions Act and similar shackling measures, and thus preparation and working for a catastrophe for the workers. There is, however, to-day this difference, that the primary centre of attack to-day, the Soviet Union, is led by a party and a movement which understands what preparation means, and which is showing the world a model of how to prepare to meet the bourgeois attack and drive it back.

A GAIN and again it has been stressed in these Notes that every weakening on the workers' side leads at once, not to an easing of the situation, but to a strengthening of the attack. Once again this fact has been illustrated by the events of the past month, and the raising of the new issue of the House of Lords proposals to counter any possible setback from a General Election. The successive steps have followed with accelerating speed since the beginning of the year, that is, since the ending of the miners' struggle; and the weak and passive reception of each one has led to a new and wider sweep of the attack. In January came the dispatch of the Expeditionary Force to China; and the Labour Movement, instead of performing its international duty of resisting the dispatch of the imperialist troops, was engaged in the Special Trades Union Conference for licking the dust and kicking the miners (at which the issue of China was not even allowed to be raised). In February came the Note to the Soviet Union in preparation for the future attack; and the leader of the Labour Party declared that "if he had been in office it would have been a stiffer Note." In March the Parliamentary Labour Party dropped even the verbal demand for the withdrawal of troops from China; and there followed at once the bombardment of Nanking and breaking of the Nationalist advance; on which the leader of the Labour Party declared that the events in Nanking (not the bombardment, but the alleged acts of the Chinese, which were being made the British *casus belli* against Chinese Nationalism) were "deplorable" and "could not be left where they were (Ministerial cheers)." In April, the Chinese struggle was believed by British imperialism to be

smashed, and there followed at once the Trade Unions Bill; the tactics of the official Labour Movement to meet this blow at the whole of working-class organisation were to "dispute it, comma by comma, in Parliament" even though it should cost nights of lost sleep (this little problem was soon dealt with by the guillotine), while a dissentient group proposed abstinence from tobacco and drink; any proposals actively to resist the Bill were officially refused to be put at the Labour Conferences throughout the country against the Bill. In May, following on this culminating capitulation, came the Arcos raid and the break with the Soviet Union, the Government now throwing aside all pretence of moderation and coming out in open Fascist guise; the criticism of the official Labour spokesmen was that "Russia must not be condemned without trial: we refuse to assume either the guilt or the innocence of Russia"; while the reformist leaders hastened to imitate the bourgeois break by working for the break of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee. In June, in straight succession of the Cabinet's policy of ever-enlarging attack, came the House of Lords proposals to prepare to circumvent even the remaining "constitutional" dreams of the Labour Movement. The blindest cannot fail to see the line of campaign and the ground covered in this short half year, or the direction in which this line leads.

THERE are those who still profess to disbelieve in the certainty of the crisis, in the magnitude of the attack on the whole rights and future development of working-class organisation in Britain, or in the certainty of the British intention and aim of war on the Soviet Union, so soon as a favourable situation can be secured. They prefer still to place their trust in the crumbling promises of constitutional democracy, or in the empty professional assurances of a Chamberlain. The chairman of the General Council, according to Tomskey's report, actually declared at the Berlin meeting in June, with regard to the proposal of a joint campaign against the war danger: "Certainly, but there is no war. Why cry 'Wolf! Wolf!' when there is no wolf?" Such a criminal indifference to plain facts and needs is nothing but equivalent to a similar attitude on the eve of 1914 and acceptance of official assurances that the Foreign

Office had no secret commitments and no policy of encirclement. And, indeed, it is worth noting in this connection that Chamberlain himself was at pains to declare in the recent parliamentary debate on foreign policy that the alleged Foreign Office policy of the encirclement of Russia had no more foundation in fact than the alleged pre-war encirclement of Germany: "the Soviet apprehensions were merely the tragic repetition of the obsession of encirclement which had so fatally prevailed in pre-war Germany." (*The Times*, July 12, 1927.) The parallel carries with it its own conclusion. If the "obsession of encirclement" "so fatally prevailed" before, it is obviously suggested that it may "fatally prevail" again, with, of course, precisely the same complete innocence of the Foreign Office in bringing about the event. But the repetition of the blind heedlessness or idle doubts and hesitations or practical indifference to the whole trend of events on the part of Labour representatives to-day is a hundred times more serious than before the last war; since what is involved to-day is no longer simply a question of the danger of war *alone*, but a question of the direct organised attack of the forces of the bourgeoisie in decline upon the entire working-class movement and on the revolution.

ON the immediate issue of the international situation it is worth while to ask the chairman of the General Council and his colleagues one or two obvious questions. Why has the break with the Soviet Union taken place? It is obvious that it was not because of the "discoveries" of the Arcos raid, since nothing was discovered. Nor can it be suggested that it was to increase trade. It was a political step, taken in contradiction to special economic interests. But such a political step of hostility, overriding immediate trade interests, has no meaning and no purpose save as a preparation for its outcome, war, so soon as circumstances are favourable and ready. The Foreign Office blandly denies any such intention. Why, then, should the whole European Press assume it? Why should governmental and semi-official French and German journals discuss at length the pros and cons, the possible bargains and concessions, of entering or not entering into the British policy of a *bloc* against the Soviet

Union? Why should *The Times* declare that at the League of Nations Council meeting in June (not the stage-play Council meeting enacted in public for the liberal pacifist blockheads, but the real meetings in secret of the Powers) "the Russian problem dwarfs all others"? Why should every sign of military and naval preparations, particularly in relation to the border states, bear out the policy? Why should a British naval squadron cruise in the Baltic, following the break, with the newly-built Polish port of Gdynia for its base, visiting the various capitals, and its officers the guests of Pilsudski in Warsaw? Why should Denmark be engaged in deepening the Drogden narrows of the Sound, so as to admit, according to the *Temps*, the passage of larger warships to the Baltic? Why should the Aldershot tattoo stage the "burning of Moscow"? These and a hundred other daily signs are, as before the Anglo-German war, the obvious signs of a whole direction of policy; and it is only the detail working out that depends on the complexities of the situation. What matters is not the idle speculation of when and how this manifest direction of policy will work itself out, but alone the practical problem how to meet it, to counter it, if possible to prevent it, and, failing prevention, to be ready to act and answer the blow when it falls. And the way to do this is certainly not to belittle the danger, to prevent and postpone any meeting of the Anglo-Russian Committee or joint-campaign or common plans, to place petty personal feelings of soreness at criticism in front of big political issues, and to create a general atmosphere of doubt, confusion, inaction, and unpreparedness up to the very point of the breaking out of war.

BUT it is not a question simply of foreign policy and the international situation as something separable from the home situation. The attack of the British bourgeoisie is equally an attack at home, and the home situation is only understandable and can only be treated as an integral part of the international situation. The Trade Unions Act and the House of Lords proposals are the counterpart of the war on China and the break with the Soviet Union; and the problem of defence and reply is a common problem. If the General Council is failing abroad, it is failing equally at home, and for the same reason: inability

and unwillingness to face the new conditions of struggle set by the bourgeoisie. The Trade Unions Act is the immediate weapon for paralysing the working-class movement; and the General Council has not only accepted the Act without a struggle, even vetoing the suggestion of a struggle, but in addition now, in the face of its legal imposition on the Unions, has given no lead so far whatever, but has left the different unions to follow different policies without any united front. But the Trade Unions Act itself is only one part of the campaign. The House of Lords proposals, and still more the discussion accompanying them, show even more profoundly the whole line of calculations and policy of the bourgeoisie for the coming period. The legal preparation of counter-revolution needs the most careful examination and the clearest exposure and warning in time beforehand. In the last few months' issues the international situation and development of the offensive have been examined. But it is necessary now to turn with more closeness to the home position and what is there threatening. It is necessary to ask plainly: What is happening in the British political situation? What is the line of the bourgeoisie, and where is the Labour Movement going? What are the prospects in front, and what are the preparations to meet them?

IT is clear that a change in the whole direction of bourgeois policy in England is taking place in the present period. The increasing rôle of the Die-hards is not a transient episode of machine politics, but reflects a real change of the general outlook of the bourgeoisie, which can be paralleled in almost every sphere of their life (the recent action of Oxford University in reversing the post-war equal admission of women is a trifling, but significant, example of the general trend of regression). The character of the change may be most simply expressed as the increasingly open recognition of the two camps of the class struggle as the decisive factor in the social and political situation (with this may be compared the trend of bourgeois literature to greater openness, cynicism, brutality, as the "modern" note). The traditional policy was to conceal in every possible way the existence of the classes, and to hide to the maximum the coercive machinery

of the State. Fabianism, which to-day smells mustily of the unreal pre-war liberal imperialist period that gave it its historical character, was the reflection of this; its "correction" of Marx consisted essentially in the diplomatic omission of the rôle of classes and the class struggle, and consequent false theory of the State, belief in capitalism and the possibility of capitalist harmony, and acceptance of imperialism; hence its helplessness, and the helplessness of the Labour Movement under its guidance to-day, before the facts of the crude class struggle (Webb's indignant explosion at the "astonishing" Trade Unions Act "putting back the clock"; Mrs. Webb's letter to miners' wives on "the Russian Revolution" as "the greatest disaster in the history of the British Labour Movement"). This traditional outlook and policy was increasingly unreal in contrast to the growing class struggle and State anti-labour organisation during the past twenty years; nevertheless right up to and including Lloyd George, the social progressive colour was still attempted to be maintained. With the Baldwin era a new character begins to appear, reflecting capitalism in decline, the character of a pure possessive conservatism and open recognition of class-repression as the primary task. (In terms of personalities, Joynson-Hicks may be said to represent most crudely and comically the new type of the British bourgeois in a panic for his possessions; Birkenhead, the hired prizefighter of the new rôle; Baldwin, the transition from the old hypocritical type to the new Bourbonism; while Churchill, with his chameleon changes, reflects like an attentive actor, through his whole career, the changes of mood of the bourgeoisie, and ostentatiously reveals his hope to go forward to a prominent rôle in the final stage of full Fascism.)

THIS change is not, as is sometimes suggested, a sudden disappearance of political wisdom and the old governing skill on the part of the British bourgeoisie, and replacement by "stupid Toryism." On the contrary, it represents an adaptation to changed conditions, and is relatively as skilful in meeting those conditions as the old Liberalism. The change in policy of the bourgeoisie is only a reflection of the change in conditions. The new conditions rule out the pretence of ignoring the class

struggle. The Labour Movement to-day numbers five millions, or the overwhelming majority of the conscious population, and the only large-scale organisation and allegiance in the social structure. The handful of the bourgeoisie can only maintain a conscious and organised following (Liberal and Conservative parties; empire, patriotic and Fascist organisations; citizens' unions, &c.) of, at an outside estimate, a few hundred thousand. They maintain their position by their control of the social and political apparatus (employment and dismissals, administration, law, education, information, and propaganda, &c.), by the illusions, habits. and routine of the existing order, and by occasional stunt devices to whip up temporarily a portion of the unawakened masses behind their banners (jingo agitations, forged letter campaigns, &c.), with the coercive violence behind as far as possible in the background. But the real social basis of their traditional hold over the proletariat—the rising standard of life on the basis of imperialist monopoly profits—is gone; the tricks inevitably wear thin; the consciousness and strength of the Labour Movement, that is, of the awakened mass of the nation, steadily grows. These five millions are marshalled under the banner of Socialism, are seeking, with however much confusion and uncertainty still, to win possession of the means of life for the working mass from the class that owns them. Once this issue becomes clear, there is nothing left for the possessing class save the whip. The bourgeoisie begins to think more and more openly in terms of coercion. The face of the bourgeoisie changes from hypocritical Liberalism to brutal Diehardism. The scientific ingenuity that went to the devising of the old Liberal system goes now to the elaborating of the methods of counter-revolution. This is not to say that there is a sudden or abrupt change, that there is not a blending of the two methods, revivals of Liberalism, combinations of manœuvring and coercion, and the like. But the general trend of change is manifest. *The calculation of the bourgeoisie begins to be an open calculation in terms of a future fight.*

THE General Strike accelerated this process by awakening the bourgeoisie to the advanced stage that had been reached. It showed that the millions of the Labour

Movement existed as a conscious and fighting unity, able to act in an organised manner outside the whole existing State mechanism, and ready to make sacrifices in the cause of the class struggle such as nothing else could claim. The revelation of the General Strike exercised a profound impression on the outlook of the bourgeoisie. The immediate reaction is recorded in such a typical statement as in Sir Ernest Benn's book, issued in June, 1926:—

Nothing in my experience has impressed me so deeply as the sight of two or three million good, honest, decent men walking deliberately into trouble, poverty, and distress with a smile on their faces and a spirit in their hearts comparable only to that of the millions who faced another sort of sacrifice in a similarly lamentable undertaking in connection with the Great War. . . .

I confess that until May 3 I was unable to believe in the possibility of millions of men obeying a call from a body with which they were not directly connected, and at a moment's notice with enthusiastic spontaneity throwing away their incomes and facing all the privations that a strike means to a striker.

Even in the case of wars between nations it takes time to arouse a people to anything like solidarity. We ourselves in the Great War were not ready for conscription until the struggle had raged for nearly a couple of years. (E. J. P. Benn: *If I were a Labour Leader*, 1926, p. 9.)

Here, in the false conventional form of a comparison with the artificially created war "enthusiasm" of 1914, is a recognition of the essential fact that the General Strike revealed the most powerful spontaneous allegiance of the mass of the nation-to-be to the class struggle, and that this allegiance could command a response and discipline such as all the resources, propaganda and compulsory powers of the bourgeoisie could not in as short a time under even war circumstances parallel. This momentous fact has had a decisive, and still developing and deepening, influence on the whole current of bourgeois thought. Henceforth there is recognised no alternative save to break and smash the independent united working-class movement, and bring the remains under the close legal control (not merely bourgeois permeation and influence through leaders, since the revolutionary forces show signs of becoming too strongly organised for this to be sufficient) of the capitalist state administrative machine and judiciary. In 1925 the Die-hard policy of imposing legal disabilities on the trade unions was still rejected in the name of the old Liberal principles of

expediency. In 1927 the hundred-times stronger Trade Unions Act was carried with the overwhelming support of the majority of the bourgeoisie.

ONE previous basic law has preceded the Trade Unions Act in the evolution of the new type of State machinery of active class suppression, and this is the Emergency Powers Act of 1920. The Emergency Powers Act of 1920 was the first milestone in the new régime of conscious preparation against revolution. The Emergency Powers Act is the explicit incorporation of capitalist dictatorship in the Constitution. But this Act was still a preparation against "emergency," an extraordinary law for special occasions and not yet for everyday functioning. The Trade Unions Act is the first law of *permanent enslavement*, of direct abrogation of the right to strike or the right to combine except on a small scale, of making the withholding of labour or refusal of given terms of employment a criminal offence, of the exclusion of the trade unions from politics and the legal imposition of a special type of leadership and policy on the trade unions. Nevertheless, it is worth while to note with very great care the precedent of the Emergency Powers Act, because this Act already contains in principle the whole programme of the suppression of the trade unions and of the working-class movement to the dictatorship of the capitalist State. Under the Emergency Powers Act the Government can in practice carry out whatever measures it chooses with no pretence of legal sanction (it is noteworthy that an amendment at the time suggesting that the regulations should not be allowed to cover the complete abrogation of all the Trade Union Acts was explicitly refused). The Regulations may cover, in the words of the Home Secretary in introducing the measure, "all kinds of things that one may conceive." No Extraordinary Commission ever had such powers, as the process of rule by Order in Council, *i.e.*, by the capitalist bureaucracy under the Act (nominally checkable by Parliament, but only *after execution*). Under the Act the Government will be able, if it chooses, to shoot every trade union leader, blow up every trade union building, hang (or, in the form now fashionable and

affording delight to our civilised imperialist rulers, decapitate) every strike committee and agitator, and, if Parliament objects, blow up Parliament. Nevertheless, the Labour Movement has carried on no active fight against these powers of the capitalist state. This fact is the most significant fact about the Emergency Powers Act.

IT is customary to-day for the leadership of the Labour Movement to denounce the Trade Unions Act as destructive of trade unionism, to declare that the correct method to resist it is through Parliament by repeal at some future date, and to vow that the whole Labour Movement will work for its repeal. What is the experience with regard to the Emergency Powers Act? It is certainly not encouraging. When the Emergency Powers Act was originally introduced and pushed through all its stages in less than a week in 1920, the spokesmen of the movement loudly protested and vowed repeal. The Labour Party Annual Conference at Brighton in 1921 unanimously passed a resolution condemning the Act as "an anachronism in this so-called democratic state" and "instructing the Executive Committee and the Party in the House to take immediate steps to secure the repeal of the Act." Has any attempt been made to carry this out? On the contrary, the Labour Government in office made use of the Act against trade unionists; and the National Joint Council had to "deplore the suggestion that the Government may find itself compelled to employ the Emergency Powers Act." Not only that, but to-day we even find a sophistical "left-wing" defence of the Act put forward to cover up the betrayal and acceptance of the Act, to the effect that it may hereafter prove a useful weapon of Labour dictatorship against the capitalists. On this principle every militant worker should support every weapon of capitalist extraordinary powers and suppression, in the hope of a glorious hereafter, when the capitalists have had their turn first to smash the Labour Movement with them beforehand. The conception of utilising the capitalist bureaucratic, police, and military machine as a splendid instrument of dictatorship against the capitalists would be comic, if it were not seriously held by many left-wing innocents, who thus play straight into

the hands of MacDonald. For MacDonald and every serious Labour Front Bencher knows that the practical use of E.P.A. by a Labour Government will be against the Labour Movement, as experience has already shown. And the same experience is likely to happen over the Trade Unions Act, if the working-class movement does not take to heart the lesson to be learnt from the campaign for the "repeal" of the Emergency Powers Act.

WHAT is likely to be the fate of the campaign for the parliamentary repeal of the Trade Unions Bill? It is already worth noting that there are signs of the cry of "repeal" passing into the background, so far as the leadership is concerned. In his message for the Bosworth by-election it was remarked that MacDonald, who had previously used the word "repeal," substituted for it the word "nullify" to express the aim of the official Labour Party. On this the *New Statesman* comments:—

In practice of course simple repeal is not the method by which problems of this kind can be dealt with; especially since in this case *no responsible trade union leader wishes to do anything that might even seem to legalise the General Strike as such.* But the Amending Act that we may expect to see passed in 1929—probably by a combination of Liberal and Labour votes—will "nullify" so great a part of the Bill as to amount almost to repeal. (*New Statesman*, May 28, 1927.)

This is probably a correct estimate of the position. The talk of "repeal" is essentially a sham cry to cover up the absence of resistance. The most probable result of an election (and for this the bourgeoisie are obviously working with their artificial revival of Liberalism by the kindly aid of Conservative votes) is a combined Liberal and Labour majority, in which case the maximum obtained with regard to the Trade Unions Act will be a compromise revision. Even a Labour Government, if left to its own devices, is more likely to introduce an Amending Act than repeal; since all the Front Bench leaders have repeatedly made clear that they are opposed to the General Strike and regard only parts of the present Act as harmful, the other parts being "unnecessary." In point of fact, we may most likely live to see a Labour Government enforcing the Trade Unions Act against a general strike,

just as with the Emergency Powers Act, and as the yellow trade union leaders are already beginning to use it (as in the N.U.R. rules revision proposal) to strengthen their position by legal and police aid against the revolutionary Left Wing.

BUT if the Trade Unions Act is the immediate offensive for the present disorganisation of the working-class movement (and this is the secret of it which makes the campaign for a hypothetical future repeal so direct a betrayal of the duty of present resistance), the new indication of the House of Lords proposals and constitutional discussions shows even more clearly the fundamental line of thought and policy of the bourgeoisie for the whole future period. It has been customary for the spokesmen of the reformist Labour Movement, in the rare occasions of facing the possibility of an ultimate physical conflict with the bourgeoisie once the decisive issue is reached, to declare that, in the event of such a conflict being inevitable (as they admit to be possible), they prefer to wait until they have the Constitution on their side, and so can command the services of the State machine, civil service, police, and military power, as well as the allegiance of the intermediate wavering strata of the population. Such a formulation of the problem is in fact empty and formal in the extreme, since it presupposes a complete liberty of choice of the proletariat as to the moment of crisis, without facing for a moment how a crisis in reality arises, and in addition bases itself on a school-book view of the bureaucracy and military services, such as will crumble under the first touch of reality (it is unnecessary to refer further to the lessons of Ulster, Kenya, &c., which have completely demonstrated the *dialectical* use of the Constitution by the bourgeoisie—*i.e.*, as a weapon against the oppressed classes, but never as an obstacle to hinder their own action). What the discussion on the House of Lords proposals shows, however, is that even the propagandist value of the constitutional weapon is not to be allowed to pass into the hands of the Labour Movement, but that, when the struggle comes, whatever the conditions, the bourgeoisie intend to brandish the constitutional weapon on their side.

WHAT is important in the House of Lords reform question is not so much the proposals themselves as the discussion accompanying them. The proposals themselves are an attempt, an excessively simple and open attempt in their present form, to organise the Constitution in such a way as to guarantee the dominance of capitalism within it under all conditions and exclude even the theoretical possibility of change. Such a crude and open assertion of capitalist dictatorship is probably too unskilful for the present stage, when the maintenance of the Parliamentary illusion is still of very great importance for the bourgeoisie as their principal first line of defence; and it is therefore extremely likely that they may be modified into a subtler form; it is even possible that the existing system of concealed sanctions through the machinery of procedure, Lords obstruction, monarchy, law courts, bureaucracy, &c., should be thought to serve better. But it is the discussion, and particularly the expression of the Government outlook, representing the outlook of the majority of the bourgeoisie to-day, that is significant. For throughout the discussion one issue, and one issue only, is considered. The open aim of any proposal of constitutional change is stated to be to prevent any Socialistic legislation. Thus we find a Government Minister, Lord Salisbury, declaring:—

The Labour Party hoped they would get a majority at some election (he did not think it would be the next), upon a subject which happened to excite temporary interest, and that then they would be able to carry all sorts of Labour legislation—every nostrum in which they believed. *There would be nationalisation and bureaucracy all round. The proper answer to legislation of that kind, carried not by the will of the people, but by the temporary success of the wirepullers of the Labour Party, was an efficient Second Chamber.* (Lord Salisbury, speaking at Sheffield. *The Times*, June 27, 1927.)

Here (if we strip away the conventional cant about the “real will of the people,” *i.e.*, Tory majorities, and “temporary successes of wirepullers,” *i.e.*, Labour majorities) we have the enunciation of the basic doctrine that the purpose of the Constitution is the protection of property, and if any constitutional majority should appear to endanger this, then the Constitution itself should automatically check it. The aim is openly and simply against Socialism. This is the elementary, unveiled theory of capitalist dictatorship, such as any more experienced politician would endeavour to

express more adroitly. We may find it even more crudely expressed in the declaration of Lord Monkswell that

any system that did not give security for Capital had no real chance of surviving. (*The Times*, June 22, 1927.)

But though a Baldwin or Birkenhead or other Front Bench Minister will know how to give a more adroit expression to this sentiment (since it is their job to do so), the basic sentiment remains the same. The openly confessed aim throughout the whole discussion of "House of Lords reform," as indeed of the whole constitutional fabric, has never been more clearly revealed as the maintenance of capitalism.

MUCH is made of the so-called "revolt" of the moderate Conservatives against the original House of Lords proposals. Nevertheless, the difference that is revealed is of completely secondary importance; for the difference is only a question of tactics with regard to the method of reaching a common objective. The common objective is the effective obstruction of Socialistic legislation. One school desires explicit powers in the Constitution, together with a permanent guarantee against any change in those powers by any elected majority whatever. This is the downright view, winning favour with the backwoodsmen and Die-hard backbone of Conservatism. A second school, with more political experience, desires to avoid openly raising the issue beforehand, and to use instead the plentiful existing powers and machinery, which, though not logically danger-proof, can be counted on in practice, with a little skilful manipulation, to bring every crisis to a successful conclusion, there being still plenty of tricks and unused aces up their sleeves. A third school, with a more scientific turn, desires to establish a Second Chamber with strong powers, but to reorganise it on a more "democratic" basis so as to conceal its reactionary function. To this last school, in principle the most dangerous, the Labour Party leaders belong; as with MacDonald's "most attractive problem" to "fit into our Constitution some sort of mechanical device, some sort of supplementary brake," and the Labour Joint Council's protest against a "*hereditary* Upper Chamber"; though it may be noted that Lord Haldane belongs to the second

school, his reception of the Government proposals on behalf of the Labour Party being to say: "Do nothing at present; they had a House that worked." *But what is common to all these views is the assumption of a Second Chamber to check the action of the First, in other words, the assumption of the necessity of the protection of the existing order against an elected majority.*

THIS does not mean that the House of Lords is in the eyes of an affrighted bourgeoisie their sole protection against revolution. The House of Lords is only one element in a whole system of defences. There are many other lines of defence first, of which one of the most important is the existing Labour Party leadership. *In the last analysis, the question of the House of Lords is merely a formal question, and not materially decisive in the issue of revolution; although it is materially decisive for a legalist constitutional party.* What the present raising of the question of the House of Lords means is that the dominant section of the bourgeoisie is determined to force the Labour Party on to the plane of illegality or stultification, just as the trade unions have been forced. Either they will have to give up even their limited aims and reforms, however much they may protest their moderation, or else they will have to fight on the plane of illegality. In the same way the trade unions were compelled, even on their limited wage issues, to enter on an illegal fight with the whole forces of the State, unprepared and vainly protesting their moderation. *The Die-hards are out to force a fight even on the existing reformist, legalist Labour Party, just as they did on the similar Trade Union Movement, and a fight in which they can employ the Constitution on the bourgeois side to smash the Labour Movement.* The whole line of bourgeois policy is leading to the future fight. This is the essential meaning of the House of Lords issue.

WHAT is the reaction of the Labour Movement to this prospect? How does the present leadership face the possibility, not to say probability, of the Constitution being operated against the Labour Party before it is

possible for them to carry through their programme or control the Constitution ; of it being weighted against them beforehand in such a way as to compel their impotence just when the working class is expecting results from them ? What is their policy for the Labour Movement in the face of such a constitutional Fascism ? To this crucial question they have no answer. They can only splutter impotently, explode with indignation, expostulate, invoke the sacred name of democracy, and—like the Aventine Opposition—depart spluttering. So we find MacDonald declaring on the House of Lords proposals:—

Henceforth elections and ballot boxes will be nothing but farces. . . . A complete deadlock is now to be brought into our Constitution. What answer has the Prime Minister to give to this except: "Well, you can employ force to resolve it" ? . . . The Trade Unions Bill surpasses the bounds of decency, but in its ultimate effects this new proposal goes further in impropriety. It throws down the gauntlet to democracy—political as well as industrial. (J. R. MacDonald in *Forward*, July 2, 1927.)

Here is no policy, save the dark hint that there is no alternative but force. What, then, does MacDonald propose ? His proposal is—to prepare for the General Election ! ("Henceforth elections will be nothing but farces.") He adds a warning against "wordy heroics." Certainly, no one has ever accused the existing Right Wing leadership of the Labour Party of any heroics, wordy or otherwise. But what is his answer to the problem ? There is no answer, and for the very simple reason that there can be no answer from the standpoint of MacDonald. His whole position, the whole position of the reformist leadership, is based on certain hypocritical assumptions as to the character of the bourgeoisie and of the bourgeois régime which are false, and which the whole course of events proves false. When the course of events proves them false, they have no course but to express their grievous "disillusionment" and regret at the disappearance of "the voice of reason" (meaning themselves, and their own utterly irrational, sentimental, useless approach to practical problems). When the inevitable happens, they have not even any apologies to offer for their vicious misleadership of the movement, but assume an air of offended democratic virtue, instead of the guilt of mariners who have refused to prepare for a storm.

BUT in fact there is no serious attempt or desire to find a policy. For in reality this "constitutional deadlock" is the essential safeguard of the reformist position. The Right Wing leadership of the Labour Party accept and support the House of Lords, just as they accept and maintain the Monarchy. They make no attempt to remove either, as they inevitably would if they were even sincere democrats, let alone Socialists; and by this fact alone reveal the hypocrisy of their democratic pretensions. They put these strategic weapons in the hands of the enemy, and they do so not unconsciously. For in fact, if any body will need protection in the event of an absolute Labour majority, it will be the resulting reformist Labour Government. That reformist Labour Government, from the very nature of its position, will be incapable of carrying out the Labour programme. In such a situation the House of Lords will be a godsend to protect the Labour Government from its own followers, and to excuse its failure. *The reformist leaders do not work for the abolition of the House of Lords; they need it too much.*

WHAT of the "Left" reformist leadership? How do they propose to meet the type of menace revealed by the House of Lords discussions, as well as by the Trade Unions Act? Here we find a louder noise, but not one atom's difference of policy (the definition of "ginger" is apparently a tricky flavour to hide rotten ingredients; or, politically speaking, stunts and phrases to hide the absence of a policy). The "Left" reformist leaders all mouth what MacDonald accurately calls "wordy heroics" about "R-R-Revolution." Thus Maxton, Chairman of the pacifist I.L.P.:—

Repeated reductions of wages in conjunction with the Trade Unions Bill, which destroys the united constitutional strike, will not lead to industrial peace, but to revolution, and the sooner it comes the better for every one. Better some months of turmoil than a century of degradation. (J. Maxton at Barry. *Daily Herald*, June 6, 1927.)

Revolution, it will be seen, is something that "comes." There is no work or preparation needed. Maxton and the I.L.P. have nothing to do about it (except preach against it beforehand). It involves simply "some months of turmoil." (Where are all the mighty

I.L.P. arguments gone about ruin, starvation, blockade, stoppage of food supplies, and the other heroic "proofs" of the impossibility of revolution in Britain?) Nevertheless, despite this possibility of "turmoil" (what a nice, polite I.L.P. word for the ugly realities of civil war!), Maxton assumes a dark Robespierrean pose, folds his arms and mutters recklessly: "Roll on, Revolution!" Curiously enough, the bourgeoisie shows no signs of being alarmed by this kind of terrible talk, but confines its police attentions to what in its pig-headed blindness and ignorance it actually considers the real enemy—namely, the revolutionary working-class movement and the Communists (just as Lansbury's attempt to repeat what the Communists were sent to prison for only evoked laughter in the House of Commons).

IN the same way *Forward*, through the mouthpiece of its Editor, proclaims:—

On the day that the Monopolists and Privilege-mongers declare that the will of the nation will not be allowed to prevail, on the day they decree that peaceful social change is forbidden, *the British people will be driven to look for another Cromwell*. . . . If Plutocracy challenges the people and decrees that Force is to be arbiter, then Force in the last resort will be accepted, and whatever else betide, the challengers will be swept away like feathers in a gale.

We have always set our faces like flint against Red Guardism and violence as political methods. So long as social change desired by the great majority can be peacefully secured, the whole conception and propaganda of force we regard as sheer stupidity and criminal folly. But if Monopoly and Privilege declare that the essential public safeguards of the Parliament Act are to be destroyed, then I mistake the temper and spirit of my fellow-countrymen if we hesitate *to accept boldly and at all hazards even unconstitutional methods of preserving our liberties*. (T. Johnston in *Forward*, July 2, 1927.)

Unfortunately for this stout declaration, the previous issues of *Forward* have just been repeatedly proving on the most irrefragable scientific technical grounds ("chemical and aerial warfare," "food supply," "credit mechanism," "starvation," "blockade," "America," &c.) the *impossibility* of a successful unconstitutional revolution in Britain, *i.e.*, of the proletariat successfully conducting civil war, unless in the position of constitutional authority; and only a few weeks previously the sub-editor was gleefully quoting

at over a column's length the commonplace parade of these difficulties in the recent very superficial book on *Communism* by Professor Laski,¹ and triumphantly demanding, "Have the Communists any effective answer to these arguments?" It is obvious that if these authors have been "setting their faces like flint" up to the last moment against any preparation whatever for violent struggle and its foreseeable conditions, they cannot at the last moment suddenly reverse the engines and enter at a moment's notice into a violent "unconstitutional" struggle with any hope of success. But in fact the reality of the whole rodomontade is revealed by the fact that in the very next issue after this valiant declaration by the Editor to die in the last ditch on behalf of the Parliament Act, the Editor's colleague, Wheatley, declares:—

A fight over the House of Lords would be mere shadow-boxing to entertain a starving multitude. (J. Wheatley in *Forward*, July 9, 1927.)

So much for the seriousness of the "Left" policy here presented.

ONCE again, another organ of "Left" reformism, now suitably merged in the I.L.P., *Lansbury's Labour Weekly*, declared in one of its last issues, in black type under the heading "If":—

A nation that has executed one monarch, driven out another . . . will not tolerate the pretences of an association such as the modern House of Peers. (*Lansbury's Labour Weekly*, July 2, 1927.)

The memory of the bourgeois revolution, presented in the school history book manner as the victory of "the nation" over despotism,

¹ The parade in Professor Laski's book of these difficulties in the way of "the Communist theory of a secretly armed minority assuming power at a single stroke"—what a picture!—the *Morning Post* could teach this writer better—shows such an ignorance of the most elementary character of Marxist thought and inability to think in terms of social dynamics and dialectics, as soon as he has to face practical problems, as reveals the whole professorial would-be exposition of Marxist and Leninist theories in the earlier chapters to be no more than a schoolboy's smattering repetition of undigested formulas without understanding. And indeed any examination of the earlier chapters of this book would prove this, *i.e.*, the essential falsity and inaccuracy of the exposition, which is, despite its well-meaning intentions, illiterate from a Marxist point of view and based on a few obvious and limited sources. The book, however, which owes its importance to the backward development of thought and discussion in Britain, both in bourgeois literature and in the Labour Movement, needs separate treatment.

is presented as guarantee of the future victory of "the nation" (which nation?) over the bourgeois dictatorship. Let us leave on one side this confusion, which is nevertheless revealing of the concealment of class issues under abstract democratic phraseology. But when it comes to the actual working-class struggle, is there any readiness, fight or policy, after all the heroic bombast about revolutionary executions? This is what we find on the present struggle in the same issue:—

It is absolute nonsense to talk about declaring a General Strike against the Trade Unions Bill. Who is to strike with any real chance of success? . . . What is the use of striking when all the conditions point to the certainty of defeat? (*Lansbury's Labour Weekly*, July 2, 1927.)

The contrast is as striking as the contrast between Wheatley's revolutionary "left wing" declarations on the platform and whining allegiance to King and Constitution in the law courts. (And indeed we find these "Left Wingers" coming out with sophistical reasons, just as on the Emergency Powers Act, to explain their acceptance of the House of Lords and Monarchy, on the grounds that the raising of any such issue is a mere red herring and will not solve the problem of poverty, which is a social problem: so Wheatley on "Is It A Trap?" in *Forward*, and Lansbury defending the Monarchy on behalf of the Labour Party Executive at the last Labour Party Conference. What pitiful hypocrisy and complete denial of the *political* character of the struggle for Socialism!) This kind of leadership is no more use than the existing Right Wing leadership to the workers in the real issues to be faced.

IN contrast to these confused, halting and empty declarations, it is desirable that the Labour Movement should face consciously the issues in front, which are clearly showing themselves. The tactics that preceded the General Strike, the tactics of refusing to look ahead and prepare for or even face plainly approaching issues, are disastrous and suicidal. Nor are serious problems to be met by idle boasting and general phrases, in place of clear facing of the issues, clear presentment to the working class, practical preparation and organisation. The attack of the

bourgeoisie is manifestly preparing both abroad and at home, on a scale very much greater than the General Strike. This attack has got to be met. It will not be conjured out of existence because it does not fit in with certain theories of gradual progress. It will not be met by the declamation of general principles of abstract Socialism and abstract pacifism. The task to-day is a task of awakening the whole working class to the revolutionary issues in front, and of serious preparation to meet the bourgeois counter-revolution.

R. P. D.

THE MINERS' FIGHT CONTINUES

By A. HORNER

THE mining industry is heading for a new and more bitter crisis. Everything points to the reopening of hostilities at the end of this year. The explanation for this state of affairs is not to be found in a desire for struggle on the part either of the coalowners or of the workers' representatives; for the former cannot afford a stoppage of production in the present state of the world's markets, whilst the latter shun as they would a plague the thought of a new struggle. Despite the fact that the inclinations of both sides are strongly in favour of peace at almost any price, there are, however, implacable economic forces at work which must ere long throw these pacifists in intention at each other's throats with unprecedented ferocity.

The coalowners, in their futile attempts to evade the full consequences of the decline of capitalist production in Britain, are compelled more and more to seek to absorb the wages and working conditions of the men, and the Miners' Federation to justify its existence must endeavour to resist this process of absorption. Events all tend to prove that, notwithstanding many truces, the mining war is a war to the death. In this the mining industry is not peculiar or different from other industries. It is merely that, because of its basic character, it is the first to be fundamentally involved. Therefore, because it is the basis of Britain's whole economic life, it must in its march to collapse as a unit of capitalist production, involve in its struggles to live the whole economic structure, and all consequential industries must share in its inevitable doom.

In this situation, both sides are seeking every loophole of escape, but recent experiences have shown that so-called palliatives are merely *culs-de-sac* for the unwary, and that, as the cause is fundamental, so must the remedy be.

The terms imposed upon the mineworkers through the district agreements entered into at the termination of the lock-out

have settled nothing, they have aggravated everything. In the conditions of these agreements the owners obtained concessions beyond their wildest dreams. In fact, the agreements were the owners' dictated terms, accepted under duress by a demoralised army. Output per man-shift has risen by one-sixth to one-quarter of pre-stoppage outputs, and this has been secured simultaneously with huge reductions in wages. The increase described above has been obtained by the following means:—

- (a) Longer hours.
- (b) Greater technique in mining methods.
- (c) Terrorism of the men, thus forcing them to work harder.

The increase in the working day in most districts from seven to eight hours has been responsible to a large extent for the bigger output. In addition, it is a tremendous factor in the endeavour to reduce costs. The owners themselves have estimated that it would bring about a reduction of approximately 3s. per ton.

The resort to a greater degree of technical efficiency must be given attention to as a cause of the present condition of the industry, especially when regard is paid to the agitation supported by alleged sympathisers with the mineworkers for still more effort in this direction. In Britain, in 1913, only 8.5 per cent. of the coal raised was won by mechanical means. In 1925, 18.7 per cent. was so won, or an increase of 100 per cent., since when the process has been considerably speeded up. In Germany, in 1913, only 5 per cent. was won by labour-saving devices, in 1925 this had grown to 50.6 per cent., whilst in the latter year the United States got 69.5 per cent. by this means. Without running the risk of being charged with being a machine breaker, one is entitled to state that the owners' policy of extended hours of labour has had an exactly similar effect to the remedy advocated by respectable trade union leaders when they have called for greater mechanisation of coal production. The one has made the working day longer, the other has made the working day more intense in its processes, whilst both have operated as methods by which mineworkers' labour has been rendered redundant.

The third recognised means for securing increased output, *viz.*, "terror," has been brought to a state of perfection, and has proved a very effective weapon for cutting down the resistance

of the men in work. Victimisation, scientifically applied, has permitted this to go the lengths it has, for since the lock-out the majority of the active fighters in many districts have been refused re-employment, the owners seeking to justify themselves on the openly admitted grounds that no local concessions can be won if the active men are employed. Piece rates have been cut down, whilst tonnage allowances have been eliminated in scores of places, and the threat of dismissal hangs constantly over the men's heads. The men, panic stricken by the collapse of effective organisation and the slave-driving of the under-officials, whose desperation lends them courage, have succumbed temporarily, but they are learning that fright and cowardice do not guarantee immunity, and that, as blows must be taken, it is just as well to take them whilst offering the maximum possible resistance. This terror has made the men work frantically hard, and to a considerable degree it is responsible for the increased output per man-shift.

The wages of the men have moved in almost exact inverse ratio to the increased productivity, and the reductions have been made possible by two methods:—

- (a) The automatic operations of the ascertainsments.
- (b) Local cuts in piece rates, and customary payments, to day-wage men.

However, notwithstanding increased output and reduced payments, the most recent ascertainments of five big districts show that the minimum percentages under the agreements are not possible on the trading results of the periods they cover, and that these minimum percentages are only being paid, in fact, in consequence of heavy borrowings from a hypothetical future prosperity. These minimum percentages, though expressed in different terms in the various districts, all amount to approximately 20 per cent. above 1914 gross earnings. The deficiencies incurred to maintain wages at this level, though the cost of living stands at 66 per cent. above 1914, are as follows:—

Durham, £272,756.

Northumberland, £93,596 (of which £66,217 was added in March, 1927).

South Wales, £589,788.

Yorkshire, £542,279.

Scotland, £159,381.

It is true that these results are abnormal in two mutually cancelling particulars:—

- (a) In the early months, prices were above the present level, due to an internal shortage of coal.
- (b) The pits required extraordinary expenditure on repairs, due to arrears of maintenance work.

These now cease to be factors to be taken into consideration in estimating the future. The markets have resumed their glutted normality, and the pits have been generally re-established as productive units. Coal for some time has been sold at about pre-stoppage prices though the subsidy which permitted the low prices then has been taken away. In Scotland they are already below those of April, 1926, and the general inclination is for all to follow in the same direction.

Pit-head prices range between 11s. 9d. per ton for Scotland, and 15s. 3d. for South Wales. These prices are bound to worsen very considerably, for the following reasons:—

- (1) Greater productivity at home due to amalgamations and still higher technique.
- (2) Greater European outputs and the setting up of barriers against the importation of British coal, as in France and Spain.
- (3) The resumption of full American production with the termination of the American coal stoppage. America has increased her coal production by 13 per cent. since 1913.
- (4) The further exploitation of cheap mining labour in the Eastern countries, India, Egypt, Africa, &c. Asia has increased production of coal by 63 per cent. and Africa 82 per cent. in 1913-1925.
- (5) More economic methods of coal utilisation. Efficiency in combustion has increased by 26 to 28 per cent. since 1913.
- (6) Development in the use of alternative fuels, notably oil and water-power. In 1913 the types of marine engine using coal were 66.2 per cent. of the total, compared to 33.8 per cent. using oil; in 1925, 31.6 per cent. used coal and 68.4 per cent. used oil. Between seven and eight million tons of shipping have been converted to oil fuel, whilst hydro-electrical supply schemes in operation in Europe alone produce 9,630,000 h.p., equal to 28,000,000 tons of coal, whilst plans are in hand to increase this to 65,140,000 h.p., thus saving 190,000,000 tons of coal per annum.
- (7) A contracting British market for coal, due to depressed condition of coal-using industries, and the competition of previously mainly exporting districts, with mainly inland selling areas. British coal production has decreased by 16 per cent. from 1913-1925.

The greater production per man-shift, which, by various means, will certainly be obtained, will throw increasing quantities of coal on the world market, and this, coupled with the fact that it is not merely a British symptom but a capitalist characteristic in every country, will force the British coalowners to seek relief through the following measures:—

- (1) Closing down mines rendered uneconomic at existing and future coal prices.
- (2) Concentration of huge capital resources in prolific geological areas, where expenditure in mechanical appliances may be justified.
- (3) Conducting of research into more diverse uses for coal as a raw material, by transformation into by-products.
- (4) Endeavouring to set up cartels for the monopoly of the inland market, through minimum prices, and protection against the importation of competitive coal from abroad.
- (5) Persistence in agitation against Poor Law Relief to unemployed men in mining areas, as a means to reduce colliery rating costs.
- (6) Continuance of the agitation for a reduction in railway and dock coal tariffs, culminating in an attack upon wages of railway and dock workers.
- (7) Attempting to introduce the eight-hour day in the Eastern districts of the English coalfields, commencing with a badly-organised district such as Notts.
- (8) Beginning, on the expiration of the Durham Agreement, a process for the abolition of the principle of the minimum percentage and subsistence wage allowance, to be followed, if tolerated, by a series of attempts on other districts.

The above are not merely possible future steps: the majority are even now being carried out in an elementary fashion, and the urge of events must determine greater intensity in investigation and practice. Neither are they alternatives to each other; on the contrary, all are complementary steps, all parts of a single strategy, forced upon coal-mining capitalism by inevitable developments in world economic conditions. Therefore, if these capitalist life-saving measures are to be successfully resisted, the mine-workers, together with all other workers, must be persuaded to face the problem as a whole. True, all these attacks upon the British working-class will not be launched simultaneously, because of various factors, such as date of expiration of Agreements, &c., but preliminary steps are already being taken to realise the whole programme.

We cannot say we will fight these measures in any particular order. We must prepare, as far as our resources will permit, to launch a counter-offensive on all fronts, and be determined as to order and intensity of struggle by the order of the coalowners' attack. The first and immediate effect is seen in the wholesale closing down of mines, bringing about unemployment. The men rendered idle have been with short periods of intermittent work on the streets since 1925, whilst large numbers of others are becoming unemployed for the first time. The former are on extended benefit at the Labour Exchanges, and many thousands are not in receipt of unemployment benefit at all. Many Boards of Guardians are refusing relief to able-bodied men, under any circumstances. The majority of the Boards claim that their callous treatment is the result of conditions laid down by the Ministry into whose debt they are driven.

The mining areas are to a very large extent dependent on one industry, such other industries as are to be found in the vicinity of the pits being closely allied. This has the effect, when the industry is depressed, of impoverishing nearly all the social and municipal enterprises upon which the miners depend for sustenance when bad times are experienced, and driving the Councils and Boards of Guardians to the national machinery for assistance. The Ministry has not hesitated to supersede the elected Guardians, as in Chester-le-Street and Bedwellty, and continuously to threaten any Poor Law Authority which fails to carry out its instructions to starve the people into complete submission to the coalowners. There can be no question about the effectiveness of this weapon; men are driven to accept work under any conditions, and when once in work, become so afraid of a repetition of their previous experiences that they will tolerate almost anything. This phase of the problem cannot be ignored by the Miners' Federation, because herein lies the key to militancy in the coal-fields of Britain.

The Miners' Federation, in co-operation with other working-class bodies, must place the maintenance of the unemployed mineworkers in the forefront of its programme, and should immediately utilise all available machinery in the organisation of an agitation, to be furthered by political and industrial means.

(a) It should commence a nation-wide agitation against the attitude of the Ministry of Labour now, in throwing increasing thousands off unemployment benefit, and oppose by all the means at its command the disgraceful Blanesburgh Report from becoming law.

(b) It should direct a campaign for adequate relief in the localities now, and seek to bring pressure to bear upon the Ministry of Health to assist the Boards of Guardians to do this.

(c) It should investigate possible means of gathering assistance for victimised and unemployed men.

(d) It should proceed to set up better relations with other working-class bodies, and work in closer co-operation with the N.U.W.C.M.

The trustification of the industry will not be avoided unless nationalisation of the industry is secured almost immediately, without compensation and with workers' control, but it is a mistake to advocate this as a possible means of remedying the mine-workers' conditions. It must be exposed for what it actually is, *i.e.*, a form of greater intensification and, in the long run, an aggravation of the disease of over-production, with all the attendant evils of that condition.

This process will have immediate effects, whole villages will be rendered derelict, and many mineworkers who have struggled for many years, through building clubs and saving societies, to buy their own houses, will lose their all. The question of the transference of labour deserves attention, and steps should be taken to compel the purchase of houses belonging to men so transferred, together with assistance to permit removal to new areas. Subsidised passages are provided for persons leaving for the colonies; similar arrangements should be made for those compelled to transfer their families to new parts of this country. In addition, and most important of all, the Miners' Federation must secure some control and say in the personnel to be transferred, because unless this is so, all ex-Federation local committeemen and officials will be left to starve in the deserted villages, isolated from the rest of their comrades. Victimisation scientifically applied has become a normal phase of capitalist production,

Research will, of course, go on, and whilst not seeking to prevent it, the consequences of such results as are secured must not be allowed to fall upon the workers, for such measures are not intended to be solutions to the workers' problems, but rather to be what they have invariably worked out to be under capitalism, devices aimed at further reducing the standard of the workers' life, relatively to the quantity and value of the product.

Cartels and selling-trusts will be set up in an endeavour to artificially hold the home market for coal and to obtain from the other industries and workers such prices as will provide the coal-owners with a profit when the workers in the mines have reached the actual bare level of subsistence. The miners' leaders will be profitably engaged in warning the workers in other industries of the consequences to them of such a step, and the necessity of again joining hands in an endeavour to overthrow the present ownership and control of the mines.

Similarly, with the attempt to reduce dock and railway charges by means of reducing railwaymen's and dockers' wages, there is no way out for the miners through this gate; the salvation of all rests upon our ability to organise and direct the whole working class against the capitalists. The Trade Unions Bill is calculated to prevent such unity as can express itself in common struggle, but in spite of this instrument of capitalist defence, the workers of all industries must secure a livelihood, by means of common struggle, over the body of a dead capitalism.

The real open fighting will, however, commence in all probability when the date of the expiration of the Durham Agreement is reached, for then commences the process of breaking down the principle of a minimum percentage and subsistence wages.

In the pamphlet *One Miners' Union, Why?* I have endeavoured to show how dangerous it is to slide into the practice of treachery, through lack of effective preparation, yet the Miners' Federation is allowing the day to approach without any serious endeavour to face up to the terrible situation. Here we have a very depressed district with a huge deficiency already, which notwithstanding an increased output for two months of 100,000 tons, shows a reduction in the wages bill of £500,000. This district has an agreement which expires on November 30, and the economics

of the area are almost certain to determine an attack then upon the workers' fundamental conditions. For Durham to fight alone, in a period of glutted markets, is to invite defeat. The coalowners of the other districts would be pleased to subsidise the owners of Durham, at little cost to themselves, for they would gain by the absence of a competitor from the coal market and, incidentally, Durham would set the pace for the remainder to follow.

The Durham fight might be turned into a fight for a National Agreement, the existing District Agreements must be liquidated by the absorption of the District Associations in one mineworkers' union. We will not be ready to fight, it is said; but we must fight—or practise treachery which will make unity in the coal-fields impossible for a generation.

Again, the endeavour must be made to rally the rest of Britain's workers to our aid. We must once more call for all power to be placed in the hands of the General Council of the T.U.C., and for this end we must support the election of the most militant possible personnel for that Council. Closer unity with the miners of other countries must also be worked for to prevent a repetition of the blackleg experiences of the 1926 lock-out. The Anglo-Russian Miners' Propaganda Committee must be utilised to the full and a real world conference of all miners, regardless of colour, creed, or professed political beliefs, must be called in order to set up a real miners' international.

Settlement or no settlement, the miners' fight continues.

MY VISIT TO CHINA

By TOM MANN

I PREFER not to attempt anything in the nature of a comprehensive article upon China; that has been done and is still being done by others. I think it may be helpful to some if I give instances of how I was impressed by personal contact with Chinese workers and peasants, soldiers and others, and by what I saw of that big country, as large as the whole of Europe and with as great a population. I have seen many countries and each of them differs from the others, but China differs in a greater degree than any country I had previously experienced.

The methods of work, the habits of the people, the customs of the country, the appearance of their cities, and even the food they eat and their methods of eating differ in so many respects from European customs and habits, that to anyone with a disposition to understand them, to estimate the people and mentally give them their rightful place in the world, every day was full of interest, and could have continued to be so if I had spent six years on the visit instead of only six months.

My chief concern was to be with the workers at their work, to fraternise with them, to interchange opinions with them, to watch them in their labours and in their leisure. To see the peasants in the fields, their farming implements, their animals, their methods of transportation and, above all, to learn at first hand how far they were satisfied with the conditions and to gauge correctly the nature of their dissatisfactions and their methods of voicing them.

In all these respects I had, as a member of the International Workers' Delegation, very good opportunities.

The delegation travelled through four provinces with a united population of one hundred million persons, Kwangtung (capital, Canton), Kwangsi^{*} (capital, Nanchang), Hupeh (capital, Wuhan—the combined cities of Hankow, Hanyang, and Wuchang) and Hunan (capital, Changsha).

We began our active work of inquiry and investigation, coupled with organising and propagandist meetings, at Canton,

^{*} = now Shensi for Kiangsi

where we had sixteen active days. The trade unionists were keen to help us to get in touch not only with the trade unions, but with all workers' organisations, which, of course, included the Kuomintang, *i.e.* the Peoples' Party. We had many trade union meetings of moderate size, and many demonstrations, some of which were attended in Canton by 30,000 persons, three platforms being used, and each of the three delegates, Earl Browder of U.S.A., J. Doriot of France, and myself, speaking from each platform.

We had opportunities and made use of them to meet trade union rank and file, as well as officials; peasants as well as townsmen; organised and non-organised; and learned at first hand their actual conditions and their desires and demands. We left Canton to go North to Hankow on a route covering about 800 miles, through mountainous country and typical agricultural country, through the rice fields and wheat fields, and through tea-growing districts. We met the peasants and listened to them with the aid of interpreters, and answered their questions, and addressed them in public. That journey through Kwangtung and Kwansi took twenty-five days.

The Southern Revolutionary Army had marched that way a few months previously and the effect was noticeable in the keen interest shown by workers and peasants in the unions. We spent seven weeks in Hankow and a few miles around, and had an intensely interesting trip to Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province, and had many meetings *en route*. Altogether we had 188 meetings in China and many interviews.

The Standard of Life of Workers and Peasants

The hours of labour are outrageously long, ten to sixteen in twenty-four hours, but as more than 80 per cent. of China's 440 millions of people work on the land, their working hours are from daylight to dark, and must vary as the seasons.

Only a small percentage of the population is connected with industry. Although the Chinese population is eleven times as large as that of Great Britain, there are no more connected with industry than in Britain, even when transport workers are included.

I did not get, and I do not think anyone can give, the number connected with transportation in China, but as they use very few horses and exceedingly few motor lorries, or cars or 'buses, and the rail mileage is very small for such a large country, it means that transportation is done on the rivers, where there are rivers, and by humans nearly everywhere else. Many millions must be employed in transport work, actually carrying all kinds of freight. I met in two eight-day marches in the interior very many teams of men and women, each team numbering from thirty to forty (men and women in almost equal numbers), and every person carrying heavy loads on shoulder poles; but I did not meet on that journey one horse, or mule, or motor; and this is typical of the greater part of China.

In the cities, the chief means of locomotion is the rickshaw, pulled by a coolie labourer. All building materials, heavy loads of bricks, stone, timber, &c., are pulled by humans, women as well as men. The daily pay averages about eightpence; the coolies in the country get less, about sixpence and even smaller amounts. There is very little heavy industry in China, scarcely any work in steel on any considerable scale except at the arsenals. Factory workers, textiles and others get shamefully low pay and work about eleven hours, few less, many more.

Mechanics, electricians, and engine-drivers get comparatively good pay, but the vast mass of the workers of China are on a bare subsistence standard; many so poor that, whilst rice is the chief food, they cannot even get a sufficiency of rice to keep them up to physical efficiency.

Are the Chinese Contented with their Position?

As all know, the feudal system still dominates China, and the conditions seem to have altered but little for a thousand years or more. Although many signs of deep-seated discontent were to be seen by observers a generation ago, China was looked upon as the one country on earth that would remain in the old grooves where she had been for more than 2,000 years. The Chinese were treated as inferiors and generally in a contemptuous fashion by all Westerners. The throwing over of the Manchu dynasty, sixteen years ago, and the establishing of the Republic did cause

some to be less emphatic as to China's eternal sleep, and thousands of happenings since then have shown that China was at last awakening, and now, *China is really wide awake and consciously so.*

The great outstanding fact is the deep-seated dissatisfaction of the workers and peasants, with very special emphasis on the peasants. There are many millions of landless peasants, many millions of other peasants whose production is only equal to a moderate existence, but who are subjected to local and national taxes that leave them in actual and continuous poverty; this, I suppose, is nothing new; what is new is that they now refuse to die quietly, as their fathers have done, but are giving forcible expression to a determination to get something better than that they have hitherto had.

Of course, we have read of people being dissatisfied and resolving to claim and get better conditions times out of number, but treat this simple statement as cavalierly as we may, I allege this to be the basic fact in regard to the whole problem of China, the plain, but very real fact that the Chinese food producer of to-day differs from his father mainly in this: that he refuses to die off quietly without a real effort to improve his position in conjunction with his class. All the rest follows from this fact. If this should prove not to be a fact, then will the present effort prove evanescent, but all the signs are there showing that already many of these I am writing of have given attention to the causes that have kept them in poverty, as their fathers were before them, and they are conscious that the causes are man-made, and may be removed by men; and they have resolved to remove them.

Similarly, the town workers, and these too, in greater degree, have so resolved; and also a third and most important element, the Chinese students.

The students are the most revolutionary portion of the Chinese population. Here, in England, the universities and so-called public schools are used primarily to train a bourgeois class; to qualify a dominant faction to become the ruling class to perpetuate the spurious oligarchic capitalist system we are burdened with. I had the opportunity of meeting many Chinese students of both sexes, and it was inspiring to be in their company. Our capitalist Press and erudite statesmen seem to find some satis-

faction in attributing the credit or blame to persons and agencies foreign to China for practically all that takes place there out of the old routine. No need to trouble them with the facts; but to the workers I can say that there are hundreds of thousands of Chinese students, most of whom have never been outside of China, who are not only willing to see changes made in China in a revolutionary direction, but they are themselves profoundly convinced that there is no hope for China except in a revolution. They are giving definite and systematic encouragement to the workers and peasants in their attempts at organisation for a new China. Can the significance of this be over-estimated? Is it only a small matter? Note, I am speaking of the young but also of the genuinely-trained, highly-educated young manhood and womanhood of China; and whilst the proletarian workers and peasants have shown magnificent courage and readiness for sacrifice, even with their lives, the students are never behind in these qualities and frequently are the pace-setters. Who can stop this? Not Chang Tso-lin nor Chiang Kai-shek.

Recognition that Organisation is Essential

How far the millions of Chinese peasants and industrial workers are clear minded as to the proper course to take to relieve themselves of the burdens oppressing them I cannot say with any certainty, but I have no hesitancy in saying they are quite clear in recognising the necessity for organisation, both of an industrial and political character. Evidence of the growth of the workers' trade unions is seen in the following entirely reliable figures. In May, 1925, the total number affiliated to the All-China Labour Federation was 1,200,000; in May, of this year, it was 3,000,000. The peasants' trade unions had made even greater progress, having grown from three millions to ten millions.

I have listened to and heard translated at the time—during the visit to China—fully 500 speeches, apart from interviews, and on the strength of this experience I am warranted in saying that the Chinese Trade Union Movement is 95 per cent. for a National Revolution, and fully 75 per cent. clear minded as to the Chinese National Revolution being part of the World Revolution. They have the most profound respect and reverence for the late

Dr. Sun Yat Sen. At every meeting, either of trade union or Kuomintang, and equally at great demonstrations when all sections join (such as on May Day this year, at Hankow, when 150,000 persons took part), the photograph of Dr. Sun Yat Sen is in the centre of the platform, and almost invariably accompanied with that of Marx on the one side, and Lenin on the other.

I deeply regret to have to report that one union is not in accord with the revolutionary principle and policy just described: this is the Mechanics' Union of Canton. They still adhere in principle, as well as practice, to the old craft-union policy, and whilst they invited me to their offices and treated me with the utmost courtesy, even when I stated, in the plainest terms, that craft unionism in England was one of our greatest troubles; still, when under instructions of Chang Kai-shek, General Li, at Canton, on April 14 and 15 last, massacred large numbers of trade union officials and took military possession of their offices, the Mechanics' Union, it was reported, were not interfered with, but helped the reactionaries in their horrible work; but in spite of everything the trade union movement is growing and becoming more and more revolutionary.

Down with Imperialism

Attending so many meetings, visiting offices of unions and Labour Party (Kuomintang), whether the meeting was small or large, I heard every speaker use one or more slogans, usually anywhere from five to seven or eight, and stress was always laid on "Down with Imperialism." All the Chinese I came in contact with, however relatively moderate or extreme, all were and are convinced that the chief and most immediate task is to get rid of imperialism. They have no illusions about the Chinese capitalists and landlords, but the greatest curse, they declare, is the foreign imperialist, and in this they are undoubtedly right; and of all the imperialist forces in China beyond any question Great Britain is the worst.

On arrival in Hankow, at the beginning of April, I counted thirty-one gunboats, destroyers, and cruisers on the Yangtze, ten of these were British, ten American, the other ten being Japanese, and one Italian. These were proudly displaying

bunting amounting to, I should estimate, fully two thousand flags, in front of the Concessions and ex-Concessions.

The Chinese workers deserve and ought to get the active assistance of the workers of the West, and most certainly from the workers of Britain, in getting rid of the imperialists. I promised the help of all the revolutionary trade unionists of this country, and wished them real success in dealing with the landlordism, militarism, and capitalism of China. I learnt to admire and to love them for their devotion to the cause, their clearness of vision, their true internationalism. May we workers in Britain help them by demanding and getting the forces withdrawn from China, unequal treaties abolished, old concessions restored, and encouragement given them to work out their own destiny in hearty co-operation with the workers of the world.

THE OUTLOOK FOR BRITISH CAPITALISM

By EMILE BURNS

SINCE the end of the mining lock-out eight months ago, we have had in rapid succession the dispatch of military and naval forces to China, the Trade Unions Bill, the break with Russia, the Local Authorities (Audit) Bill, the Blanesburgh Report, and the proposals to preserve the House of Lords. No one—not even the “sane” men—can doubt that these are intimately connected with one another and with the defeat of the miners. But behind all these lies the more fundamental cause—the decline of capitalist production in Britain.

This decline is not a matter of opinion, but of statistics; and it is impossible to form any judgment of the probable course of events without having those statistics in mind. The most convenient summary of the position is published by the London and Cambridge Economic Service—an organisation whose Executive includes Sir William Beveridge, Professor Bowley, and Maynard Keynes, not to mention Sir Charles Addis, Director of the Bank of England.

The figures issued by this organisation can at least be accepted as authentic, and their general index of production for post-war years (as a percentage of the 1913 production) is as under:—

1920	..	..	..	..	..	90·42
1921	..	..	..	..	..	68·56
1922	..	..	..	..	..	82·51
1923	..	..	..	..	..	85·86
1924	..	..	..	..	..	90·69
1925	..	..	..	..	..	89·67
1926	..	..	..	..	..	74·23

Whatever qualifications may be made one way or the other, the fact remains that the general level of production since 1920 has averaged only 83 per cent. of 1913. This figure is roughly confirmed by the general level of unemployment throughout those years, which has ranged between 9 and 15 per cent., while it is common knowledge that a very considerable proportion of un-

employment—especially partial unemployment in the form of short time—is not recorded in the official figures. Even in the best years since the war, the general index shows production about 10 per cent. below the 1913 level.

If we examine the details of the figures given by the London and Cambridge Economic Service and select 1925 rather than 1926 as a "normal" post-war year, certain features of special interest emerge. Production in the basic industries is lower than the general average for all industries. Coal output was 90·7 per cent. of the average for 1907-1913; iron ore, 65 per cent.; tin ore, 50 per cent.; iron and steel, 85 per cent.; railway locomotives, wheels and axles, 63·2 per cent.; shipbuilding, 74·9 per cent.; while the average for the textile trades was 76·3 per cent. The general index for all production has to a great extent been raised to the 89·67 per cent. noted above for 1925 by increases in chemicals, rubber, cocoa, sugar, tobacco, and paper. The figures, unfortunately, do not include any estimate for general engineering, which is believed to have increased; but it is to be noted that any increase seems to be entirely in the lighter sections, so far as can be judged from machinery exports, which were 218,000 tons in 1925, compared with 387,000 tons in 1913. The evidence, therefore, appears to prove conclusively that production in 1925 was considerably lower than before the war just in those trades which are of special importance for the extension of the means of production—that is, for the creation of new "capital goods" from the employment of labour on which the capitalist class can draw additional profits.

No one who has studied the figures can doubt that, in 1927, the general position is much the same as recorded above for 1925. In the first flush of their mining victory the capitalists spoke of full order books, increasing trade, and coming prosperity. Some even of the trade union leaders mistook the temporary flash for the dawn of a brighter day. There was a brief period of industrial peace talk. Even the coal industry seemed to be enjoying a relative boom. But neither the workers nor the capitalists were to find peace. Coal and iron and steel output soon began to be checked; exports remained obstinately below the level of 1925; and after a short fall, unemployment began to rise sharply. The note of

optimism is now only sounded by such men as Joynson-Hicks and Churchill.

But, after all, among the workers only the very foolish can have believed that the situation had in any way changed for the better in 1927. Six years of low production culminating in the disastrously low production of 1926 is hardly a good foundation for economic prosperity. It is true that the capitalist economists have a pathetic belief in the inevitability of good trade periods following bad trade periods, but no serious reasons can be given why this should be so, except that in pre-war days good trade alternated with bad trade. These "trade cycles" of long ago, however, were merely superficial changes compared with the change that has taken place since the war, and not a single one of the factors which in pre-war days made recovery possible is now in existence.

Far from there being any possibility of new trade from opening up Colonial countries, the production of the Colonies themselves is driving British products from their own and neighbouring markets. Transport—both shipping and rail—is affected as well as industrial production. As the Colonies have ripened in capitalist development, so have foreign countries. Not only Germany, but the United States, Japan, and even France and Italy are competitors. Capitalist production in Britain, built up in a period of relative British monopoly, and maintained before the war by the use of Empire, can no longer be maintained at its old level now that its monopoly has been broken by capitalist development in other countries and the Empire made worse than useless by similar development there.

But although capitalist production in Britain is declining and is unlikely to make even any temporary recovery, this does not imply that the capitalist class is losing its economic or political power. Profits, we know, are made at the point of production; no production, no profits. But it does not follow that a lower level of production means less profits. Monopoly, technical reorganisation, and, above all, lower wages and longer hours may, if successfully carried through, maintain profits in spite of a lower level of production. The best examples of this process are the cotton trade, the railways, the chemical industry, and, of

course, the mining industry, so far as the larger colliery groups are concerned. And then there is the method of exporting capital—abandoning production in Britain and investing in enterprises abroad—which can maintain profits or even increase them.

In fact, such statistics as are available support the view that capitalist profits are rising. The Colwyn Committee estimates that £500 millions were invested by the British capitalist class in 1924, as against some £350 millions in 1913. The *Economist* tables of industrial profits show a steady rise. In the first six months of 1927 the new capital issues totalled £207 millions, as against £120 millions in the first six months of 1913. So far, therefore, the position of the British capitalist class has not been seriously affected. But if the factors which have led to falling production in Britain still operate, and there is no prospect of any but the most temporary improvements, it will inevitably become more and more difficult to maintain profits, and this is the position for which the capitalists are preparing.

At the same time it must not be supposed that all difficulties can be overcome by exporting capital abroad. Apart from the saturation of the overseas markets, the British capitalists as a class can no more abandon the capital already invested in Britain than they can forget their old investments in Russia. Moreover, events in Russia and in China have made overseas investments precarious throughout the East. And for these reasons the fight to maintain profits must be carried on in Britain, as well as against the Russian, Chinese, and colonial workers.

The fight to maintain the level of profits in Britain takes two main forms: direct attacks on wages and hours, as in the case of the miners; and "rationalisation"—improving equipment and technique so as to save labour costs without necessarily lowering wages rates or increasing hours. The latter form is the more useful in the long run because, generally speaking, the workers offer no organised opposition to it, and if they do attempt to gain some advantages in return for offering no opposition to the introduction of new machinery or other labour-saving methods a compromise favouring the employer is easy to obtain.

In every industry this process is going ahead: sometimes on a relatively small scale, in particular factories or pits, by the

introduction of new labour-saving equipment; and sometimes on a larger scale, by amalgamations and the closing down of the least efficient concerns. Such a proposal as that of the unification of London traffic means taking numbers of 'buses and trams off the streets and at the same time, of course, throwing their drivers and conductors on to the streets. This is the feature of all the methods which capitalism has used and can use to maintain its level of profits: either by direct wages attacks, or by attacks on hours, or by labour-saving methods, the amount of the wages bill is reduced.

Simultaneously with the reduction in the total wages bill there goes, of course, a reduction of what is called "effective demand" for the products of industry, and therefore a further progressive lowering of production. And at each lower stage of production the employers must make further and more strenuous efforts to maintain their profits.

For this reason the Trade Unions Act is not the final phase of an attack on labour, but merely the preliminary clearing of the ground for further attacks. The economic necessity for such attacks is most evident in the mining industry, and, in view of the facts which have been widely published during the last few weeks, no sane person can doubt that reductions in subsistence wage rates will be followed by reductions in the minimum percentages for all grades. The owners have arranged that the fight shall begin in Durham, while the Government has done all in its power to weaken any possibility of mass resistance.

But it would be absurd to suppose that the Durham miners, or indeed the miners generally, will be the only workers to be attacked. Evan Williams, at the South Wales Joint Conference, brought up again the question of railwaymen's wages; and the textile workers have had warning enough of an impending attack. And already, of course, a steady fall is taking place through the operation of wages agreements based on the cost-of-living index.

Of at least equal significance is the general drive towards economy of labour which has shown itself particularly in railways and passenger transport, and which the co-ordination proposals for London traffic will operate on a very wide scale.

The direct industrial attacks have already been supported by

a series of measures involving political repression of the workers' organisations or of the individual workers who have given a lead to the rank and file. The persecution of the Communists, the operation of the Emergency Powers Act, the persecution of Labour guardians and councillors, and finally the Trade Unions Act making persecution a general feature in the life of a trade union—all these have aimed at driving home the power of the State in the service of the capitalist class. But the Trade Unions Act is no more an empty threat than was the Emergency Powers Act or any other Act to preserve the security of capitalism. It is meant to be used in circumstances which the Government considers are certain to arise, and which, with the economic facts before us, we too must realise are bound to arise.

In the colonies and other areas abroad where British capital is invested the economic position is the reverse of the position in Britain; in fact, the growth of production in those countries is one of the factors in the British decline. To a certain extent the losses on British production are being made up by profits on new production abroad financed with British capital, and therefore leaving the British capitalist position unchanged. But the very development in the colonial and other areas has created a new situation there, manifesting itself most clearly in the Chinese revolution, but also showing its influence in India, Egypt, and other colonial territories. The central feature of this new situation is that it threatens the very existence of the tribute drawn by British capital from its investments there. On those fields, therefore, the struggle is a struggle for life and not merely to maintain a certain level of profits. Therefore more and more determined action by the British capitalist class is inevitable, and especially action against Soviet Russia.

WHAT'S AHEAD IN THE CARIBBEAN?

By SCOTT NEARING

UNITED States interests in the Caribbean have developed with great rapidity during the present century. In 1900 they consisted of a few investments in Mexico and Cuba, and a small amount of trade. To-day, Latin America is one of the chief commercial and financial outlets for United States finance capital.

United States commerce with the Caribbean has multiplied several fold since 1900. Here are some of the figures:—

Trade between the U.S.A. and S. America

					<i>(millions of dollars)</i>		
					1900	1914	1925
Cuba	..	..	..	..	58	185	460
Mexico	..	..	..	..	64	124	324
Colombia	..	..	..	..	7	18	105
Venezuela	..	..	..	..	8	14	45
Dominican Republic	..	..	..	..	5	8	25
Haiti	..	..	..	..	4	7	16
Nicaragua	..	..	..	..	3	4	14

United States trade with Latin America has become a factor of major importance during these twenty-five years. In 1900 it totalled \$304 million; in 1926, it totalled \$2,000 million. It made up 14 per cent. of the total foreign trade of the United States in 1900. In 1925 it was 21 per cent. of the total.

United States investments in Latin America have increased with even greater rapidity. In 1900, including \$185 million in Mexico and \$50 million in Cuba, combined United States investments in Latin America totalled only about \$290 million. At the outbreak of the World War, United States investments in Latin America were about \$1,250 million.

In 1926 they were estimated by the U.S. Department of Commerce at upwards of \$4,000 million, distributed as follows: Mexico, \$1,500 million; Cuba, \$1,400 million; Central America, \$154 million; Chili, \$380 million; Argentina, \$300 million; Brazil, \$290 million; Peru, \$100 million; Colombia, \$90

million; Venezuela, \$85 million; Bolivia, \$80 million; Ecuador, \$30 million; Uruguay, \$30 million; Paraguay, \$15 million; Haiti, \$22 million; Santo Domingo, \$18 million.

War necessity between 1914 and 1918 gave the United States an unequalled opportunity to possess itself of the Latin-American produce and investment markets. European empires were busy fighting and their economic interests suffered accordingly. Politically, the United States had prepared the way for its conquest of Latin-American opportunities by the economic interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. Originally (in 1823) Monroe warned Europe to keep hands off Latin-American republics. Practically, in 1916, Wilson interpreted the doctrine to mean that the United States was to have first claim on economic opportunities in Latin America.

The huge investable surplus of the United States, which now totals more than \$15 billions annually, compelled American business interests to seek an outlet in this very important region. The Panama Canal facilitated the process. Then, too, the Caribbean contains the tropical complement to the resources of temperate United States. Combined, these forces made the United States' domination of the Caribbean inevitable.

The Caribbean is rich in natural resources, but the combined populations of Mexico, Cuba, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Central America, Colombia, and Venezuela (area 1,939,000 square miles), are only 35,990,000. Thus a territory eleven times the size of Germany has one-half of Germany's population.

None of the governments is really strong. All depend for their financing on foreign bankers. There are no navies, and outside Mexico, no armies of moment. Consequently, foreign exploiters have been able to proceed with little interference. Where questions have arisen in Cuba, Haiti, Honduras, they have been settled by sending in a gunboat and a file of marines. Wages are low. Standards of living among the masses of workers are Asiatic. The Caribbean is a veritable paradise for American economic exploitation.

Given an imperial domination of a rich semi-tropical area by a powerful and aggressive capitalist group such as that which now dictates domestic and foreign policy in the United States, what

results will follow in the exploited area ? European statesmanship has been asking this question in North Africa and in southern and eastern Asia ; Moroccans, Syrians, Egyptians, Turks, Persians, Indians, and Chinese have been answering it in a most emphatic manner. United States interests have been raising the same question in the Caribbean since about 1900. Thus far Mexico is the only country that has attempted a far-reaching answer.

Mexico had an important revolution in 1857. The Mexican revolution of 1910, however, was of paramount significance : first, because it became a typical bourgeois-proletarian revolt against imperial exploitation ; second, because thus far it has been the only definite movement of its kind in the Americas.

President Porfirio Diaz ruled Mexico from 1876 till 1910. He derived a considerable portion of his governmental revenue from the sale of concessions. Some of the concessions went to Mexican capitalists. Most of them, however, were bought by foreign capitalists. These concessions included the right to exploit mining, lumbering, oil-drilling, agricultural, commercial, and other business enterprises. The traditional backers of Diaz were the big land-owners of Mexico. His concession-granting policy called into being a business class that soon assumed a rôle of dominating importance in Mexican public affairs. Diaz made certain overtures to this business class. In the main, however, he continued as the representative of his landed backers, leaving the newly-created business class to protect its interests as best it could.

The presidential campaign of 1910 was fought between Diaz and Francisco Madero. The latter was a banker and business man and had the backing of important Mexican and foreign business elements.

Diaz won the election as a matter of course. Madero, alleging fraud, demanded that Diaz either resign his office or submit to a fair election. Diaz refused. Thereupon Madero proclaimed the revolution and rallied to his support some of the smaller land-owners and a large contingent of those doing business in northern and eastern Mexico. British and American oil interests were waging a bitter war for the control of the Mexican fields. Diaz was throwing his support at the British interests represented by Lord Cowdray, Madero favoured the United States oil interests,

Superficially the Diaz regime was very strong. Fundamentally it was so weak that it crumpled under Madero's attack. Diaz left Mexico and Madero became president within the year.

There were other aspirants for the office, however. One of them, Victoriano Huerta, was generously supported by the British oil interests. Huerta overthrew Madero in February, 1913. He was promptly attacked and driven out of office by the combined efforts of President Wilson, Secretary of State Bryan, and a group of revolutionary leaders headed by Carranza.

Between 1913 and 1917 the Carranza group stabilised its position. In 1917 the Constitutional Convention summoned to amend the Constitution of 1857 turned out a document more radical than any existing constitution along at least two lines : (1) a provision for the nationalisation of natural resources ; (2) an advanced labour code.

How did it happen that a business men's revolution begun by a banker in 1910 should produce such unbankerlike results seven years later ? The answer is simple. In the intervening years the Mexican revolution had secured extensive proletarian and agrarian support.

At the outset the Mexican revolution was bourgeois. By 1914 it had developed a well-formulated labour movement among the industrial workers in the cities and the powerful agrarian movement centred in Morelos, Yucatan, and other States where the Indian communal traditions were still strong. These proletarian and agrarian elements controlled the Constitutional Convention which met in the closing days of 1926. Carranza was a landlord ; his interests lay primarily with the propertied classes. Apparently he had hoped to re-draft the Constitution of 1857 in such a way that the vested interests of Mexico would be entirely protected. The Convention discarded the Constitution of 1857, and in its place drafted an entirely modern and largely working-class document.

Land-nationalisation provisions contained in the Mexican Constitution of 1917 have never been enforced. But the Petroleum Law of December 31, 1925, and the Land Law of January 21, 1926, both aimed at putting the land-nationalisation provisions into effect. These belated efforts of the Calles Government to enforce a

Constitution adopted ten years earlier have met with the stubborn opposition of the United States oil interests in Mexico.

There are two reasons for this. On the one hand, the laws are held to be retroactive. On the other hand, the law provides for a re-registering of concessions, and as some of the United States oil companies hold titles that are said to be none too good, an inquiry might lead to awkward complications.

United States officials protested against the land-nationalisation provision when it was before the Mexican Constitutional Convention in 1916-1917. They have fought it consistently ever since. Mexican officials, charged with the enforcement of this constitutional provision, have had to proceed with one eye on the Washington State Department and the other on the United States Navy. Necessarily their progress has been slow.

The Mexican revolution thus remains a frustrated revolution. While it is true that labour elements exercise important control in Mexican affairs it is equally true that Mexican officials listen carefully for the opinion of the United States State Department before making important decisions. As Mexican officials put it :—

We are between the Mexican workers on the one hand and the Standard Oil Company and the State Department on the other. We go as far as we dare.

The Mexican revolution of 1910 leading to the Mexican Constitution of 1917, constitutes the first real revolt against capitalist imperialism that has been staged in the Caribbean area since the United States assumed a dominant position there in 1898. But the same forces that produced the Mexican upheaval will, in greater or less degree, work throughout the Caribbean area : the granting of concessions, the exploitation of native labour and native resources by foreign concessionaires, the conflicts among foreign interests, conflicts between foreign interests and local business interests, the economic and political interference by the United States public officials and the U.S. Navy. Where independent States have been forcibly reduced to the status of protectorates, they are filled with bitter hostility.

Nicaragua is the latest illustration of the operation of these forces, and it is worthy of note that both the United States State Department by innuendo, and the Diaz regime in Nicaragua by

direct statement are accusing the Mexican Government of an attempt to unite the exploited groups in the Caribbean area against their common exploiter—"the Yankee Peril of the North," as the United States is described in Latin-American anti-imperialist circles.

President Coolidge, in his message to Congress on January 10, 1927, wrote :—

I have the most conclusive evidence that arms and munitions in large quantities have been on several occasions since August, 1926, shipped to the revolutionists in Nicaragua. Boats carrying these munitions have been fitted out in Mexican ports and some of the munitions bear evidence of having belonged to the Mexican Government.

President Adolfo Diaz of Nicaragua is much more specific. "The espousal, by the Mexican government, of the lost cause of a political minority in Nicaragua presents a problem which transcends the bounds of local politics and interests." (Statement of January 8.) Two days later Diaz scored "the Communist government of President Calles" (Mexico) and asserted that "for the sources of the Liberal war-chest funds one has only to look to Mexico and perhaps further still, to Russia."

When the Diaz conservative regime in Nicaragua was recognised by the United States on November 17, 1926, Diaz invited the United States to support his regime against the Liberals, who, he declared, were receiving Mexican backing. He reiterated these statements on several subsequent occasions, each time repeating his charge against Mexico as a revolutionary force in Latin America.

"The future of Nicaragua and ultimately of all Central America is pending in the issue of the present conflict between my Government and the Calles Government. . . ." (Diaz statement of January 2.) "However innocent some of these Liberals may be of any desire to introduce Mexican radicalism into Nicaragua, no rational person will believe for one moment" that the Liberal government backed by Mexican support "will not be a docile pupil of its master and the exponent of present-day Mexican radicalism."

"All the nations of Central America are at this moment trembling in the presence of the military aggression of the irre-

sponsible and immoral Government of Mexico directed against Nicaragua and menacing all of Central America."

Diaz greatly prefers to have his dealings with the United States. One of his first acts as President of Nicaragua was to invite the United States to send a military force to fight in his behalf on the ground that the "national sovereignty and best interests of small Latin-American countries are secure when any one of them finds it necessary in a difficult moment to seek the aid of the United States. We have no such grounds for confidence in Mexico."

Diaz laid an economic foundation for this opinion in his statement of January 8 : "We feel that our country needs capital . . . We find that capital on fair terms in the United States, but not in Mexico."

Two days later Diaz waved this economic olive branch : "I admit that on the re-establishment of peace I should be most happy to see a large loan contracted by my Government in the United States."

In the same statement he describes his Government as "one known to be friendly to the United States and fair to all foreign interests." This regime he contrasts with "a regime supported by the Communistic Government of President Calles."

Meanwhile President Coolidge had placed fifteen war vessels and a large landing force in Nicaraguan waters. Marines had been landed at the principal centres of Liberal activity ; these centres (including the Liberal capital at Porto Cabezas) had been "neutralised" by U.S. marines and the Liberals ordered to disarm or get out ; United States planes were serving the Diaz Government and every effort was being made to terrorise and hamper the Sacasa forces. Whatever Calles may have done for the Liberals, Admiral Latimer, representing the United States, gave both material and military aid to the Diaz regime.

President Calles and the Mexican Foreign Minister both denied any intention to unite Latin America against the United States. They insisted that the Mexican Government was not giving military support to Sacasa and emphatically repudiated the allegations of Communism directed against his regime.

The issue between Mexico and the United States is well portrayed in the statements made by Calles and Coolidge at about

the same time. Calles was talking to Mexican newspapermen ; Coolidge was addressing the United States Congress.

The ideal of my Government, said Calles, which is the same as the ideal of my people, is to save the great masses of the population from misery and ignorance; to raise their social standards; to teach them a better system of food; to give them schools and culture; to raise them to a higher degree of civilisation; to make the nation more homogeneous. We feel the great gap that exists between a small group of Mexicans who have had all the comfort and enjoy refinement and well-being, and the great population of Mexicans exploited by all the tyrannies, neglected by all administrations, and sunk in misery, sorrow and shadows.

. . . I am the friend of the humble and the poor of my country. . . . I am their friend precisely because I wish to take them out of that condition and better them to the point of establishing the foundation of their economic, social, and intellectual elevation.

What sharper contrast could there be than that between this *credo* of President Calles and the announcement which President Coolidge made in his special message to Congress on January 10, 1927 :—

There is no question that if the revolution continues American investments and business interests in Nicaragua will be very seriously affected, if not destroyed. The currency, which is now at par, will be inflated. American as well as foreign bond-holders will look to the United States for the protection of their interests. The proprietary rights of the United States in the Nicaraguan canal route, with the necessary implications growing out of it affecting the Panama Canal, together with the obligations flowing from the investments of all classes of our citizens in Nicaragua, places us in a position of peculiar responsibility.

Here is a basic conflict of interests. A Mexican president interested in uplifting the masses—a United States president interested in protecting bondholders and foreign investors in the Caribbean area. Confronted by these two statements, it is not hard to decide which of the two men will be accepted as spokesman by the local business men and the exploited masses of Latin America.

Mexico has already moved forward into the position of Latin-American protagonist against the "Yankee peril." Carlton Beals, who is intimately acquainted with the Mexican situation, wrote from Mexico City to the *New York Nation* (issue of December 15, 1926, p. 632) :—

Mexico has been seeking the leadership of Central America through careful selection of diplomatic representatives ; gifts of

airplanes, libraries, wireless stations, scholarships; the sending of labour organisers, theatrical troupes, lecturers; the promotion of international sport and literary and cultural unions; the arranging of special tours to Mexico City; newspaper subsidies and a semi-official news service, "Ariel"; improving communication, rail, cable, wireless, subsidised steamships, and co-operating in mutual difficulties such as the locust plague; offer of financial assistance and the active support of free Liberal Governments. This is part of a large program of cultural *rapprochement*, a movement toward the unification of the entire Latin-American cultural race *bloc*, a movement of which Mexico temporarily, perhaps permanently, is the spokesman, the prime mover, and the leader.

The United States has been attacking the Liberal elements in the Mexican revolutionary movement with spectacular fervour for more than a dozen years. Mexican revolutionaries have resisted doggedly. Gradually the idea which Carlton Beals presents in his *Nation* letter has permeated the Latin-American mind. To-day, when a Nicaraguan crisis or any similar upshot portrays graphically the United States imperial policy in the Caribbean, protests echo throughout Latin America.

An association of Central Americans headed by a college student is reported from Mexico City as planning a boycott against American business houses and American goods until the marines are withdrawn from Nicaragua.

On January 23, 1927, in Mexico City, 5,000 people listened "to violent anti-American speeches in the Arbeu Theatre here at a meeting held under the auspices of the Anti-Imperial League of the Americas." Representatives of the Nicaraguan Liberals, the Haitian Consul, a representative of the Kuomintang party of China, and other distinguished foreigners made up the committee which sponsored the meeting. The *New York Times* special correspondent reported that "the majority of those at to-day's meeting were poorly-dressed working people, but there was a large number of radicals and agitators."

The Buenos Aires *La Nacion* describes the events in the Caribbean as—

a new conception of imperialism, crudely materialistic, which has supplanted the sentiments of high idealism which the great leaders of the United States had established.

One of the leading newspapers of Brazil warned the citizens of

that country against American loans, lest they become "caught in a dangerous net of gold."

The Caribbean faces a period of unrest and of probable revolt aimed at the expulsion of foreign investors, the liberation of small nations, and the establishment of the right of economic self-determination. Diaz and Coolidge quite rightly anticipate such a development. It arises inevitably out of the political and economic situation created by the presence of United States exploiters.

Signs are not lacking that this revolt is already well under way. Press dispatches from Cuba, from Mexico, from Argentina, and from other Latin-American countries carry the story of student and other demonstrations directed against the United States. Haya Dela Torre, writing in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* for December, 1926, described the A.P.R.A. (*Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*), with its growing support in Latin-American countries and its principle of common action against Yankee imperialism; the nationalisation of land and industry and the internationalisation of the Panama Canal.

No matter how good, or moral, or virtuous, or honest, or efficient the United States may be, the necessity for the protection of bondholders and investors leads inevitably, in every Latin-American country, to the presence of the cruisers and marines that are now invading Nicaragua. Imperial policy is determined by the intensity of the struggle for investment and other economic opportunities. The vast economic surplus of the United States creates a continuing and pressing imperial necessity of which Latin America is the most obvious victim.

Against this pressure of investment, with its corollary of exploitation, Latin America has only one possible remedy: united action for the repudiation of foreign concessions and the expropriation of foreign investments. The Mexican Constitution of 1917 and the land and oil laws are a step in this direction.

The Caribbean area is in reality a miniature China; imperialists are doing the same things in both, and the exploited populations of these "backward" countries are reacting in the only manner in which exploited populations can react. Matters have proceeded much farther in Asia because the problem is much older, but they are moving inexorably in the Caribbean region.

THE ISOLATION OF INDIA

By BERNARD HOUGHTON

INDIA is more than a peninsula: it is practically an island. On the North the iron rampart of the Himalayas shields it from all invasion not only of men but of ideas. The barriers on the East are scarcely less formidable, for dense forests and malaria make up for lower height. All the South is bathed by great oceans, and even on the West there are ranges of mountains difficult to traverse. Small wonder, then, that in the past, separated from the outer world, the Indian community has crystallised into the caste system, the most elaborate expression in history of a stationary agricultural society. In more than one respect it has analogies with that of ancient Egypt, isolated from other peoples by deserts and the sea. As in Egypt, religion, the handmaid of the ruling landlords, looms gigantic on the horizon of Indian thought and civilisation.

Long since has the insularity of India begun to disappear. The seas are no longer barriers, but pathways. On to the background of this ancient culture has been precipitated, first, the trader with machine-made goods, demanding raw materials and building railways for transport; and, secondly, the factory system itself.

Nevertheless, a vast mass like the three hundred millions of India, bound by religions which enter to so striking an extent into the daily life, possesses no little inertia. It is not lightly to be shaken from its traditional beliefs and immemorial customs. Conceive yourself an Indian village. Agriculture will appear the supreme occupation of mankind; factories a far-off portent; the absurd anachronism of the spinning wheel cult a quite feasible proposition. The caste system, strange, almost fantastic as it is in the eyes of the modern Englishman, will be the most natural thing in the world. Foreigners come, but over long distances of ocean, and, excepting a few missionaries, they do not touch the social life and the religions of the country. They do not touch

them for the excellent reason that their own dominion depends on the party walls which divide and weaken the teeming millions of India. These old beliefs act as chains tying India to a past which the rest of the world has finally outgrown.

Obviously it is in the interest of the British rulers that Indians should, in thought at least, remain apart from other nations. When a warrior has made a man captive, he does not desire him to exchange views with outsiders. He would have him remain subject to his influence alone, in order the better to inoculate him with the ideology of slaves. Moreover, does not all religion, and in a peculiar degree the Indian religions, preach and disseminate established authoritarian ideas? Is not authoritarianism the best guarantee in the mental sphere of the permanence of foreign rule? Precisely as the Government of Burma endeavours to keep that province aloof from the larger world of India, so do these rulers at Simla strive to hold the Empire of India separate from this our modern world and cherish every institution which may conduce to that end. For in the north of Asia are new ideas, dreaded by all imperialists, ideas which are spreading southward, and which even now knock at the doors of the Indian Empire.

Politically, this insularity of mind so characteristic of India serves admirably the purposes of the British ruling class. Indians are not good Asiatics. They are concerned with the troubles of the colonists in Africa, but the mighty events which are changing the face of Asia seem to awake comparatively little interest. The use of Indian troops to seize Mesopotamia evoked little opposition. The protest against the despatch of regiments to China was, with one exception, more formal than real. So far as Asia is concerned, India thus remains a passive tool in the hands of the imperialists. Nor does the advantage of the latter's wider outlook end here. They see the world as a whole, and they can regulate their Indian policy accordingly. If hard beset elsewhere, they will be gracious to their subjects, lavish, as during the war, with promises of rainbow gold. When, on the other hand, in the imperialist sky the clouds are few and small, they become autocrats again, snubbing contemptuously the puzzled but still subservient bourgeoisie. Before Indians can counter their masters' strategy and understand their politics, it is necessary that they

lift their eyes beyond the Indian horizon. They must cease to look on India as a land apart, and see it as it is, a pawn of imperialism on the chess-board of the world. Englishmen are often enjoined to think imperially. So also should Indians. From this wider viewpoint they will then more and more identify imperialism for what it is. They will see in it no selfless system for the security and the uplift of Asiatics, but an organism which exploits them for the purpose of winning great profits. They can then discard the illusions of Liberal ideology, and understand that in the relations of foreign conquerors with subject Asiatics it is no question of slow reform, but of class war.

Nevertheless, the spiritual isolation of India, useful to her masters, is visibly dissipating. In hoping to keep her mentally separate whilst materially exploited, they are dreaming of the impossible. For it is not only from the wide spaces of the North that new ideas come. They come with the machine, with the factory system. The industrialisation of India, now the settled policy of the British, sounds the knell of the caste system and of the great religions based on an agricultural order of society. A new order comes into being with but two classes, the capitalist and the worker. The Press supplants the altar as the organ of class domination. Here the masters of India are up against a contradiction. With the crumbling of the old system disappear also the stiff barriers against modern science and modern thought. The minds of Indians become plastic, open to the inrush of all kinds of subversive notions, to doctrines of equality, to republicanism, even, *horribile dictu*, to Marxian dialectics. Our imperialists, it is to be feared, cannot have their cake and eat it too. They cannot exploit India through the factory system and expect India to remain conservative, passive, and submissive as of old.

It is true that the number of industrial workers is as yet but small, a mere two millions or so. But they swiftly increase. They have already proved that they can unite and most grimly endure. Not improbably, now that the bourgeoisie has lapsed into impotence, it will be they who will form the spear-head of a new national movement that shall emancipate India. A century ago in England the industrial workers played a part vastly more important than their numbers indicated, and we all know how in

Russia the Bolsheviks formed the vanguard of the masses of peasants. So also in China, the general conditions of which, if we except the religious incubus, are comparable with those in India.

The factories may also form centres from which will spread new ideas dissolving and transforming the primitive society of India. Thus far the process has proceeded slowly. Untouchability and religious feuds still affront a world that, whatever its vices, has elsewhere outgrown these puerilities. But we live in a day of quick and astonishing changes. Given a great wave of emotion, a patriotic and emancipating movement, and all these dark relics of a landlord civilisation will be swept away as suddenly as a river in spate sweeps away the débris collected in its bed. An Indian Kuomintang would give birth to a new India, unthinkable alike to the imperialists and to the priests and princes of the old order.

One thing is certain. Asia has awoken from her slumber of æons. She is moving and moving fast. In a single decade Turkey has changed, Persia and Afghanistan are stirring, Siberia and Turkestan have been revolutionised, China is transformed.

Millions whose lives in ice lay fast
Have thoughts and smiles and tears.

The tide of a new world surges even closer to the ramparts that isolate India. From over the seas come strange ideas, penetrating on all sides her ancient society. Within her, by the very power which holds her captive, the seeds of a new order have been sown. Is it likely that she alone will remain stationary, dreaming of a past that is dead? When all Asia is being revolutionised, will India stand still? Imperialists may point to the defeat of Gandhi's movement. True, he failed, but also so failed John Brown's raid into the Southern States. That did not prevent the speedy emancipation of the slaves at the hands of another and a greater force.

The World of Labour

INTERNATIONAL

The Pan-Pacific Labour Conference

THE Conference of the Trade Unions of the countries round the Pacific was opened at Hankow on May 20. The original intention was to hold it on May 1 in Canton, and the organisation was largely in the hands of Chinese and Australian workers—unfortunately the temporary success of the counter-revolutionary coups in Shanghai and elsewhere changed the whole situation, since the Labour movement in important Chinese centres was forced underground. But it was only a postponement, and despite the fact that the leading imperialist powers put every possible obstacle in the way of the Conference, delegates being arrested, and passes, visas refused, &c., &c., nevertheless delegates from practically all countries managed to get through to Hankow.

The following countries were represented : Japan, six delegates ; Korea, France, and England, one delegate each ; Soviet Union, five delegates ; China, fifteen delegates ; U.S.A. and Java, two delegates each. The Mexican delegate came late. From the Philippines a telegram wishing success to the Congress was received, and regret expressed that it was impossible to send representatives owing to the Philippine T.U.C. being held at the time. Australian and Indian delegates were prevented because the capitalist dictatorship in these countries refused passes. The presidium was made up as follows : Losowsky, Russia ; Tom Mann, England ; Andsama, Japan ; Racamand, France ; Browder, U.S.A. ; Alimin, Java ; Sateschavisen and Lilisan, China.

Losowsky proposed a manifesto to the people of China, Tom Mann a similar one to the people of India, and Browder to the people of Australia. The Japanese delegate moved a resolution of protest against the attacks of the imperialists on the Soviet Union.

Special resolutions were passed supporting the Chinese Revolution, against the intervention policy in China, on the danger of war in the Pacific, and in support of the movements for the liberation of the people in India, Korea, Java and the Philippine Islands, as well as the countries of Central and Southern America.

A programme was drawn up embodying, among others, the following demands on behalf of the workers in these countries—introduction of the eight-hour day, a weekly day of rest, social insurance, protection for women workers, prohibition of child labour, equal pay for equal work, freedom of combination, workers' control, abolition of corporal punishment and fines in money, formation of Workers' Defence Corps, &c. A permanent committee

was elected to maintain the connection between the various organisations and to exchange information and call a congress next year. A resolution was passed in favour of trade union unity. The secretariat was then elected consisting of ten representatives and six substitutes, two representatives and one substitute apiece from China and the Soviet Union; the Trade Unions of U.S.A., Japan, England and France one representative and one substitute each; for Korea and Java a representative each.

The Conference also considered it its duty to warn the workers of the world against relations with the Labour Office at Geneva, and denounced all Labour leaders who have anything to do with this office, whose activities are opposed to the interests of the workers. The Congress declared for a consistent struggle against exploitation, and against the policy of class truce and civic union.

The Conference had great importance in view of the fact that the Amsterdam International, which up to recently confined their attention practically to the European workers, are now, in the interests of class harmony and imperialism, also turning their attention to the workers in India and China. Already they have allies in the Japanese and Indian Labour movements.

Especially important in view of this, was the following statement, on the question of the unity of the trade union movement :—

The last years have been marked by the increased attack of capitalism on the political and economic achievements of the workers. In many countries the capitalists have succeeded in forcing down the workers. The united front of capital is unfortunately confronted by no united front of labour, and that is the main cause of a series of defeats. The knowledge that the greatest possible unity of labour is necessary to organise a successful defence against the capitalist attack has induced the progressive sections of the workers in all countries to raise the question of setting up united Trade Union Centres in every country—as well as an all-embracing Trade Union International. The Trade Unions of the Soviet Republic have taken the initiative in the fight for the unity of the Trade Union movement. They have succeeded in building up fraternal relations between the workers of Great Britain and Russia by the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee and the negotiations for an Anglo-Russian Miners' Committee. In many countries, and also on an international scale, the divisions continue. The Conference of the Trade Unions of the countries on the Pacific—who regard the formation of a united front in every country as well as internationally as the best weapon against the capitalist offensive and the Fascist reaction—calls on the workers of the Pacific to take an active part in the fight for the unity of the Trade Union Movement.

The Pacific Conference greets all who fight for the unity of the T.U. Movement, and promises to do all in its power to put an end to the split in the International Trade Union Movement—and bring about the formation of a firmly and strongly knit united front of Labour as well as setting up a united Trade Union Movement in every country.

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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
W.C.1*

W 15085

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

September, 1927

Number 9

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Published at

162 Buckingham Palace Road

London

S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : ST.OLANE 5412.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

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WAR PREPARATION AND THE T.U.C.

[The "Notes of the Month," by R.P.D., interrupted at present, will be resumed in a later issue. This article appears in their place.]

The New Period

THE central fact of the present period is the attack on the U.S.S.R. All the other issues are overshadowed by this or are bound up with it. The onslaught of capitalist reaction has proceeded on three fronts. The first to develop was the attack on the workers at home. The next stage of action came with the attack against the Chinese revolution and preparation for the attack against the U.S.S.R. The way is now open for the period of direct attack against the Soviet Union, and the attempt to destroy the central stronghold of the revolutionary workers. In the now far-off period of democratic pacifist illusions all these developments appeared a very remote possibility. When the Conservative Government came into power there were many who did not even believe in the coming onslaught on the working class at home. The official movement welcomed the smoke-screen of industrial peace talk as if it was a new atmosphere of goodwill. Even when the real character of capitalist reaction at home could no longer be denied, it was still believed that capitalism was sincerely striving for international peace. The Locarno policy was represented in the most rosy colours. Only now is the full strategy of British capitalism open and undeniable. The whole drive of its foreign policy is towards war with Russia, and a new world war of imperialism. The working class is faced with the certainty of struggles, both at home and abroad, on a scale greater than anything that has yet taken place. The onslaught on the working class at home, the effort to wreck for ever its powers of resistance, takes its place as only one aspect of capitalist policy, an essential but subordinate part of the preparation for war.

War Draws Near

The new period into which we have now entered opened with the armed offensive against China. The diplomatic break with

Russia immediately followed, and, with the evidence of the daily fomentation of the war atmosphere, it has been shown that this cannot be regarded as anything other than the prelude to new hostilities. It is true that even before the events of this year it would have been absurd to talk of a reign of world peace. Apart from diplomatic intrigue and manoeuvring and preparation for war, there have been plenty of examples of small-scale wars since the Treaty of Versailles was drawn up. But the war with China is of a special type and with a special significance. It is a war conducted by the big imperialist powers, by direct and indirect means, against the greatest area and greatest population of Asia. Further, unlike the preceding small wars, it is not a war between two bourgeois powers, but a real class war waged by the forces of world imperialism, headed by British imperialism, against a national revolutionary movement which is the immediate ally of the international working class. If the attack on the Chinese revolution had been prevented it would have meant, not only a check to the immediate attack of capitalism at home, but also the gaining of a new ally for the working class of the utmost significance for the future development of the whole of Asia, and for the struggle with capitalism throughout the world. The unimpeded progress of the capitalist attack in China means the desertion of this ally, and leaves the way open for more thorough-going reaction at home, and for a further development of the capitalist offensive abroad. Thus, the attack on China is seen to be the key to the new period of war.

The idea of war is no longer one of a far-off menace, but has become an immediate present issue. War preparations are no longer hidden or glossed over, they are obvious, unconcealed and even flaunted with all the publicity that the Press can give. The underlying preparations are for a new imperialist war, the immediate objective is war against the Soviet Union. The time is nearly ripe for actual outbreak of the latter ; as in the case of the preliminary diplomatic rupture, the exact moment of the offensive is only delayed until the most favourable opportunity is found. The bloc of the European States is nearly ready, the League of Nations is guaranteed as a tool, and the military preparations are practically complete. The visits of Sir Samuel Hoare to the Balkans and of

Sir Worthington Evans to the Afghan frontier, are only minor, though unmistakable, evidences of the plan of operations. The preparations in India and in the Near East are the greatest of all. Preliminary steps in the war against Russia may consist in an attack on Afghanistan, or through Persia or Mesopotamia, and consequently it becomes as vital for the working class to prevent these as to prevent a direct offensive against the U.S.S.R.

In the face of the war intentions of imperialism which now stand revealed, what becomes of the reformist hopes of preventing war by pacifist propaganda, international arbitration, the League of Nations and disarmament? It stands exposed as illusion and deceit, which plays the same rôle of preventing the action of the workers against war as did surrender to the hypocrisy of President Wilson in the last imperialist war. The very reformists who wish to concentrate all attention on these panaceas are the most entangled in the militarism and war-preparations of their own Governments. Who can believe that the leading socialists of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, such as Paul Boncour, the author of the Mobilisation Order in France, or MacDonald, the servant of the British Foreign Office; or Jouhaux, the bitter opponent of Soviet Russia; or Vandervelde, foreign minister in a capitalist government; or Breitscheidt, who agrees to military intervention against "red imperialism"; or any of them, will ever do anything but follow in the wake of the capitalists of their own country. No wonder that the *New Statesman* remarks, with regard to the rather "excessive programme of naval construction" of the Conservative Government, that "nevertheless, it is important that it should be understood that the attitude of a Labour or Liberal government would be substantially the same."

The Geneva Disarmament Conference

Among the revealing portents of the coming war situation, the breakdown of the Geneva Disarmament Conference takes an important place. The significance of the breakdown does not lie merely in the failure to limit the piling up of armaments, for all the previous efforts in this direction have also proved of no account. Thus the provisions of the Washington Conference of 1921 are already largely a dead letter, the Coolidge disarmament proposal

came to nothing, and the League of Nations Commission on Disarmament in March of this year broke up without achieving any result. What the Geneva failure does is to bring the existence of the fundamental Anglo-American antagonism into the open. The existence of this basic imperialist antagonism is none the less real, because it has not hitherto been expressed in a form of acute conflict, but has rather been hidden under the form of co-operation as was evident at the Washington Conference. In the same way, another fundamental antagonism, that between the U.S.S.R. and the rest of the capitalist world, remained apparently dormant while minor antagonisms, such as that expressed in the Ruhr conflict in Europe, were passing through an acute phase. Even at Washington the underlying Anglo-American antagonism really dominated the situation and determined, for instance, the open abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. The failure of Geneva means the breakdown of the co-operation screen just where it was most desired to preserve it, viz., in regard to military calculations and preparations for the next war.

The whole of the capitalist Press, in order to mask the real situation, has taken the line that the difference that arose at Geneva was only due to the different points of view with regard to strategical requirements, that it was really an unnecessary difference and chiefly to be deplored because of its possibly unfortunate effect on the good relations between the two countries. Actually, the exact reverse is the case ; the conflict over strategy arose as the result of the rapid development of the underlying economic political antagonism between British and American imperialism. The financial struggle, the war for markets, &c., is only now beginning to develop into a real conflict for supremacy. The competition of the U.S.A. is only now beginning to be seriously felt by the British Empire in the export markets of the world. The Dominions, especially Canada and Australia, are drawn into the conflict along with Britain and already, therefore, the full calculations for a possible war have to be made by British capitalism.

The decline of British capitalism forces it to take up an aggressive rôle in order to maintain its position. Thus, with the economic and trade preponderance passing into the hands of the

U.S.A., Britain was forced at Geneva to appear as the aggressor in refusing a limitation of armaments. Also she is compelled to seek allies, and this explains why the third great power, Japan, at Geneva was to be seen putting forward compromise proposals which give a greater tonnage to Great Britain than to the U.S.A. America scored at Washington in 1921 by securing the cancellation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. It is doubtful whether it was ever really thrown overboard, and at Geneva the occasion was taken openly to resuscitate it and thus to repudiate the Washington decisions.

The sharpening of Anglo-American antagonism has its effect also on the British conflict with the U.S.S.R. There are some signs of approaches to the Soviet Union on the part of U.S.A. capitalism since the British rupture of relations. The latest expression of Anglo-American oil rivalry has arisen over the purchase of Russian oil by the Standard Oil Company of New York and the Vacuum Oil Company. Ivy Lee, described as public relations counsel for these two American companies, has recently written a book advocating investment of capital in Russia, suggesting the formation of a Russian Bureau for promoting trade with the U.S.S.R. The American approach to the U.S.S.R., in part, at least, a move directed against Britain, makes the task of British capitalism more difficult and complicated.

War and the Workers' Struggle

The intimate relation between the working class fight against capitalist reaction at home, and the fight against the war menace has already been indicated. It is useless to hope for peace based on pacifist propaganda or on arrangements made by the imperialists among themselves. Imperialism itself involves war, and, therefore, the struggle against war is not different from the struggle against capitalism. The attack on the working class at home is part of the preparation for war and it must be defeated if war is to be prevented. Any slackening of resistance brings in its train an immediate further development of the attack. If the working class is defeated in Britain, it means a further extension of the war front, and sharpening of war preparations abroad; if the opposition to imperialism breaks down abroad, as by the check to the Chinese revolution, or the defeat of the national-revolutionary movements

in the colonies, then further development of the capitalist offensive in Britain is inevitable. Therefore, the war preparations of British imperialism must be fought in the same way as the capitalist reaction, by the mass struggle of the working class in alliance with the mass revolt against imperialism on the part of the colonial peoples.

The immediate and central issue in the struggle at home is the Trade Union Act. The struggle here in itself expresses and sums up all the other issues, it includes the war issue, as also all the home issues, because it involves the very existence of independent trade unionism. It is, therefore, a totally wrong view to look upon it merely as "the Blacklegs' Charter." This epithet reveals the pitifully narrow and limited view of its users. As if the Act was only to facilitate strike-breaking ! The question involved in the Act is the whole question of the existence of the trade union movement as the organ of the workers. It is a consciously designed scheme to block all revolutionary development, to paralyse working-class action in the coming crisis, and to convert the trade unions into subordinate government institutions. The challenge is immediate. The application of the Act is not at some future time but now, in the crisis actually at hand. It is idle, therefore, to talk of a hypothetical repeal in future by a hypothetical future Labour Government. The Act must be fought now, anything else is equivalent to an acceptance, and means an assent to the liquidation of trade unionism. That is the chief issue and task of the forthcoming Trades Union Congress at Edinburgh. That Congress will have to determine how the fight against the Trade Union Act can be conducted, and how the attempt at the application of its provisions can be prevented from disorganising the movement. The first essential is that there should be a common policy of the organised movement on the Act, and that policy can only be one which has the object of rendering the Act inoperative by refusal to comply with its provisions.

The Edinburgh Trades Union Congress

The Trades Union Congress at Edinburgh meets in the new war period. It is the first to be held in the situation created by the defeat of the general strike and of the miners' struggle. Last

year, the miners' struggle was still going on at the time of the Bournemouth Congress and naturally overshadowed other issues. Now it is clear how deeply the basis of the old trade union movement has been shattered. The T.U.C. meets in the new situation expressed in the issues of the Trade Union Act, the war preparation against the Soviet Union, and the breakdown of international trade union unity.

The old pre-general-strike apparatus of trade unionism can no longer in the new period of intensified class struggle stand up to the demands upon it. The high-water mark of its effort to cope with new problems was seen in the Scarborough Congress of 1924. Since then the tendency has been undoubtedly backward. The Scarborough resolutions expressed the fighting readiness of the rank and file, but they were only scraps of paper for the trade union bureaucracy. The general strike revealed the unsubstantial character of the "Left" section of the General Council, and already at Bournemouth, in 1926, they had all retreated into the fold of the reformists. This year there is every possibility of further surrender to capitalism on the part of the now consolidated trade union bureaucracy. Nevertheless, just as at the time of the Bournemouth Congress there was shown, in the very continuance of the miners' struggle, in the resolutions to support it by the levy and embargo and in the general strengthening of the rank and file left wing, that the movement for building a fighting revolutionary class movement was still going on under the crust of the weakening conservative leadership, so also now, in spite of apparent reaction and retrogression, the working class is still being driven in the direction of revolutionary resistance to capitalist attack. The reactionary leadership uses every influence to spread paralysis and make capitulation, and blames the "apathy" of the workers. Yet if one thing is certain it is that the present period is not one of mere stagnation. If that were so why should the whole energy of the reformist leaders be concentrated on the attack against the Communists and Left elements and on the endeavour to stifle every revolutionary expression? The reason is that the bankruptcy of the class-collaboration policy of so-called "sane" reformist trade unionism is now becoming increasingly so obvious and self-

evident that its sponsors have to use every extraordinary measure of suppression in order to maintain their position of supremacy.

This is the only explanation of the retrograde character of the official movement, in spite of the increasing urgency for the workers to make preparations to fight to retrieve lost positions and stem further attacks. This is the explanation of the events at the Southport Miners' Conference, where, in spite of the critical position of the miners and the growing demand for a real facing of the crisis in all its aspects, there was witnessed a solid front against all fighting proposals. The delegates at this Conference were 95 per cent. of the full-time officials, and in the majority of districts they are selected on the basis of their position and not by a ballot vote of the rank and file. Mining officialism is threatened by the Left movement; the anger of the workers at the desperate position into which they are being driven culminates in a demand for the resignation of officials and their replacement by the younger active militants. Hence, in attacking the militant movement, the officials feel that they are defending their positions.

New Leadership not "Left" Leadership

With the certainty of declining industry, renewed attacks on the workers, and imperialist war, there is now no alternative between frank acceptance of the revolutionary position and black reaction and enslavement. The present period sees the final liquidation of the "Left" element on the General Council that carried all before it at the Hull and Scarborough Congresses. It is an instructive episode in the history of British trade unionism, not because of the individuals and personalities concerned, but because it is testimony of the evolution of the working-class movement towards clearer and sharper class issues. As long as "leftism" was a matter of phraseology, the Left leaders were able to maintain their position. As soon as it became clear that capitalism was throwing down a challenge that could only be met by action, the retreat began. Already, before the general strike, the difference between Left and Right in regard to the home situation had disappeared. Internationally, however, the appearance of a Left attitude could still be maintained. In the new war period, the challenge comes internationally as well as

nationally, and consequently we see the crumpling up of the "Left" element on this field as well. In regard to international issues, the position is the same as in the home situation before the general strike, either revolutionary struggle of the workers or complete impotence in the face of the imperialist war.

The Paris Congress exposed the complete emptiness, chaos, and fiasco of the I.F.T.U. at the very moment of the most intense and menacing international situation. In the most critical time of threatening war against the Soviet Union, the Anglo-Russian Committee ceases to function. Instead we have fifteen pages of the Report of the General Council to the Edinburgh Congress devoted to relations with the Russian trade unions presented in such a way as to constitute an invitation to break with Russia. At Paris, Purcell's presidential address contained all the revolutionary phraseology of the left wing with a real emphasis on the urgent need for a world trade union international, combined with an appeal for this to come about by the movements of the world joining the decrepit, corrupt bureaucracy of the I.F.T.U. The Trades Union Congress is faced with this last culminating collapse of the "left" wing. It must demand that the signed pledge of the General Council to call an unconditional World Congress shall be honoured. Edinburgh must give a new lead for international unity or all hope of preventing war will be in vain. The General Council itself is faced with the alternative of making such an independent move or accepting the position of humble, chastened servants of Oudegeest and the other Social-Democrat counter-revolutionaries.

In the period of acute crisis, when no half-way position is possible, when the only prospect for successful resistance is by class-conscious mass struggle, the central problem is that of real new leadership. This must be solved by the trade union movement if it is to face the greater trials now coming. For that reason it is all the more necessary that at Edinburgh there shall be a clear-cut fight of the revolutionary elements without compromise or confusion.

CLEMENS DUTT

THE PARIS CONGRESS OF THE I.F.T.U.

By HARRY POLLITT

THE Triennial Congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions met in Paris on the thirteenth anniversary of the outbreak of war. It is no coincidence that just as thirteen years ago the I.F.T.U. ignominiously collapsed when decisive action should have been taken, so on this occasion with a most serious international situation confronting the workers of the world, a situation calling for decisive action in many spheres, this futile International collapsed like a pack of cards, not as a result of fighting or facing these issues, but in an atmosphere of the most terrible intrigue, corruption, and "back-stairs" work that has ever disgraced the International Labour Movement.

All over the world the workers are facing a capitalist offensive on their wages, hours, and working conditions ; industrial and political rights of organisation that have been looked upon as secure for all time are being ruthlessly suppressed and smashed in every capitalist country ; the situation existing in China demands the most serious and careful attention ; there is ever-increasing capitalist hostility against Soviet Russia ; a terrible White Terror is reigning in Poland, the Balkans, and Hungary ; yet these things apparently were not the concern of the I.F.T.U., and no policy or organisational measures emanated from the Paris Congress dealing with a single one of the fundamental issues now facing the working class.

It was common knowledge before this Congress met that financially, organisationally, and politically it was bankrupt. It has not, and never has had, any real international outlook. The bureaucrats in control of the machine have only been concerned with preserving the favour of the International Labour Office and carrying on a violent campaign to prevent any effective steps being taken to bring about unity in an international movement that is split as a result of the existence of two trade union internationals, and the fact that there are a number of countries whose trade union movements are not affiliated to either of these internationals ;

The I.F.T.U. is the institution which Mr. Purcell in his presidential speech declared must provide the driving force for international trade unionism ; and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, knowing all the above facts but never taking the responsibility of acquainting trade unionists in this country with them, placed a resolution on the Agenda of the Paris Congress of this International calling for a Committee of Inquiry to be established "in order that the Federation may become an organisation of universal scope and influence."

The events in Paris should not give rise to the assumption that the General Council was standing for some fundamental change in the way in which international unity could be achieved. Its official resolution and Mr. Purcell's speech were in practical effect what Amsterdam has stood for ever since its inauguration, namely, that world unity can only come through the I.F.T.U. and any other existing International must be dissolved and its affiliated organisations automatically disaffiliated and unconditionally accept the constitution and statutes laid down by Amsterdam. Let us remember that at Vienna this was interpreted as only being possible when it was done in a manner "compatible with the dignity of the I.F.T.U." Paris has displayed the dignity of the I.F.T.U. before the workers of the world.

The workers everywhere must take into consideration the facts, and these are very simple. There is a Red International of Labour Unions in existence. Mr. Purcell in his speech referred to the necessity of getting contact with the Trade Union Movements of India, China, &c. The R.I.L.U. has already won the affiliation of the Chinese Trade Union Movement, and the Javanese, Mexican, and Japanese Trade Union Movements have all had close connections with the R.I.L.U.

At this point it is pertinent to quote what Fenner Brockway, speaking at the I.L.P. Summer School on August 5, said in regard to another International : he said the "Third International has accomplished magnificent work in making a contact with the coloured peoples, particularly in China, India, and Africa." It can be asserted without fear of contradiction that this statement is also true of the R.I.L.U. When the world situation compels the British Trade Union Movement to pay great attention to

international organisation, when the acute capitalist crisis compels British trade unionists to seek new allies in India, China, South Africa, &c., is it to be expected that the Russian Trade Unions will leave the R.I.L.U. to join up with the I.F.T.U. whose Dutch, French, and Belgian leaders reign supreme in their European exclusiveness and loyalty to their capitalist masters at Geneva ?

The way to international trade union unity is not through the Vienna resolution of 1924 or the General Council's Paris resolution of 1927. The situation at the Paris Congress and the Brown disclosures once again provide the British Movement with the opportunity of rising to the new possibilities of the situation. It is no longer a question of appointing a new secretary or of obtaining new headquarters ; it is the supreme question of altering the whole conception of what international trade unionism means and deciding how best this reorganisation can be achieved out of the existing conditions.

What steps will be taken to achieve this result is a matter which will have to be decided by the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress. The British Movement cannot exist in isolation. To those who say "a plague on both your houses" it is only necessary to mention that the world situation in which the British Trade Union Movement finds itself, compels it to participate in international affairs.

The key to the situation is in the hands of the British and Russian Movements. If the Anglo-Russian Advisory Council calls an immediate conference for the purpose of reviewing the position and the necessary *will* to unity is developed at that conference, in a short space of time world unity can be achieved.

The Russians are the strongest section in the R.I.L.U., the British have been the strongest section in the I.F.T.U. Both these trade union movements have a great influence on the trade union movements of South America, India, the whole of the Scandinavian countries, and the revolutionary workers in Germany, France, &c. Further, they could summon to their assistance many prominent international trade union leaders who are personally in favour of unity, and who would be willing to join an Anglo-Russian Committee which was co-opting for this specific task all those international leaders willing to co-operate in organising a world con-

ference at which the trade union movement of every country in the world would have an opportunity of being represented, together with representation from the International Trade Secretariats.

At such a Congress one united trade union international could be created (an *International* in every sense of the word) and an end made once and for all to the present splits and divisions that exist in the World Labour Movement.

The Edinburgh Trades Union Congress has a tremendous responsibility before it. It will have to consider both the General Council's Report on its connections with the Russian Trade Union Movement and also the policy of the General Council in regard to the Paris Congress. It is to be hoped that there will be no attempts to divert the Congress to side issues ; the international situation is such that it will be a crime against the working class if decisive steps are not taken at Edinburgh to bring about unity.

If the spirit which was in evidence at the Hull, Scarborough, and Bournemouth Congresses is again evidenced at Edinburgh, and if those British leaders who in speeches on Russia or in articles on *Trade Union Unity* supported the movement for a single world international, boldly face the Congress and fight for those things to which they have paid lip-service, a mighty movement will be developed that will sweep away all the bureaucratic barriers, the lies, treachery, and conspiracy against unity that have made the official leadership of the International Federation of Trade Unions stink in the nostrils of every decent worker.

The World Congress must be called. That is the sole way to world unity. Whatever is decided with regard to the Anglo-Russian Committee, the responsibility rests with the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress to see that a World Trade Union Congress is convened.

THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF U.S.S.R.

By MAURICE DOBB

IT is now nearly ten years since the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" in Russia passed from an insurrectionary slogan into a political reality. And it is now nearly seven years since the end of civil war on six or seven fronts ended the military period of the revolution and gave the first "breathing-space" for economic reconstruction.

When by the end of November, 1920, the remnants of Wrangel's invading army had been finally driven out of the Crimea, Russian economic life was at the lowest ebb which one can conceive possible, short of complete catastrophe and collapse. Industrial production as a whole stood at less than a sixth of the pre-war amount; while the activity of blast furnaces, as the basis of the essential metal trades, had sunk to the ludicrous figure of 2 per cent. of the normal. Even stocks of goods carried over from earlier years, which had served as a mainstay during the war period, were in most cases approaching complete exhaustion. The fuel situation was so acute as to threaten a complete stoppage of transport. The coal-field of the Donetz and the oil-fields of Grosny and Baku had only just passed back under the sphere of the Soviet Government; and locomotives had to crawl their way with green wood to heat their boilers. Some idea of the disorganisation caused to transport by the civil war can be gauged from the fact that in 1919 about 60 per cent. of the railway mileage was in the hands of the White armies, and in 1920 80 per cent. of the railroad was within the sphere of military operations. By the end of 1920 more than half the locomotives were disabled and awaiting repair (the figure already stood at 30 per cent. in October, 1917), while over 2,000 bridges and 1,000 miles of permanent way had been destroyed. In agriculture, the compulsory requisitioning of the peasant surplus, imposed by war necessities, had caused the area of peasant sowings to shrink by some 30 per

cent., and the total yield of grain by more than a half; so that the ration of the town worker in several months of 1920 was insufficient to keep him from starvation for more than some eleven to thirteen days in the month. The position of important raw materials was even worse: the cotton crop in Turkestan, for instance, as a result of the civil war was in 1919 only 6 per cent. of the pre-war yield. A downward spiral of collapse had been established in which food and fuel could not be moved from distant regions to the towns for lack of transport; transport breakdown threatened from lack of available fuel and the inability of the metal industry to conduct the necessary repairs; industry in turn was shackled by shortage of materials, fuel, and food, while the Donetz coal mines themselves were at a standstill because they could not procure food supplies for their workers. At the base of the whole stood the peasant, unwilling to plough and reap and send to market unless sufficient inducement were given him in the shape of available supplies of manufactured goods. Finally, as though a malignant deity schemed to make collapse inevitable, the spectre of famine, such as visits agrarian countries once in a lifetime, descended on the Volga region.

It was a brave prophet who in those dark days declared that Russia could pull through to convalescence without going cap in hand to the pawnbrokers in the West; and the *émigrés* in Berlin, Prague, Paris, and London, whose military ventures had ended in fiasco, joyfully acclaimed the famine of 1921 as the beginning of the end. It even seemed doubtful whether Russia could climb out of the depths and "mark time" at a low economic level, until such time as the advance of the workers' movement in Western countries brought her aid. Russia in pre-war days had relied on borrowing from abroad to the extent of over £20 million each year, and her industry had relied extensively on foreign managerial and technical personnel. Her existing plight was unprecedented in modern history; and subsequent events were to show Austria snatched from death only by virtue of a "stabilisation loan" from the League of Nations, Germany, in much less serious plight than Russia, salvaged only by pledging herself to Wall Street, and even Paris and London having to raise American credits in order to stabilise their foreign exchange.

Yet seven years have proved the Cassandras unjustified. No workers' governments in Western Europe have appeared to lend Russia aid. No foreign loan was forthcoming at Genoa, save on conditions which amounted to economic servitude of Russia to the capitalist West. The amount of foreign capital procured by means of "concessions" has been insignificant—less than £1 million per year on the average. Short-term credits procured in the course of foreign trade were no greater, and probably less, than is received by the majority of nations who trade with richer neighbours. Yet to-day Russian industry, in spite of the devastation of six years of war and invasion, approaches and even surpasses the pre-war level of production.¹ Real wages now exceed the pre-war amount; and to wages must be added gains in the shape of an extensive system of social insurance, steadier employment,² the eight-hour day, and a fortnight's holiday with full pay, which must bring the material position of the worker up to at least 25 per cent. above the pre-war standard. The currency has been stabilised, a new monetary unit, the *chervonetz*, based on gold and foreign valuta, introduced—a stabilisation which preceded that of the mark, the lira, or the franc, and even preceded by a year the return of Britain to the gold standard.

Nor is this all. In addition to the restoration of shattered productive forces, Russia is now making important progress toward industrialisation and the raising of industrial production above the pre-war level. In addition to re-equipment of existing factories, new factories are being built. In addition to reconstructing the old transport system, the construction of new lines is being set on foot. In addition to restoring the old sources of fuel for industry, a whole new network of electrical power is

¹ It is interesting to compare this with Mr. J. W. F. Rowe's estimate, for the London and Cambridge Economic Service, that Britain has reached at most no more than 94 per cent. of pre-war production. Of course, just as this figure is approximate and subject to a margin of error, being only an estimate, so are all Russian comparisons with pre-war, since in their case the 1913 figure is an estimate only.

² It is true that figures of unemployment are actually high. But this represents, in the main, influx of peasants from the villages, and coexists with a steady increase in the total numbers of workers employed—for instance, a 6 per cent. increase in 1925-26.

being created, of which seven large stations with a 166,000 kilowatt capacity have already been opened. In the current year, 1926-27, sums equivalent to about £85 million are being applied to capital development in state industry (including electrification); while capital accumulation of all kinds (including transport, agriculture, housing, &c.) is estimated to amount to over £190 million.³ If we make allowance for the fact that part of this figure represents sums set aside to repair current depreciation and wear and tear, we find that the figure of *net* capital accumulation represents nearly 8 per cent of the total national income of Russia, and compares very favourably with the figure of pre-war capital accumulation, which was 8.5 per cent. of the national income according to reliable estimates. In Britain, which has a national income per head four times as great as Russia, capital accumulation is no more than 12-13 per cent. of the national income and still falls behind the pre-war amount. On the basis of this, Soviet official plans anticipate an annual growth of some 15 per cent. in industry over the next five years; while with regard to the total national income the most cautious estimates anticipate a 6-7 per cent. growth per year. These figures compare with a pre-war annual growth of 2.5 per cent. in the national income (Professor Prokopovitch's estimate) and of 3.8 per cent. in industry, and with a 3-5 per cent. annual growth in U.S.A. and 2.1 per cent. in Britain.⁴

This reconstruction period of seven years can be divided into three main phases.

First was the fierce struggle against the famine and the fuel and transport crisis in 1920-22. This showed itself financially in a universal shortage of circulating capital—an inability of industry to find the means to purchase the food, fuel, and materials with which to keep its plant in operation. The problem facing the Government was to concentrate the limited resources which

³ These figures are arrived at by converting chervonetz roubles into £'s according to the ratio of their internal purchasing power (as expressed by the Gosplan Wholesale I.N. and the Board of Trade Wholesale I.N.), which gives a truer picture than converting roubles then at the par of exchange.

⁴ Figures based on articles by Professor Weinstein in *Socialist Economy* (Russian), 1926, No. IV; Strumilin in *Planned Economy* (Russian), 1926, No. IV, &c., the translation of which I owe to H. C. Stevens.

it had upon the fuel and transport and transport-repairing industries, even though this meant a ruthless reduction of the number of persons on rations in Moscow and Petrograd, or an actual closing of textile, leather, and other factories producing finished goods. Industries producing secondary necessities for the urban population had to be starved of resources in order to provide the funds for purchasing from the peasant more primary necessities and coaxing him to extend the area and intensiveness of his cultivation. The whole forces of the Communist Party were mobilised and turned on to the economic front, as before they had been turned on to the military front. Drastic economies were introduced into transport and fuel, in the former by a 25 per cent. reduction of staff and decentralisation, in the latter by "concentration" of production on the more efficient pits and by mobilising available transport facilities for carrying food supplies to the Donetz miners. As a result, by the autumn of 1922 the fuel and transport crisis had passed, and the finishing industries in the final months of the year showed a phenomenal recovery, while with an improved harvest and improved transport of food, the real wages of workers more than doubled in the course of the year. At the same time the new form of organisation of State industry which replaced the temporary over-centralised system under "war communism" had come into being; and though heavily handicapped by lack of financial resources, the new Trusts (groups of enterprises governed by a Board appointed by the State in consultation with the T.U.'s as "Trustees," and possessed of commercial competence to operate on the market at their own discretion) had successfully established their position, and had in turn created their own commercial apparatus in the form of Syndicates and an Industrial Bank to pool their resources and provide them with short- and long-term credit.

The *second* period, extending over 1923-24, witnessed a more complicated stage of reconstruction. No longer shortage of fuel and food, but shortage of raw material, handicapped industry. Industrial production had recovered to about a third, and agricultural output to about two-thirds of the normal. The new industrial organs had become established and were increasing in strength and influence. The first steps were being taken to

balance the State Budget, terminate inflation, create a balance between imports and exports and stabilise the currency—all of which involved further parsimony of State grants and credits to industry and increased taxation. The main problem of the period was that wide divergence between industrial and agricultural prices which came to be called “the scissors”—a divergence which culminated in a severe “sales crisis” in the autumn of 1923, owing to the relative highness of industrial prices and the relative lowness of peasant purchasing power. The diagnosis of this problem and its solution proved to be a turning point in Russian development which ranked with October, 1917, and March, 1921. Partly the “scissors” was due to the slower reconstruction of industry than of agriculture; and one group of opinion which came to constitute the opposition within the Party in the 1923-24 discussions laid exclusive stress on this cause, and urged a more rapid rate of industrial development by accumulating as capital the profits of State industry, and by a policy of “dictatorship of industry” to strengthen State industry on the market. But the most important cause, at any rate of the most acute phase, of the “scissors” in the autumn was precisely this policy of “dictatorship of industry”: State Trusts and Syndicates had used their monopoly power to raise prices and secure monopoly profit at the expense of the peasantry; and, as in all monopoly actions, these prices and profits could only be maintained on the basis of restricted output and sales. The crucial question, accordingly, confronted the Communists: Was socialist industry to be developed at the expense of the “exploitation” of peasant agriculture through the monopoly power of State industry on the market? Among others Preobrazhensky answered in the affirmative: the necessary socialist accumulation could only come from the profits of trade with small-scale private economy, as Imperialist countries draw “super-profit” from colonial trade, and as mediæval towns grew rich on the proceeds of trade with the dependent countryside. But the majority view in the Party eschewed this policy, first because it would strike a blow at that union of urban worker with the poor and middle peasant of the village which Lenin had laid as the corner-stone of the New Economic Policy—the *sine qua non* of working-class hegemony in

an agrarian country; second, because such a policy necessarily involved lessened trade between town and village, a smaller market for industry and a smaller inducement to the peasant to extend his supply of the food and raw materials so urgently needed by the towns. This official policy by the end of 1924 had managed to close the "scissors" by a 30 per cent. reduction of industrial prices and a 70-80 per cent. raising of agricultural prices; while industrial costs had at the same time been lowered by over 20 per cent. through a further "concentration" of industry, reducing overhead charges and economising circulation capital. The monetary reform had been introduced in March of the year and maintained in spite of a poor harvest in the summer; while industrial production had expanded to over a half of pre-war.

The *third* period, starting with 1925, may be said at the same time to have closed the phase of reconstruction and to have opened the phase of progress beyond the pre-war level. It was now no longer a question of insufficient circulating capital to keep existing plant at work (although shortage of raw materials still remained a difficulty): the possibility of economies through concentrating work on the most efficient plant was now exhausted; and with the approach to the normal level of production the question came to the fore of the renewal of basic or fixed capital, depreciated and worn-out in the war years, and its extension. This task, requiring as it did parsimony in the present, in order to release resources to build factories, railways, electric power stations, &c., for the future, was a problem which dwarfed even those of the dark days of 1921. It was a problem to be calculated no longer in millions or tens of millions of gold roubles, but in hundreds of millions, and in milliards.

The crucial question concerned the source of the funds necessary for this capital extension, and whether sufficient accumulation was possible to permit the building of socialist industry in the middle of a hostile world. Four sources were open. *First* was the extraction of "super-profit" from trade with peasant agriculture. *Second* was the method of inflation, which imposes a forced levy on all persons whose money incomes lay behind the inflationary rise of prices. *Third* was restricted present consumption by the workers themselves, in the form of wages rising at a slower

pace than productivity. *Fourth* came stringent economies in industrial administration by means of "socialist rationalisation," leaving a surplus of resources available to finance capital development.

The first of these sources was ruled out as the main source of accumulation by the decisions in the "scissors" discussion in 1923-24. A certain amount could be drawn from the profits of trade with the peasantry, but only in the shape of a minimum, not a monopoly profit. The second method resolved itself in the final analysis into either the first or the third, and any considerable reliance on this method would endanger the stability of the monetary unit. Though expansion of credit, so long as it did not out-distance expansion of production and so did not raise the price-level, could play a minor rôle in supplying funds to industry, its rôle could be no more than a minor one. It was, therefore, the last two sources of accumulation on which principal reliance had to be placed. The fact that the process of capital accumulation, now resting on a socialist, not a class basis, already reaches the pre-war rate is a measure of the success in handling the greatest, if less spectacular, problem which the new Russia has so far faced.

But while the quantitative aspect of Russia's economic progress can be gauged in figures, there remains an important qualitative aspect which is less easily measured. How to test whether the social tendencies which underlie the statistician's figures are working in the direction of socialism, or whether, on the contrary, they represent from the socialist point of view a retreat? To deny the existence of any tendencies of this latter character would be to deny that Russia is in passage through a transition period. The New Economic Policy, inaugurated in 1921, does not represent complete socialism, nor is it the product of any "defeat." It is a system adapted to the economic circumstances of the transition period—a "mixed system" (which Lenin called State-capitalism), comprising socialist large-scale industry, private small-scale industry, and backward peasant agriculture. The unique character of this "mixed system" is that the workers hold the "commanding heights"—holding them by virtue of their alliance with the poorer peasantry—and that the socialist

element predominates, since it covers 80 per cent. of industrial production. Naturally, the tendency exists for the non-socialist elements to increase their relative influence, for capital to accumulate in the hands of private traders (*Nepmen*) in the town and of rich peasants (*Kulaks*) in the village, and for germs of new class monopoly and class division in this way to arise.

But against these tendencies exists the strong influence which the ruling party can exercise through its control of big industry, of taxation, of credit, of education, and by its lead in the co-operatives. These can be used to stem any tendency to a revival of class differentiation. For instance, the State has power to discriminate against the *kulak* in the matter of taxation and of credit, while the co-operatives lend special aid to the weaker peasant and so prevent him from becoming an exploitable victim for his richer neighbour. Again, the universities are now peopled by workers to at least 80 per cent., while the ideology taught there is predominantly Marxist, so that the old divorce between the creatures of higher education and the masses is well in process of being destroyed. Through the growth of State industry and the industrialisation of the country, through the influence exerted by its control of the "key positions," and through the gradual transformation of peasant agriculture, not by the compulsory methods of the "war communism" period nor by Preobrazhensky's policy of "crushing out" the peasant, but *via* the intermediate stage of rural "co-operative collectivism," the ruling party of Russia places confidence in a steady growth of the socialist elements in this "mixed system" and a progress towards a classless system, even though Russia remain encircled by a hostile capitalist world. And it is precisely because the triumph of socialism in Russia depends upon the steady progress of this industrialisation, that Russia of all countries has most to lose from the phantom of war which has once again begun to prowl about the chancelleries of European capitals.

BRITISH WAR PREPARATIONS IN INDIA

By A. N. BHADURI

INDIA has always been the strongest base for British imperialist wars during the last hundred years of world history. To mention only a few, the three Afghan wars, the Boer war, the Boxer uprising in China, the two Burmese wars and the last world war, were waged with Indian men and money. In Mesopotamia, Palestine, Persia, Turkey, Africa, Egypt, Nepal, Tibet, Indian mercenaries and resources were used for the imperialist expansion of Great Britain. Hong Kong was wrested from the Chinese with the help of Indian soldiers ; opium was thrust down their throats with the help of the Indian police, and even in revolutionary China of to-day, Indian soldiers are mobilised in order to drown in blood the Chinese struggle for freedom. India has only too often stood in the way of human freedom, though generally against her own will. The vast reserve of Indian men and money and the strategic value of the occupation of this continent, largely helped the British capitalist class to win its dominant position in the world, to maintain which another war, more sinister than ever, is again being organised.

This "war of civilisation" against Soviet Russia is a question of life and death for the cause of Indian freedom. The declaration of war against Soviet Russia, who makes no secret of her moral and material support for the struggle for freedom of the Asiatic nations from the yoke of international imperialism headed by Great Britain, is as a matter of sheer logic, a declaration of war against revolutionary Asia. India forged in 1914 more strongly on her own neck the chains of political and economic slavery by strengthening with life and money an arch-reactionary force in the world, British imperialism—the most perfected stage of world capitalism. Indian middle-class nationalism, by supporting a decadent culture of vested interests and by assisting British militarism, which is the mainstay of the huge irresponsible

bureaucratic machine in India, is bound sooner or later to drag the Indian people into a criminal war against the aspirations of Asia and against the exploited workers of the world. Indians who have nothing in common with the interests of the imperialists must work to prevent this crime of declaring war against their own interests, a war for swelling the pockets of their own oppressors, a war that is prepared to lower their already miserable standard of living.

But the murderous war plans in India are organised on the certain support of the privileged ruling class of India. The Conservative Government of England is feverishly seeking to foment a war against Soviet Russia, after being sure of the help of the Indian bourgeoisie in her military operations in India. The buying up of the Indian bourgeoisie for the stabilisation of British capitalism and the winning of them over to her sinister war plans is an important chapter of Indian history of recent years. It is worth while studying the history of the bourgeoisie in a fairly industrialised Asiatic country like India, where the interests of this class are interwoven with the interests of the British imperialists.

The world war, which revolutionised Britain's economic relation with India, brought the Indian people almost to the brink of a social revolution. The new imperial policy after the suppression of this mass discontent, is a policy of "economic concession and political repression." The new phase is marked by the growth of Indian industries and by a new agricultural policy (the new Viceroy being an agricultural expert and ironically called a peasant-viceroy), and the export of British capital with increasing rapidity in order to industrialise India with the help of Anglo-Indian capital and thus to restore with the help of Indian cheap labour, raw materials and the Indian market, Great Britain's badly shaken industrial monopoly in the East. The removal of duties on imported machinery, the removal of the cotton excise duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and the raising of the duty on imported cotton goods from 7 to 11 per cent., the enormous bounty from the Government to the iron and steel industry, political pseudo-reforms, the recognition of the Government prize-boys in the League of Nations, in short a junior partnership in the exploitation of the masses, and lastly the fear of a social revolution, all these causes have driven

the nationalist leaders (since they come from the land-owning or industrialist class) to the side of the Government, and have led them to carry out the British imperialist policy both inside and outside India with little or no resistance. The following opinion of one of the most prominent spokesmen of the bourgeois nationalists, Mr. B. C. Pal (once in the camp of the Bengal revolutionaries), will clearly expose the betrayal of the nationalists and the trend of events in India :—

Economically, Britain's possession of India is also a very great asset to herself and her overseas empire. India's raw material, cheap labour and huge unprotected markets offer almost incalculable opportunities of exploitation to British imperial industries, trade and commerce.

The attainment of a national government in India by *timely and friendly compromise* with the representatives of British imperial interests will alone provide for the adequate protection of these very large interests which the British have acquired in this country.

A possible revolution will be the greatest conceivable menace to those interests, and British statesmanship, therefore, must put forth its best efforts to secure the *timely and friendly compromise*, but before this compromise can be effected the British will naturally want reasonable guarantees for peace and good government in India which is so essential for the protection and promotion of their special interests.

This speech is addressed to the "representatives of British imperial interests" showing the advantages of a "timely and friendly compromise" with the Indian bourgeoisie for the united exploitation of the "unprotected market, cheap labour and vast resources" of India. This classical, frank and conscious statement from one of the prominent mouthpieces of the Indian upper class, proves most conclusively an open betrayal of the nationalist movement. With this certain and important support, the British imperialists can afford to prepare another bold crusade against Soviet Russia. It is worth while also noting the statement from the report of the Fiscal Commission, consisting largely of a radical section of the Indian bourgeoisie, which was appointed in October, 1921, with the object of examining the tariff question :—

It is mere commonplace to say that a rich India is a tower of strength to the Empire, while an economically weak India is a source of weakness . . . *India would have been of far greater help to England during the war* if the policy of protection had been adopted at least a

generation ago . . . This (revision of the tariff policy) would have been to her great advantage and would have been beneficial to the Empire . . .

No further comment is necessary to prove the object of the era of Protectionism in India. In order to realise England's further war-preparations in India it is necessary fully to understand its economic basis. That there is a systematic preparation for war is self-evident in view of the fact that more than one-third of the Indian revenues are still used for the military budget. The war preparations in India are of various kinds and have recently grown rapidly in size and intensity. They can be divided into several categories.

Political Preparation for War

The main political object of the British Government is to buy up the Indian leaders in time, in order to be sure of their help with men and money, when declaring war against Russia. After the Indian revolutionary movement had made some attempts to create revolutionary risings in 1915, the Home Rule movement was organised throughout the country and the British Government promised the leaders constitutional reforms in August, 1917, in order to secure Indian men and money and support in the war against "barbaric Germany." To-day, after the mass movement of 1921 and the Chinese revolution, Britain again finds it essential to buy up the upper class by two arguments :—

(a) The argument of offering a substantial share in the government of the country, that is to say, a share in the exploitation of the people.

(b) The argument that the upper class must be protected against Bolshevik Russia which threatens private property.

Since all the Indian leaders come from the landowning or industrialist class, it is not surprising that they are ready to use these arguments for their own political benefit. All the Indian leaders are, in one form or another, negotiating with the British government and some of them are even now (June-July) in London in order to fix the terms of the betrayal. The coming reforms of 1929 are a very important step in the war preparations of England just as the 1917 reforms substantially helped England in the war against Germany.

It must be remembered that it is only British India that will get reforms, and that it is the policy of the British Government to divide India into two parts, viz, (a) the so-called Swaraj India, and (b) the India of the Princes. A study of the negotiations of the government with the Council of Princes shows that it is the intention of the Government to make the Princes responsible to the Government of Great Britain and not to the Swaraj Government of India, so that if Swaraj India were to go against England in her war plans, the Princes' India may be used for the purpose of supplying troops and money not only against Russia, but also to crush any attempt at revolution in India. The facts regarding the anglicisation of the armies of the Indian States, the increase in the number of troops in the States, the more effective control of the armies, the occupation of the posts of military ministers and the training of the sons of the Princes in England under the control of English agents, all point to the conclusion that the States are being specially and rapidly prepared for rendering service to Great Britain in the coming war.

The ideological propaganda which is being conducted by the Press agencies, by the information departments of the British Government in India and by members of the British Labour Party, is clearly directed against Russia. By continual reiteration of the Russian menace to the safety of the Indian people, England is creating a fear of Soviet Russia. The propertied class is to be frightened into helping Britain against the U.S.S.R. by being told that the Bolshevik movement intends to seize their estates. The Hindus, especially in the Punjab, are being told that Soviet Russia is helping Afghanistan in order to set up Islamic rule in India. The Mohammedans are being told that Bolshevik Russia is an enemy of the Islamic religion and of all religions. In this manner the help of all groups is being secured.

War Preparations in Industry

The establishment of the Tariff Board, besides having the object of buying the nationalist leaders as has been already mentioned, is intended to facilitate the production and storing of war materials in India. The industries which were practically called into being and enormously developed during the war for the supply

of war materials, especially the iron and steel industry, are now technically well equipped through "subsidies" and "protection," and in the event of a war, will represent an important technical basis for British militarism in India.

This is remarkably confirmed by the evidence given before an official commission last year, when a representative of one of the Indian steel producing firms said that his firm received "from time to time" orders from the Ordnance Department of the Government of India "for various parts of gun mountings and other munitions" as their plant was "particularly well-adapted for the manufacture of a large variety of castings for munition purposes." The same firm was also asked to undertake the "manufacture of aerial bombs weighing respectively 5 cwts., 1 cwts., and 20 lb." The probable number required was stated to be 5,000 or more per month. The representative of the firm further said that "in the event of war, a vast quantity of special steel for manufacture of high explosives and shrapnel shells, gun tubes and jackets, ribs, barrels, &c., were certain to be required at a very short notice. Their works could be turned to this class with little or no delay." This vast storing of war materials in India, which is surely also going on from many other sources unknown to us, most conclusively proves that the British government intends to wage a war in which India will play an important part.

Among other industrial war preparations may be mentioned the following :—

(a) The participation of Indian capitalists in the building up of Indian industries and protection given to steel, paper, cement, mining and other industries, whose products, though alleged to be Indian, are used largely for the manufacture of munitions and war material and will be used in future solely for war purposes.

(b) Freedom from customs duty for motor lorries. The importance of this will be seen from the fact that special motor-lorry transport service is being arranged between Karachi and Peshawar. In the last war the motor-lorry (armoured cars) transport was a very important factor in the military success of the French and British armies. It must be remembered that a railway strike would endanger the transport of munitions and therefore the importance of

motor lorries is increased. Military motor transport roads are also being made in the Burmese frontier region.

(c) The monopoly and use of the entire rubber industry for war purposes.

(d) The new agricultural policy is clearly intended to win over the peasantry under the small landholders. The biggest zemindars, enjoying an artificially prolonged life, are already slaves of the Government. The establishment of co-operative banks under Government control will assist in solving the problem of food supply in times of crisis.

Military War Preparations

It is impossible to enumerate all the military preparations for war that are now being undertaken. The following are only some of the most important of these measures :—

(a) The Singapore base which serves the following purposes. It controls the Pacific and China, keeps Holland at least neutral, threatens French possessions in the East and makes it difficult for France to go to war against England, threatens the Japanese Navy, and enables the landing of Australian troops quickly in India in the event of a revolution.

(b) The secret naval base in Trincomally.

(c) The construction of the air base at Karachi.

(d) The concentration of the air fleet in the North-West frontier provinces—the probable Verdun of the coming war. This air-craft base is one of the best technically equipped in the world ; one of the first duties which the present Viceroy, Lord Irwin, performed on his arrival in India, was an extended tour of this frontier.

(e) The already mentioned motor-lorry transport between Karachi and Peshawar.

(f) The very costly Khyber Pass railway and the new strategic railways on the Afghan frontier now under construction.

(g) The projected railway to connect Bengal with Burma, and the one between Burma and Siam.

(h) The Royal Indian Navy, whose sole function is to co-ordinate the action of the Indian Fleet with the British Fleet in the Persian Gulf, which dominates Mesopotamia.

(i) Lord Haldane's proposal to transfer the British expeditionary force to India for the purpose of being used in Asia, *i.e.*, against Russia and China. This remarkable proposal for concentrating the British Expeditionary Force in India has been discussed in a leading article in the *Calcutta Statesman*, which is usually very well informed about official intentions and a strong hint is given that this plan is under consideration by the Government of India and the Imperial Government, and that it is strongly supported by the military authorities. Before the war, it was pointed out, the Expeditionary Force was kept in England because "it was known that it might have to be landed on the continent of Europe." The question, says the *Statesman*, arises "whether England is any longer the most suitable place for the whole striking force, where exactly the *danger centres* are." It should also be remembered that the growing consciousness of the British working class as witnessed during the last General Strike might endanger the transport of troops in times of crisis. The *Statesman* dwells further on "danger centres" which leaves no shade of doubt about England's sinister preparations of war against Soviet Russia and Asia. It is stated that—

The likelihood of a necessity of shipping the force across the Channel is clearly a good deal less than before the war, whereas prospects that it may have to be employed in the *Eastern Mediterranean*, the *Black Sea* or the *Far East* are greater than of old. The last case has in fact arisen and we have now 25,000 troops in China. Of these India has supplied two battalions from her own army and two battalions from the British garrison in India. The bulk has had to be drawn from the expeditionary troops retained at home, and clearly had they been in India they could have been dispatched to China more quickly and more economically.

The journal further gives financial reasons and adds with naïve hypocrisy, that this step will release the serious strain of the military budget on the country!

(j) The modernisation and control of the armies of the Indian native states, as already mentioned.

(k) The establishment of new munition factories in India.

(l) On the pretext of liberating slaves and stopping human sacrifices in the wild jungle regions of Northern Burma, the Government of India is making a military inspection of the frontier between Burma and China. So long as Southern China was a

helpless victim of Great Britain's opium policy and military aggression, the military authorities who are responsible for the "Safety of India" concentrated their sole attention on the North-West frontier. But now that China has resorted to armed resistance to British imperialism it has been suddenly discovered that the wild tribes in the North of Burma were practising human sacrifice (although apparently on a very much smaller scale than the British Empire) and a Captain of the British Army was sent out to bring the tribe to reason. Last winter the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army travelled to Bhamo on the Irrawady, and from there he proceeded, mainly on foot, down the Burmo-Chinese frontier, in order to make an inspection of that imperfectly known region. "We have got the North-West frontier always before us," said Sir William Birdwood on March 5, 1927, and "and I may say we have to keep strict watch on the North-East frontier also. We know what Bolshevist propaganda is doing not only in Afghanistan, but also in China." Commenting on this warning the *Englishman* of Calcutta, a semi-official organ of the Government of India, wrote :—

If India is to be confronted permanently with a hostile China as well as a hostile Russia, additional precautions on the Burma frontier will be essential.

The Calcutta *Forward*, the organ of the Indian Swaraj Party published an article recently in which it warned the people of India that "the British government was preparing to advance towards China on land." For this article the Government of Burma has prohibited the *Forward* to enter Burma, a prohibition that caused great indignation in India.

(m) The increased expenditure on political Secret Service in Afganistan, Russia, Persia, Turkey and China.

One need not be a Communist to realise the conclusive significance of these facts as revealing a systematic preparation for war against Soviet Russia. A politically and economically enslaved India is the strongest base for British military operations. The subjection of India has kept humanity in poverty, and perpetually on the brink of imperialist wars. We are faced with a situation to-day when we have to decide again whether we can permit this crime against humanity for the sake of imperialist profits.

WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN CHINA

By EARL BROWDER

THERE are so few data on exact wages and working conditions in China, that anything that can be added to the store of information on the subject is of value. Therefore, in the following article, I have condensed the most important observations made on this subject during a five months visit covering the provinces of Kwangtung, Kiangsi, Hupeh, and Hunan. During this time I and my colleagues made one trip of twenty-five days through the interior of Kwangtung and Kiangsi, and later a trip of five days through Hunan, most of which time was spent in the smaller cities and towns which are seldom heard of outside of China. Thus we obtained a picture of conditions throughout South and Central China, in the large cities as well as small towns, as they obtained in February, March, April and May of 1927.

Canton (Kwantung Province) was our first point of investigation. This is a city of over a million population, the Southern gateway to China, the centre of the Nationalist movement for years and the only place in China where trade unions were legal before the middle of last year. Canton was the headquarters of the All-China Labour Federation from 1922 to the beginning of 1927. It is not, however, a modern industrial city, like Shanghai or Hankow, but almost entirely one with commercial and handicraft industries. In spite of the handicap of this fact, the workers of Canton were enjoying conditions better than we found later in any other place. Since we were there, it must be remembered, the *coup d'état* of Li Chi-sen, lieutenant of Chiang Kai-shek, has placed power in the hands of the enemies of the workers ; this fact is probably already showing itself in a worsening of conditions ; but of the details of this we as yet know nothing. We deal with Canton as it was in February.

There are approximately 230,000 workers in Canton organised in the trade unions. Of these about 10,000 are industrial workers

in the modern sense, the rest being artisans, shop clerks, and coolies. These industrial workers constitute a sort of economic aristocracy, their wages and working conditions being much higher than the rest of the working class. They consist in the main of seamen, railway workers, chauffeurs, electric light and waterworks employees, arsenal workers, the employees of a few small textile mills and machine shops, and modern printing plants.

The usual wage of workers in these lines is \$30 per month. (A Chinese dollar is nominally about the same as 1 rouble Russian, or 50 cents U.S., but Chinese currencies are almost universally depreciated about 20 per cent. at this time.) This wage allows for no rest days ; Sundays are worked the same as other days, this being true in Canton for *all* workers. The railroad workers get a wage somewhat above this average, because, although they also work on Sundays, they now get paid double-time for this day. Chauffeurs are another special category ; on account of shortage of skilled men they were receiving \$60 (Chinese) per month. Almost all of these 10,000 workers have the eight-hour day, nominally, but "military emergencies" constantly cancel this "rule."

The artisans (handicraft workers) constitute the main body of the Canton working class. The principal groups are, the workers in matting, bamboo work, ivory and bone, silk, tea, metal, herbs, earthenware, firecrackers, paper, furniture, wood-carving, marble, and precious stones. They generally work, two to six artisans, in the shop with their employer, who also works alongside of them. These little shops are scattered along the business streets, the entire front being open, the men working next to the street where the prospective customers are passing along. They eat and live with their employer, working twelve to sixteen hours per day, seven days per week ; their only holidays are at New Year, when they have seven to ten days. Apprentices work for three to five years for nothing but food and bed ; at the end of their apprenticeship they begin to draw wages, \$5 to \$7 per month, which gradually increases, up to \$20 per month, with a very few highly-skilled workers, of course, getting more. The wage for an artisan of average skill is about \$20 per month when he has been in the trade for ten years. In addition to his wage, the artisan is fed on a bowl of rice two or three times a day, with a piece of pork twice a month ;

and has a hole to sleep in, or a bench in the shop. The conditions of work of the artisans, especially in the interior of China and in the small towns, are distinctly semi-feudal.

The coolies form a large and important part of the working class in Canton, as everywhere in China. There are several groups, such as rickshaw coolies, cart coolies, warehouse coolies, &c. They perform the labour that in other countries is done by animals or machinery ; it is absolutely "inhuman," if that word can have any meaning, as it is almost impossible to believe that human beings can continue to live, bearing such burdens every day in the year, for ten to fourteen hours a day. The rickshaw coolies take the place of horses and automobiles for city transport, and spend hours on end, running at a smart pace, to carry their more fortunate fellow citizens several miles for from 5 to 20 cents. These coolies not only bear the burden of their physical loads, but also a terrific burden of taxation and middlemen. Thus, the rickshaw coolies, even in Canton, pay a tax which, in proportion to their earnings, is doubtless the heaviest borne by any section of the population. Paid in the first place to the Government by the owner of the rickshaw, it is then added to the rent which the coolie must pay ; but when it gets to the coolie it is 12 cents instead of 5 cents. The coolies of all kinds and grades suffer from the middleman, who contracts jobs and then lets them out to all sorts of sub-middlemen, so that the coolies get about half what has actually been paid for the work. I was told of instances which the union had investigated, where the coolies had received less than 20 per cent. The average earnings of an able-bodied young coolie is \$15 per month—when employed. Unemployment, a terrible scourge for all kinds of labour in China, is especially chronic among the coolies, on account of the constant flow of peasants, driven from the land, coming into the cities. Old and infirm coolies live from hand to mouth on the few coppers they pick up here and there from odd jobs. I have seen in Canton great heavy carts loaded high with cans bearing the "Socony" (Standard Oil Co. of New York) label, being pulled through the streets by gangs of men, women, and children, evidently families, starved-looking, gaunt and exhausted, straining with all their might at the ropes—and earning an average of 15 cents each for twelve hours' labour, to the greater profit of Standard Oil.

It made me understand more clearly why Rockefeller prizes his Chinese business, and why capitalists everywhere are determined that the "Bolshevik" trade unions of China must be destroyed.

The clerks, in stores, shops, and tea houses, form another large group. In Canton about 35,000 are organised in the trade unions. There are still traces in Canton of the semi-slave, semi-feudal conditions under which this class works still in most places in China. The unions have, however, abolished many of the worst abuses, such as corporal punishment, unlimited hours, &c. Gradually order and system is being brought even into the lives of these miserable shop clerks. In Canton, after a long strike, the hours of clerks in the big department stores was limited to ten per day. In the small stores hours are still thirteen to sixteen per day.

Woman and child labour is even more exploited than that of men. Generally their wages are from 30 per cent. to 60 per cent. of that of men. Besides ordinary coolie labour, they are found principally in the small factories (matches, hosiery, silk, food preparation, &c.). There are 16,000 women members in the trade unions of Canton, which the union leaders claim is 80 per cent. of the women workers. The hosiery workers are 100 per cent. organised, the match factories 70 per cent. Women and children have relatively made the greatest gains from trade union organisation.

Hygienic conditions are indescribably bad. That is, of course, true for the entire population, including employers, for sanitation in a modern sense is only in its beginnings. Only in the modern industries, the Government plants and big department stores is there a beginning of sanitation and hygiene. These also have dispensaries with modern medical attendance for the workers.

Conditions in the Interior

The conditions described above are in Canton, a great city, the most modern in China, except Shanghai and Hankow, where the trade unions have been able to work openly for several years. What, then, must the conditions be in the interior? We had an opportunity to see at first-hand when we began our overland trip to Hankow, which lasted twenty-five days. A few typical towns along the route will give a picture of the general conditions.

Namyung is the last town on the Pei Kiang, or North River, northern Kwangtung Province, near the Tayu mountains bordering Kiangsi Province. It is reached by boat, drawn by ropes and pushed by poles against the current for six days from Shiuchow, the present terminus of the railroad eventually to continue to Hankow. The men and women who perform this labour are strongly organised in the Water Transport Union (originally for seamen only), and their union controls all transport on this river. They are, therefore, among the better-off; they receive 40 to 60 cents a day, working from dawn until dark, and sometimes till ten o'clock at night, stopping twenty minutes twice during the day for food.

Arrived in Namyung, we were lodged as the guests of the city in the public gardens on top of the great old city walls which in former times protected the commerce that flowed here from the north through Meiling Pass from Kiangsi. These walls, typical of Chinese cities, are still in good repair, but in the era of modern artillery useless for anything more serious than lodgings for guests. In the quaint tea houses perched over the city we met a dozen trade union leaders who spent hours with us answering our interminable questions.

Here we learned a peculiarity of most Chinese inland towns: a sort of rough division of labour has, in the course of time, developed between them, so that one town makes a speciality of one line of business, another town of another line, so that almost in each town will be found one industry predominating over the others. Namyung is a tobacco town, a market centre for the tobacco raised in a large district, where it is dried, packed, and shipped to the big cities to be made into cigarettes.

These tobacco packers and shippers in Namyung number 1,300, of whom 500 are women. Their work is seasonal, lasting only six months in the year. How they live for the other six months we could not learn, but when they have work they spend fourteen hours per day at it, for which they receive, for men 40 cents, for women 20 cents. The secretary of the union came to us directly from work, and therefore did not show up until after ten o'clock at night. He would begin again next morning at daybreak. He told us that the struggle with the employers at the moment was to

force them to pay the 40 cents and 20 cents per day in silver instead of depreciated coppers.

Clerks in Namyung are all paid by the year. Apprentices get only "food and lodgings," the fourth year they begin at \$20 per year. From that point they slowly progress upward. When we insisted upon knowing what was the very highest wage being paid to any clerk in town, we were told \$150 per year. The hours are daybreak until 11 p.m.

Artisans, upon completing apprenticeship, begin to receive wages at \$4 per month. The average wage is \$8 per month, with "food and lodgings"; the hours are fifteen per day.

From Namyung we walked over the mountains by Meiling Pass to Nananfu, a distance of 120 Chinese li (about forty miles). Throughout this distance we constantly passed groups of carriers, loaded with great bundles, bales and boxes, transporting the commerce between two great provinces exactly as it had been done for the past two thousand years. Only the character of the commodities has begun to change—again I saw oil cans bearing the "Socony" label. The carriers are about equally men and women. We were told that they earn 30 cents per day, but could get no detailed information.

Nananfu was the first town we had visited in the newly-conquered Nationalist territory. It was the first point in Kiangsi entered by the Nationalist armies last July when they began their triumphant march northward. Here we heard the story repeated from that time on up to the Yangtsekiang; following the Nationalist Armies had come a surge of trade-union organisation, and struggles to ameliorate the terrible conditions of labour. Everywhere it was the same tale of feverish organisational activities, strikes, and a few meagre gains which, however, had tremendous significance for the workers. Above all, they realised for the first time the power of organisation, for the first time they "had something to say" about the course of events. This was the enfranchisement of the Chinese masses, the greatest product of the revolution so far.

The trade unions of Nananfu had about 2,500 members in the city, and 13,000 in the district. The special industry of the town is bamboo and timber, the next in importance being tailoring. The

bamboo and timber workers, engaged in felling and transporting raw materials, not in fabricating commodities, work unlimited hours on piece work. They earn \$1 per day on the average ; we could not get a satisfactory explanation why these workers can get so much more than the average wage of their district, more than twice as much as the general wage. Tailors, formerly paid 25 cents per day for fourteen hours, have cut the hours to ten and raised the wage to 28 cents, with increase of food. The shop clerks seemed to have made the greatest proportionate gains ; formerly, apprentices began without wages, and worked up to a maximum of \$60 per year ; after several strikes, they now begin as apprentices at \$10 first year, \$20 second year, \$30 third year. When we arrived, 20 per cent. of the clerks were obtaining more than \$100 per year, 50 per cent. received from \$60 to \$100, while only 30 per cent. were getting less than \$60, which was formerly the maximum.

Farther down the river, 150 miles, is the city of Changshu. A smaller city, but with about the same social and economic conditions, only here the Right Wing Kuomintang held power and oppressed the trade unions. Wages were about the same, having been raised by strikes to an average of \$7 per month (daily rates from 10 cents to 60 cents, varied not according to occupations but to length of service, &c.). The "speciality" of this town is the preparation of drugs, and the Pharmacists' Union has 400 members, out of a total union membership in the city of 3,000.

In Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi Province, the reaction of Chiang Kai-shek was rampant. Trade union leaders were in hiding, and their headquarters were guarded by soldiers of a "Left" Army to prevent their destruction by soldiers of the official garrison. Wages and working conditions were the worst we had seen. The artisans were receiving 10 to 15 cents per day ; the hosiery industry, employing a large number of women, was paying 15 cents per day *without food* ; 40 per cent. of all workers were unemployed.

At Hankow, Headquarters of Nationalist Government

Hankow is the capital of Nationalist China. It is the industrial and commercial centre of China, having the most modern industry and developed working class of any city except

Shanghai, which is in many respects a foreign city. As might be expected, therefore, the labour movement here is the most highly developed. There are 300,000 trade union members in the Wuhan cities (Hankow, Wuchang, and Hanyang) which make up one economic centre, separated only by rivers, and which we usually mean when we speak of Hankow. Properly, the collective name is Wuhan. In order to have a definite idea of the conditions of these 300,000 workers, it is necessary to examine in detail a few separate groups. For this purpose I have chosen the textile workers, as representing those workers most thoroughly brought under the conditions of modern machine production ; and the rickshaw and cart coolies, who are the least directly influenced by modern methods in their work. These two groups may be taken as the two extremes of the working class in Wuhan. Conditions of artisans here are much the same as elsewhere.

The rickshaw and cart coolies are very thoroughly organised. There are 29,900 members of the Union ; of these, 17,000 are public rickshaw pullers, the others being : private rickshaws, 3,000 ; carters, 5,000 ; carriages, 800 ; automobiles, 600 ; lorries, 1,700 ; bicycles, 400 ; car repairers, 700 ; car manufacturers, 700.

The basic group are the public rickshaw pullers, whose earnings set the standard upon which other coolie wages are set. The secretary of the Union informed me that an extensive investigation by the Union (since the Union raised fares) has shown average gross earnings by these men of 2,000 cash (the large copper coin is 20 cash, therefore 100 coppers, which were worth at that time 160 to the Chinese dollar). Out of this, the man must pay rent for the rickshaw, licence, tax, and "squeeze" for one or two middlemen, totalling 1,100 cash (equals 55 coppers). He has left as his net earnings, on the average, 45 coppers, or 900 cash, which are worth 28 cents Chinese silver (equals 28 kopecks Russian, 14 cents American, or sevenpence English). Out of this he must support himself and family. As a result, their living conditions are unspeakably miserable and vile.

The Textile Workers' Union of Wuhan has 37,096 members, these figures being taken from the membership fee records, which all pass through one office. They are organised in eleven branches ;

six branches represent as many cotton spinning mills, one branch to each mill ; one branch for a weaving mill ; two branches for two silk weaving mills ; and two branches of artisans working in scattered small shops, one of dye workers and the other of hosiery workers. The number of artisans amounts to 7,500.

These workers are strongly organised and highly disciplined. They are fully conscious of their power, and are studying the industry with a view to taking over direction of production. They say they know production cannot be increased under present private exploitation, but they are sure they could increase production and improve conditions, while at same time cheapening cloth. They are moving slowly, as they themselves expressed it, in order not to embarrass the Nationalist Government, which as yet hesitates before the nationalisation of the mills.

Some General Observations

Wages and working conditions are distinctly better in Canton where the unions have been at work for some years. Yet even here, only a beginning has been made toward a living wage. In the newly conquered territory, improvement is being rapidly made, wages having been increased 30 per cent. to 50 per cent. in the course of half a year, still, however, leaving Canton in the lead. In the territory controlled by Chiang Kai-shek, the trade unions are being crushed, and much of these gains wiped out. It yet remains to be seen how long this condition can last.

One specifically revolutionary feature of the trade union development is the taking over of buildings for union administration. Thus, in Canton, we visited the railway union headquarters, and found it housed in a splendid building with gardens, formerly the private residence for the chief engineer, provided at the expense of the railway. When Chiang Kai-shek's lieutenant, Li Chi-sen, carried out his counter-revolutionary *coup d'état*, he was compelled to install another group of workers there when he crushed the union ; although this other group were corrupted tools, yet it is a tribute to the depth of the revolution that even these traitors are forced to pay formal adherence to the principles of the trade union movement and the rights of the workers. In all cities, the

trade unions are gradually, but surely, taking over buildings more commensurate with their own importance.

A beginning, small as yet, is being made in the introduction of representatives of the trade unions in administrative bodies in industry. This has already been done on the railroads running out of Hankow.

Everywhere the working class is beginning to develop its own armed forces, under the name of Trade Union Pickets. The work done by these pickets in taking Shanghai before the entrance of Chiang Kai-shek's troops, is well known. Not so well known, however, is the fact that the same kind of bodies are growing up everywhere with startling rapidity. * This is one of the great guarantees for future progress.

Steadily, and with increasing momentum, the Chinese working class is consolidating its power. As it does so it is improving its wages and working conditions. But already it fully realises that this task includes another one—namely, the complete reorganisation of the economic life of China. For the Chinese workers it is no longer a debatable question as to whether China shall be developed as a capitalist country, or whether it shall now proceed upon the road to socialism. It is the latter path upon which they have firmly set their feet. And already, in spite of their terrible obstacles, their poverty and misery, they have made progress that puts to shame the workers of technically more advanced countries, who, misled by the traitors of social-democracy, hesitate before their historic tasks, while the Chinese workers press forward with a tenacity, a courage, a determination, that win for them the admiration of conscious workers all over the world.

THE MOST URGENT TASKS OF OUR MOVEMENT

By N. LENIN

(From "*Iskra*," No. 1, December, 1900)

RUSSIAN Social Democracy has repeatedly declared that the immediate political task of a Russian Labour Party must be the overthrow of absolutism and the conquest of political freedom. That was declared more than fifteen years ago by the representatives of the Russian Social Democracy, by the members of the group "Liberation of Labour," that was declared also, two and a-half years ago, by the representatives of the Russian Social Democratic organisations, who in the spring of 1898 founded the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. But, notwithstanding these repeated declarations, the question of the political tasks of Social Democracy in Russia, is now again appearing on the programme. Many representatives of our movement are expressing their doubts about the correctness of the above-mentioned solution of the question. It is asserted that predominant significance must be attached to the economic struggle, the political tasks of the proletariat are pushed into the background and narrowed and restricted ; it is even held that talk of the foundation of an independent Labour Party in Russia means simply a mechanical repetition of foreign words, that the workers have only to carry on their economic struggle and should leave politics to the intellectuals in alliance with the liberals.

This last declaration of the new "creed" (the famous *credo*) leads straight to the point where the Russian proletariat is recognised as not yet of age and the Social Democratic programme completely diverted. The *Rabochaya Mysl* ("Workers' Thoughts") has in fact expressed itself in this sense, especially in its supplement. Russian Social Democracy is passing through a period of vacillation, a period of hesitation which borders on self-abnegation. On the one hand, the Labour movement is separated from Socialism ; the

workers are helped to carry on their economic struggle but precautions are taken not to explain to them the socialist aims and the political tasks of the movement in its entirety. On the other hand, Socialism is detached from the Labour movement ; the Russian Socialists are beginning to assert more and more frequently that the intellectuals alone by their own strength have to carry on the fight against the government, for the workers will restrict themselves only to the economic struggle.

In our opinion, three circumstances have created the soil for these unfortunate phenomena. Firstly, the Russian Social Democrats in the beginning of their activities restricted themselves in the circles purely to propaganda work. When we then proceeded to carry on agitation among the masses, we could not always avoid the other extreme. Secondly, we had to hold our own in the beginning of our activities, in our frequent fights with the representatives of the *Narodnaya Volya* ("The Will of the People") who understood "politics" to be an activity far removed from any working-class movement, who degraded politics to the level of conspiracy. The Social Democrats who rejected such politics fell into the other extreme and pushed politics altogether into the background. Thirdly, the Social Democrats who were working separately in small local workers' circles, did not sufficiently realise the necessity of the organisation of a revolutionary party, which would co-ordinate and unite the total activities of the local groups and make possible correct organisation of the revolutionary work. The predominance of separate, sectional work is naturally bound up with the predominance of the economic struggle.

All these above-mentioned circumstances have led to the over estimation of one side of the movement. The "economic" school (as far as it can be called a school at all) has produced attempts to raise this narrowness to the height of a special theory and attempts to make use for this purpose of the now fashionable Bernsteinism, the newly-arisen *Critique of Marxism* which permits the old train of bourgeois thought to sail under a new flag. It was these attempts that have created the danger of weakening the connection of the Russian Labour Movement with Russian Social Democracy as the champion of political freedom. Our most urgent task now lies in the strengthening of this connection.

Social Democracy is the union of the working class with Socialism. Its task is not to render passive service to the labour movement in all its stages, but to represent the interests of the entire movement, to chalk out the ultimate aim and the political task of this movement, to maintain its political and ideological independence. Detached from Social Democracy, the Labour Movement is bound to give way to trifles and become bourgeois. If the working class carries on only the economic struggle, then it loses its political independence and becomes the appendage of the other parties, then it abandons the great maxim: "The emancipation of the workers must be the task of the workers themselves." There was a period in every country when the Labour Movement and Socialism existed independently of each other and travelled along separate routes, and in all countries this separation led to the weakening of both Socialism and of the Labour Movement. In all countries, it was the union of Socialism with the Labour Movement that first created a firm foundation for the one as well as for the other. But in every country this union of Socialism with the Labour Movement took place historically, passed through definite channels according to place and time. In Russia, the necessity of a union of Socialism with the Labour Movement was theoretically proclaimed long ago, but it is only now that it is being carried into practice. The process of this work is a difficult one and we should not wonder if it is accompanied by various vacillations and hesitations.

What lesson can we learn from the past?

The entire history of Russian Socialism has proved that the fight against the Tsarist government and the conquest of political freedom is its immediate task; our socialist movement has, so to say, concentrated itself on the fight against Absolutism. On the other hand, history has shown that in Russia, the alienation of socialist thought from the advanced representatives of the working class is much greater than in other countries, and with such an alienation the Russian revolutionary movement is condemned to impotence. From this naturally arises the task which the Russian Social Democracy is destined to fulfil, namely to plant socialist ideas and socialist self-consciousness among the masses of the proletariat and to organise a revolutionary Party which is indissolubly connected with the elemental Labour Movement. Much has already

been done in this respect by Russian Social Democracy but much more remains still to be done.

With the growth of the movement, the field of work of Social Democracy becomes ever wider, the work more and more many-sided, more and more participators in the movement concentrate their forces on the realisation of various special tasks as they arise out of the daily necessities of propaganda and agitation. This phenomenon is thoroughly justifiable and inevitable, but it compels us to take especial care that the special tasks and the various methods of the struggle are not raised to an end in themselves and that the preliminary work is not proclaimed as the chief and only work.

Our chief and fundamental work consists in the furtherance of the political development and of the political organisation of the working class. All those who push this task into the background, who do not subordinate to it all the special tasks and separate methods of struggle, enter upon a false path and inflict serious injury upon the movement. That is done, however, firstly by those who appeal to revolutionaries to take up the fight against the Government with the strength of individual groups of conspirators who are totally alien to the Labour Movement ; secondly, by those who, limit the content and progress of political propaganda, agitation and organisation, who hold it to be possible and suitable to entertain the workers with " politics " only in exceptional moments of their lives, only on solemn occasions, who in their great anxiety abandon the political struggle against Absolutism in exchange for the demand for individual concessions from Absolutism, and who do not take sufficient care to see, that this demand for individual concessions is raised to a systematic and clearly-aimed struggle of the revolutionary party against Absolutism.

" Organise yourselves," the paper *Rabochaya Mysl* calls to the workers in various tones, and all the adherents of the "economic" school repeat the cry. Naturally, we too rally to this call, but we must add something more ; organise yourselves not only into associations for mutual aid, strike funds, workers' circles, but organise yourselves also into a political party, organise yourselves for a determined fight against the absolutist government and against every capitalist form of society. Without such an organisation, the proletariat is unable to raise itself rapidly to a conscious

class-struggle; without such an organisation the Labour Movement is condemned to impotence. Merely through strike committees, circles and relief-societies, the working class can never succeed in fulfilling its great historical task, namely to emancipate itself and the entire Russian people from political and economic slavery. No class in history ever succeeded in coming to power without selecting its political leaders and its representatives who are able to organise and lead the movement. The Russian working class has already known that it is capable of singling out such men : the extensive struggle of the Russian workers in the last five or six years has shown what an enormous reserve of revolutionary force lies latent in the working class, has shown that the most frantic persecution by the Government does not decrease but, on the contrary, increases the number of workers who rally to the banner of Socialism, political consciousness, and political struggle. At the Party meeting of our comrades in the year 1898 the task was correctly realised, foreign words were not repeated, expression was not given merely to the strivings of the " Intellectuals."

We must proceed determinedly to the fulfilment of these tasks, we must place the question of the programme, the organisation and the tactics of the Party on the agenda. We have already said what we consider to be the fundamentals of our programme, and this is not the place to develop these principles in detail. We propose to devote a series of articles in subsequent issues to the questions of organisation. That remains one of our weakest points. In this respect, we have remained very backward in comparison with the old fighters of the Russian revolutionary movement. This short-coming must be plainly admitted and we must do all we can to bring about a more conspirative leadership of the movement and a systematic propagation of the principles of work and of methods of hoodwinking the gendarmes and slipping through the meshes of the police net-work. We must train up men who will devote not only their free evenings but their whole life to the cause of the Revolution ; we must create an organisation so large that a strict division of labour can be carried through for our different kinds of work.

Finally, on questions of tactics we will limit ourselves here to the following : Social Democracy does not tie its hands, does

not limit its activities to any pre-arranged plan, to one single method of political struggle, it sanctions every means of fight, provided only that they correspond to the existing forces of the Party and allow the possibility of attaining the maximum results that are achievable under the prevailing circumstances. In a well organised Party, a single strike can transform itself into a political demonstration, into a political victory over the government. In a firmly organised Party, an uprising in any one locality can grow into a victorious revolution. We should not forget that the fights against the government for separate demands, for wresting from it individual concessions, signify merely small skirmishes with the enemy, merely shots fired by the advance guard—the decisive encounter has still to take place. We have before us in all its power the stronghold of the enemy, from which shells and bullets rain down upon us, snatching away our best fighters from us. We must storm this fortress, and we will storm it, if only we can unite all the forces of the awakening proletariat with the forces of the Russian revolutionaries into a single Party which will attract to itself all the living and sincere elements existing in Russia. And only then will the great prophecy of the Russian worker-revolutionist, Peter Alexiev, be fulfilled: “The million-headed working population will raise its horny hands and the yoke of despotism that is protected by the bayonets of the soldiers will be reduced to the dust.”

CAPITALISM AND THE NOVEL

By MANUEL LOPEZ

WHEN in 1917 the Russian workers overthrew the political power of the capitalists they did so not only to gain access to the material means of production, *i.e.*, factories, lands, &c., but to break down the barriers that had kept them from the thorough assimilation and enjoyment of the fruits of human culture, science, philosophy, and art. The cultural monopoly of the capitalists followed its economic monopoly to the scrap-heap of history. The world-shaking event of October is to be the beginning of a new world for the workers wherein will be fashioned on the anvil of Soviet power, not only a just and harmonious social order but corresponding to it and its reflection, a new culture of the masses, self-conscious, realist, collectivist. The energising example of our Russian comrades has given a gigantic impetus to the workers' cultural movement in all parts of Europe, although by far the greater part of the activities of those engaged in it is given to the propagation of the principles of Marxism, proletarian science. Yet in increasing numbers we are greeted with the publication and production of workers' plays, the publication of proletarian and "Communist" novels, &c.

It is always taken for granted that workers' novels and plays should deal with the lives and experiences of the workers who are so often shown as heroes in the fell clutch of circumstances, with heads bloody but unbowed. In Jack London's *The Iron Heel* what have we but a precursor of Ethel Dell's strong, but far from silent, hero in Ernest Everhard? Ernest Hunter's *The Road the Men Came Home* could still be a best-seller if its propagandist parts were cut out. Its hero, apart from his Socialism (I.L.P. sentimentalist Christian kind), would be a fit companion for the Sheik in the hearts of tired business men and love-lorn spinsters.

The movement can sustain the imprisonment of its leaders, the persecution of its rank and file, but that its novelists should sit at the feet of Ethel Dell and Hutchinson, that is too much.

From the proletarian, strong and virtuous and silent heroes; from the cruel and blood-thirsty and voracious villain (the capitalist); from the tender and virtuous and lingering sister of the Women's Sections, may God deliver us. Yet its coming is inevitable. As the weak sections of the movement fall under the sway of capitalist ideas so will the aspiring artists of the proletariat copy the false romanticism, the lack of style, the shallow psychology of the great mass of bourgeois literature. And so much the easier is it for them to do this as long as the principles of Marxism are not applied to the various phases of cultural activities to show the relations existing between them and the economic foundations of society.

Bukharin, in his *Historical Materialism*, has pointed out that art has a social function, "it is a systematisation of feelings in forms; the direct function of art is socialising, transferring and disseminating these feelings in society." What conditions the development of art? He gives the answer: "directly or indirectly, art is ultimately determined in various ways by the economic structure and the stage of social technology." Or as Marx puts it: "the method of producing the material livelihood determines the social, political, and *intellectual* life process in general." Hence it is possible to trace in the development of philosophy, religion, art in all its aspects, music, architecture, drama, the novel, &c., the influence of social development.

When the Bolsheviks overthrew the capitalist system in Russia they also delivered the death-blow to an entire ideological system embracing systems of philosophy, religions, code of morals, an official and stultified science and a reactionary and decadent art. Clara Zetkin, in a speech made at the seventh meeting of the enlarged E.C.C.I., drew attention to the necessity of examining not only the economic and political aspects of capitalism, but also its ideological super-structure if we would obtain an exact picture of capitalist disintegration, that shows in religion, education, the Press, science, &c., the unmistakable symptoms of decay and early collapse. The economic system of capitalist production is in its death throes, and this is reflected in accordance with the M.C.H., with the ever-spreading disintegration and decay of the whole cultural life of our time. "The supporting pillars and

columns of the capitalist super-structure are beginning to shake and totter—they are crumbling; glowing streams of lava and hot ashes are devastating and destroying the erstwhile blooming gardens of bourgeois ideology, of the bourgeois world conception.”

Trotsky, in his *Literature and Revolution*, devotes part of his work to an estimation of the social significance of pre-revolutionary art which is characterised as the art of the “hangers-on”; an art which has revealed its indissoluble connection with the governing class of old Russia. When the landlords and capitalists fled to the shelter of the White Armies across the frontiers in 1917 they took with them their domestic flunkies, their mistresses, their panders, and their poets and scribblers. A nauseating compound of cynicism, pessimism, philandering, servility, and cowardice, this exiled art rots in the capitals of Europe, and these attributes of pre- and non-revolutionary Russian art are to be found in the art of all countries—the counter-revolutionary characteristics of capitalism’s culture. Capitalism does not rest only upon bayonets, but also on the masses’ allegiance to bourgeois ideology, of which art is the most subtle and the most insidious factor.

“The great question of social salvation is so great and sublime that all other problems which time may bear in its folds must wait in silence. The whole of old Europe is waiting with bated breath for the fulfilling of things which are coming. . . . History stands still, because she gathers force for a great catastrophe.” Thus wrote the old Dietzgen in 1875. And yet to-day there is not a single English writer of eminence who has grasped this elementary principle of social science or who has any conception of the true purpose of the modern working-class movement. Lack of a rational and scientific understanding of social development (Marxism), a deeply-rooted pessimism as to the ability of the proletariat to transform society, the class affiliations (education, social status, source of income, &c.) of the modern artists, are the fundamental causes of the spiritual bankruptcy of English literature and of its counter-revolutionary rôle.

Faithfully enough a few may depict the corruption of the Press, of Parliament, &c.; satirise the narrow-minded prejudices, the greed and philistinism, of the bourgeois; the stupidity and licentiousness of the rich; but a realisation of these things as

symptoms of a fundamental decay in capitalist economy is completely absent. Thus the one-sided realism which is characteristic of the works of Galsworthy, Bennett, Wells, Forster, &c. Tchekov stated: "You confuse two things: solving a problem and stating it correctly. It is only the second that is obligatory for the artist." It would be something if the artists did this, but they do not. Theirs is the philosophy of Jack London when he wrote, "But I know better than to give the truth as I have seen it in my books. The bubbles of illusion, the pap of pretty lies, are the true stuff of stories." If stating problems correctly lies beyond the literary ability and knowledge of English writers, solving them appears to be their strong line. Thus in Galsworthy's *The Silver Spoon* we have Foggartism as a cure for social and economic ills, and in Wells' *The World of William Clissold* we have the Blue Train as a means of flight from the Red Menace. Both methods would excite the mirth of the newest member of a Plebs class, although the latter work found favourable reviews in all the journals of reformist Labour.

The attitude of the novelist towards the worker is one of conscious and stupid superiority. The proletariat in modern writings are all "Yus-Sayers." Hear Bichet speak in Galsworthy's *The White Monkey*:—

I see it is, from your fyce. I want the truth—I must 'ave it. I'm getting wild over all this. If that's 'er fyce there, then that's 'er body in the gallery; it's the syme nyme.

This is Mr. Bojanus from Aldous Huxley's *Antic Hay*. It is obvious he belongs to the "people."

For the 'uman 'erd is an 'erd which can't do without a leader. Sheep, for example: I never noticed that they 'ad a leader; nor rooks. Bees, on the other 'and, I take it, 'ave. Natural history was never, as you might say, my forty.

It is harder to find an intelligent worker in modern novels than it is to find an honest person on the Stock Exchange. And this is a symptom of the fact that modern novelists hold the working-class movement in contempt, consider its actions as stupid anti-social manifestations of ignorant envy and malicious destructiveness, and are permeated with the deepest pessimism as to the ability of the workers to reconstruct society. The characteristic principle of bourgeois thought and culture is individualism,

which is fundamental alike in its economy as in its art. Trotsky writes: ". . . bourgeois society during the period of its rise had a great aim for itself. Personal emancipation was its name. . . . In reality all modern literature has been nothing but an enlargement of this theme." Modern literature has torn the individual apart from society and through the cults of the "New Psychology," "The Unconscious," "The Subconscious," "Sex Complexes," &c., has explored human individualism to the dregs and has finished in the slough of pessimism, scepticism, and spiritualistic bankruptcy.

It is said that the modern writer is a disillusioned pessimist exploring the limits of cynicism with the doctrine of the right of every soul to find its own damnation. Norman Douglas says: "Consider well your neighbours, what imbeciles they are"; in place of the word "neighbours" we recommend the substitution of the word 'authors.' Cabell, with his philosophy of the vanity of desires achieved and his picture of man as "an ape bereft of his tail and grown rusty at climbing"; D. H. Lawrence, with his credo, "My soul is a dark forest. Strange gods come forth from the forest into the clearing of my known self and then go back"; Aldous Huxley, whose hero in *Those Barren Leaves* feels within him the need for unperturbed and untrammelled meditation; and the whole sweep of those who so faithfully reflect the perversions of sexual love in modern society; where in these can the worker find reflected the dynamics of a great age of social change, the inspiration to gigantic class battles, the elaboration of those slogans which they need—political, imperative and intolerant? To quote Trotsky, in conclusion, the worker needs an art "against mysticism, against the passive deification of nature, against aristocratic and every other kind of laziness, against dreaminess and against lachrymosity—and for technique, for organisation, for planfulness, for will power and courage, for speed and precision. An art realistic, active, vitally collectivist and filled with a limitless creative faith in the future."

The World of Labour

ANGLO-RUSSIAN UNITY

ON June 22 the General Council of the T.U.C. decided not to call a meeting of the Anglo-Russian Advisory Council. This was the culminating point of recent negotiations between the two bodies, and, unless rank-and-file pressure is able to move the British General Council, is likely to be the end of official unity between the English and the Russian Trade Unions.

From its inception up to May, 1926, the Committee carried on its work in spite of the hostility of the capitalist Press and of the I.F.T.U. The I.F.T.U. rebuked the General Council, and in 1925 was so incensed by "the peculiar form of radicalism which has so suddenly developed among the British Trade Unions" as to attack leaders personally. *Forwards* and other organs of Continental reformism wrote of the English Trade Unions as "the agents of Russian foreign policy." But it was not until May of last year that any real test of the strength of the Committee was experienced. Previously, it is true, the initiative for any move had invariably been taken by the Russians. Grave misgivings had been caused by delay after delay. But the mining crisis in England proved the real testing time. During the general strike the Russians offered financial aid to their comrades in England. This, too, was turned down by the British T.U.C. The Russians were thereafter presented with two courses of action: (1) to keep silent on the General Council's treatment of Anglo-Russian unity and the working-class struggle in England; or (2) to speak out their minds to the workers of Britain, even at the risk of offending the General Council. They chose the latter course, which resulted in a policy of sabotage on the part of the General Council against the Anglo-Russian Committee.

During the coal stoppage, the Russians asked for a joint meeting in order to discuss how best to help the miners. At length a joint meeting was held in Paris on July 30-31. At this meeting the British asked for a cessation of criticism. The Russians insisted that the miners' lock-out was the main issue to be dealt with. The British delegates, however, rejected this, and the meeting finally adjourned with nothing definite having been achieved. On account of the indecisive character of this meeting a further meeting was held in August at Berlin. The Russian proposals for assisting the British miners were rejected by the British, but the Committee decided to urge the General Council of the British T.U.C. to

fulfil the obligation undertaken by the Anglo-Russian Conference and afterwards ratified by the General Council and the British T.U.C., namely, to call a preliminary conference without any restrictive conditions, between the I.F.T.U. and the Russian unions,

and recommended the British General Council to summon the conference not later than the end of October. On the eve of the Bournemouth Congress at the beginning of September the British General Council decided to postpone the matter for three months.

Then came Bournemouth, and when the Home Secretary forbade the attendance of Russian fraternal delegates, *The Times* could justly speak of secret relief on the part of the British General Council. The fraternal message sent in place of the delegates, its reception, the ways in which it was replied to, and the universal praise accorded to the T.U.C. by the capitalist papers marked the growing difference.

The next meeting of the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council took place in April, 1927. Three resolutions were adopted embodying the four following clauses:—

(1) The Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council unanimously reaffirms the sincere desire and readiness of the Trade Union Movements of both countries to do everything in their power to create by their joint effort the unity of the International Trade Union Movement.

(2) The A.R.J.A.C. further declares that the essential condition for success in the struggle for the international unity of Labour against Capital is a firm fraternal union between the Trade Union Movements of Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. It testifies its readiness to develop systematically and strengthen the existing friendly relations between those movements.

(3) This development should be in the direction of more active mutual aid and support, based on the unconditional recognition of the principle that the sole representative and medium of expression of the Trade Union Movement of Great Britain is the British Trades Union Congress and its General Council, while in the U.S.S.R. the corresponding bodies are the Trade Union Congress and the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions.

(4) The A.R.J.A.C., speaking in the name of the Trade Unions of both countries, representing nearly fifteen million organised British and Russian workers, appeals again to the organised workers of every country to join their efforts with the British and Russian Trade Union movements in order to prevent new fratricidal wars, to defend their standards of living and political rights, and, overcoming all obstacles and difficulties, to help to bring into existence one all-inclusive world-wide Federation of Trade Unions.

Just how much these resolutions really meant to the British General Council is shown by the following resolution that they placed on the agenda of the Paris Congress of the I.F.T.U.:—

This Congress expresses its profound regret at the continued separation of national Trade Union centres from the I.F.T.U. Bearing in mind the interdependence of the working class in all countries, it hereby appoints a committee of four members to investigate the cause of the inadequate manner in which the Federation is organised, and to make such recommendations as will eventually lead to an increase in the number of affiliated bodies, in order that the Federation may become an organisation of universal scope and influence.

That was the first test of the April resolutions. The second test came when the Arcos Raid and the diplomatic rupture with Russia indicated an intensification of the capitalist offensive and an approach to war upon Soviet Russia. On May 14, the Russian Central Council of Labour Unions sent the following telegram to the General Council:—

The latest events sustain the worst fears with regard to the preparation of an attack of the imperialists under the leadership of Great Britain against the Soviet Union. The raid upon the Pekin Embassy of the Soviet Union and the arrest and torturing of its employees was, as is now clear, not only inspired by but a part of the plan for an offensive against the Soviet Union. The raid upon Arcos and upon the Trade Delegation, which was accompanied by violence against the employees, is the second act, the direct continuation of the offensive which commenced with the Pekin raid.

The Central Council believes the moment to be serious and demanding the exercise of all the forces of the working class in order to oppose this dangerous policy. The Central Council is of the opinion that it is necessary to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee in order to consider joint action on the part of the Trade Union Movements of the two countries. If you do not consider this possible at the moment, then the Central Council will not press for it, on the assumption that the General Council realises the importance of the situation and will fulfil its fraternal duty and protest energetically enough against the policy of raids and an offensive against the Soviet Union.

The answer to this was as follows:—

Your telegram will be discussed by the General Council in its session next week. A protest has already been sent to the Prime Minister.

It was dated May 18, and on the 25th, a week later and the day following the formal diplomatic rupture, the Central Council sent another request for an answer. The British reply to this was a letter dated the 29th (four days later). It ran:—

We hereby corroborate our telegram dispatched to you yesterday with the following text: "We cannot convene the Anglo-Russian Committee; we will, however, inform you as quickly as possible in the matter."

When several more days had elapsed, the Russians, on June 3, 1927, sent the following letter to the General Council:—

On May 14 the Central Council directed a request by telegram to the General Council to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee on account of the open intention of the British Conservative Government to break off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. . . .

The Central Council regards the situation as serious, for the intention of the Conservatives to force war on the Soviet Union is clear to everyone.

At the present moment the Anglo-Russian Committee has an extremely responsible rôle. The workers of the Soviet Union want to know what the Anglo-Russian Committee intends to do in the fight against the approaching war and in case it breaks out. The Central Council is of the opinion that not only the workers of the Soviet Union, but also the workers of other countries, expect activity from the Anglo-Russian Committee, as every war brings with it the danger that it may develop into a world-wide war. The whole world is threatened with this danger. Procrastination and passivity are damaging and can lead to disastrous results.

The Central Council is of the opinion that any such procrastination and passivity would cause justified dissatisfaction amongst the working masses, who regard the Anglo-Russian Committee as an organisation which has been created to fight against the offensive of capitalism and against the danger of imperialist wars. For this reason the Central Council requests a speedy communication from the General Council informing it whether or not the General Council is in agreement with the calling together of the Anglo-Russian Committee.

Should the General Council be in agreement, then we request a communication concerning the date and the place of the meeting.

On June 10 the Russians, being still without answer, sent the following telegram to the General Council:—

Despite the extremely tense situation you have given no clear answer to our repeated request to convene a session of the Anglo-Russian Committee. Our affiliated organisations are inquiring as to the reason for the passivity of the Anglo-Russian Committee. This forces us, unless we receive a definite answer by the 14th of this month, to publish the correspondence between us on the subject.

This telegram succeeded in securing an answer, and the General Council replied the same day as follows:—

In reply to your letter of June 3 the International Committee of the General Council proposes that Tomskey and Dogadov meet Hicks and Citrine on June 17 and 18 for the purpose of a preliminary examination of those questions which you wish to lay before the Anglo-Russian Committee. Please telegraph whether date satisfactory.

The next communication was a telegram, sent by the Russians the following day, June 11:—

We have no objection to the preliminary conversations between the chairmen and the secretaries upon the agenda, but we must insist in the name of our organisations categorically that on the date mentioned all the members of the Anglo-Russian Committee meet in Berlin and hold a plenary session. Events are moving swiftly, and every form of delay is impermissible. We expect an immediate answer; should no answer arrive we shall take it that the General Council is in agreement with our proposal, and all the Russian members of the Anglo-Russian Committee will then arrive in Berlin on the 17th inst.

In answer to this Citrine dispatched the following to Melnichansky on June 12:—

I cannot arrange a plenary session of the Anglo-Russian Committee without the instructions of the General Council, which will meet on the 22nd inst. In consequence the full Committee cannot be in Berlin as requested on June 17. I request you therefore to telegraph immediately if you wish the chairman and myself to be in Berlin on the 17th inst.

The Russian trade unionists immediately notified their acceptance, and on June 17 Hicks and Citrine met Tomskey and Melnichansky in Berlin. On June 20 there was a meeting of the General Council, which received their representatives' report. After discussing the report of the Berlin meeting and the whole question of the relations of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, it was decided to refer to the International Committee the drafting of a reply to the Russian demand for a full meeting of the Advisory Council, *this draft to be submitted to the next full meeting of the General Council*. As the General Council was not to meet until the middle of July, it was clear that this postponement put the Anglo-Russian Committee out of action for the most critical period. It began to be believed that the intention of at any rate a section of the General Council was to shelve this matter until the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress.

On June 29, at the Extraordinary Plenary Session of the Russian Unions, a declaration was made from which we take the following:—

Declaration Addressed to the Workers of the Soviet Union and of Great Britain

The dangerous international situation, the ever more threatening danger of war and the vicious attack of capitalism in Great Britain have up to the present produced no decisive action upon the part of the Anglo-Russian Committee. The Anglo-Russian Committee, however, was formed to fight against the offensive of capitalism, against the danger of imperialist war, and for the international unity of the Trade Union Movement. The attempt of the Central Council of the Labour Unions of the Soviet Union to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee in Berlin in June was met by the General Council of the T.U.C. with evasions, postponements, and sabotage. Therefore the Central Council of the Labour Unions of the Soviet Union considers it its duty to direct the following declaration to the workers of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union.

The Central Council believed and still believes that the Anglo-Russian Committee which was formed as the organised expression of the struggle of the working-class movement in Great Britain and the Soviet Union against the offensive of capitalism, against the danger of imperialist war, and for the international unity of the Trade Union Movement, could and should meet to consider the existing situation and to fling its whole authority into the scales for the protection of peace and against the preparations being made for war. In such a moment of silence and inactivity on the part of the Anglo-Russian Committee would be a crime in the eyes of the working class. This is our firm conviction.

The British General Council is attempting to evade the convening of the Anglo-Russian Committee and is causing delays under various excuses. It systematically avoids placing the most important questions which interest the British and the Russian workers before the Anglo-Russian Committee for examination. The Central Council cannot conceal the fact from the workers of Great Britain and the Soviet Union that the obstinate refusal of the British General Council to convene the Anglo-Russian Committee can only be interpreted as a deliberate policy towards the breaking up of the Anglo-Russian Committee which justifies the fears of the Seventh Trade Union Congress of the Soviet Union.

The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee is an organisation representing the Labour Union Movements in both countries. The very fact of the existence of such an organisation consolidated the bonds of friendship between the proletariat of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union. The formation of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee was a decided forward step upon the way to international proletarian unity. . . .

Holding the dissolution of the Anglo-Russian Committee to be damaging to the struggle for the international unity of the working class, the Central Council considers the present open or masked disruption of the Anglo-Russian Committee by the leaders of the General Council to be direct treachery to the class interests of the proletariat of the Soviet Union and of Great Britain.

The only political answer made by the General Council to the proposal of the Central Council to call the Anglo-Russian Committee and discuss the important questions was contained in the telegram of protest in connection

with the reprisals of the proletarian State against the White Guardist spies who had drawn the sword of terror against the proletarian dictatorship. The resolution of protest adopted by the General Council condemning the shooting of open and obstinate enemies of the working class, the shooting of incendiaries and terrorists who shot down from behind representatives of the workers' State, who were actively engaged in preparations for the restoration of the regime hated by the workers and peasants, was in effect a direct mockery of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union and a shameful participation on the part of the leaders of the General Council in the campaign against the Soviet Union made by the venal bourgeois Press.

To ignore the danger of war, to conceal the real significance of the Anglo-Russian breach from the workers, not to condemn publicly the foreign policy of Chamberlain, to evade the convening of the Anglo-Russian Committee and at the same time to make common cause with the Black Hundreds in the question of the so-called "Red Terror," that is the real policy of the General Council. Such tactics cannot be regarded as anything but treacherous and aiming at the dissolution of the Anglo-Russian Committee.

In the name of ten million organised workers in the Soviet Union the Central Council considers it its duty to announce publicly the dangers which are threatening the world. Only the blind can fail to see that Great Britain is arming for a war against the Soviet Union, coming to an understanding with the Fascist Mussolini, mobilising the dark forces, recruiting allies, seeking to bring about a repetition of the horrors of the intervention, of the blockade of the free workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, striving to burden the Workers' State with new confusion and suffering. Only a traitor to the cause of the proletariat could justify such a policy in face of the growing danger of war.

The carrying out of the terrible plan to crush the Chinese revolution and to commence a campaign of blood against the Soviet Union must be prevented at all costs! The struggle against war is the urgent duty of the British and the world proletariat.

The Central Council repeats, it considers it impermissible for the Anglo-Russian Committee to be silent, to be passive, in such a situation. The Anglo-Russian Committee can and must raise its voice against the danger of war and against the reaction. The Anglo-Russian Committee must become a central point for the mobilisation of proletarian public opinion; it must place the question of the practical measures to adopt in the struggle against imperialist war and against the offensive of capital on the agenda. The Central Council places the full responsibility for the policy of sabotage towards the Anglo-Russian Committee upon the shoulders of the General Council and appeals to the British and Russian workers to fight energetically for real proletarian solidarity, for a real struggle against capitalism, for a real defence against the incendiaries who seek to cause an imperialist war.

A proletarian front against the front of capitalism!

Fight against imperialist reaction!

Proletarians, prepare yourselves for the struggle against the danger of war!

On this statement the General Council made no comment: but one of its most prominent members, Mr. J. H. Thomas, at the annual delegate meeting of the National Union of Railwaymen in the first week of July took the opportunity to voice his indignation at "interference" in British Trade Union affairs by Soviet Trade Unionists.

BOOK REVIEW

CLASS COLLABORATION IN AMERICA

Industrial Relations in the United States. By H. B. Butler, C.B. (International Labour Office, Geneva, 1927.)

THIS is a study of the feature in American industrial life that is most envied by European (and particularly by British) capitalists, and, therefore, is being most fervently praised by those leaders of the Labour Movement whose function it is to advocate whatever changes in the organisation of capitalism are most needed at the moment, for its progressive development and expansion (or, as in Britain at present, seem to hold out the best hopes for its recovery).

The International Labour Office is a responsible organisation set up to do its best to smooth out the difficulties arising in the present system of society. Like one of the more responsible newspapers—say the *London Times*—it is most useful to those whom it is intended to serve when it gives a relatively objective viewpoint on important subjects. The book before us, therefore, is not a propagandist attempt to show how ideal are the conditions governing industrial employment in America (such as, for example, *The Secret of High Wages*, by Bertram Austin, M.A., and W. Francis Lloyd, M.A.) and it is even free, to a remarkable extent, from the judicious use of colouring matter observable in the Government Delegation *Report on Industrial Relations in the U.S.A. and Canada* (1927, Cmd. 2833) signed without comment by Messrs. Bevin and Kaylor.

The conclusions reached are put down as tentative. There is no attempt to describe the new tendencies as forming a process occurring throughout the whole of American industry ; they are described as tendencies not yet certain to survive or to spread widely. The last paragraph of the book, referring to “experiments in collaboration between capital and labour” points out that “the enterprises in which such experiments are being tried are as yet comparatively small in number.”

An attempt is made in the first chapter to provide a general background for the study of industrial relations in the United States, by dealing lightly with the geographical feature of size, with the extremely diversified legal position in the various States, the mixture of races due to immigration, and with what is held to be the keynote of American industry : Individualism.

The second chapter is devoted to a review of the economic conditions under which the “new tendencies towards collaboration” have begun to flourish. American prosperity, the rise in real wages since the war period, the increase in productivity per man and the effect of high wages on the purchasing power of the people are dealt with ; but the treatment of the whole of this question of American prosperity is extremely (and admittedly) superficial.

In the final chapter (page 106), the reasons for American prosperity are summarised as being to some extent “derived from the special advantages which the United States enjoys in its great home market, its immense natural

resources, its abundance of capital and in its population, which is still far short of the country's capacity."

Taking these alleged reasons for prosperity one by one would lead us beyond the issues arising out of this book, but one very simple fact practically invalidates all of them: American prosperity dates roughly from 1919. Before that date, wage levels were, if anything, only slightly above the average British level of the pre-war years (the difference in the cost of living being taken into account) and real wages were practically stationary from the beginning of the century up to somewhere about the middle of 1919. (Mr. Butler notes in the book under review, on page 35, that real wages fell slightly between 1900 and 1910).

The fact that the "American economic miracle" consists not in a continually increasing high level of wages, but in a fairly sharp rise in wage levels after the war period (to something like 30 per cent. above pre-war) is admitted by Mr. Butler on page 30.

America's size has not altered since 1918. The population has grown normally, and in spite of the wage increase the home market derived from wages—taking Mr. Butler's figures collected from the Statistical Abstract, 1925, page 748—scarcely absorbs 1.5 per cent. more of the value of the products of American industry than was the case before the war.

America's "immense natural resources" are also somewhat beside the point, when considering this post-war period of prosperity and relatively high wages. The resources existed before the war; and, also, other countries possessing comparable resources (e.g., India) are not held out to us as examples of prosperity.

Mr. Butler's impression, expounded at length, that the rise in wages was due to the shortage of labour is made ridiculous when we look at the unemployment figures: there were four to five million unemployed in 1921 (when real wage rates were rising sharply) and have been two to three million on the average since then. (See 1927, Cmd. 2833.)

The real reason for America's prosperity during the last seven or eight years, and for the high level of wages which has prevailed even during periods of unemployment and depression, such as 1921, is to be found in the change from America as an economic colony of European capital to America as the leading imperialist power in the world. The United States are going through a period of imperialist prosperity greater than that of Britain during most of the nineteenth century, and more concentrated and rapid in its effects, but comparable to it in many ways.

The main portion of the book before us is not, of course, devoted to this question of prosperity, high wages and the reasons for them. These questions are, however, very important because they are the theoretical basis both for modern plans of capitalist reorganisation throughout Europe, as exemplified by the "rationalisation" of German industry, and for the I.L.P. plans for "Socialism in our Time." In all I.L.P. publications expounding these plans, America's prosperity is taken as both practical and theoretical justification for their possibility and value.

The present state of industrial relations in America corresponding to this "prosperity" is defined by Mr. Butler as "a transitional stage . . . in

which the creed of combat is being challenged by a new doctrine of co-operation which has found considerable support both among employers and workers." The practical working out of this doctrine of co-operation is analysed in the chapters on trade union policy, the policy of the employers and their associations, on the new science known as "personnel management" and on the schemes for "employee representation."

It is pointed out that the American trade union movement contains only a very small proportion of the working class, the American Federation of Labour having only 2,800,000 paying members in 1926 and the unions outside the Federation not numbering more than about 1,000,000 members. The unions therefore consist of the skilled and higher paid workers who have received most of the benefit secured by the working class from the present phase of prosperity.

Almost all these unions are very definitely willing to co-operate with the employers in the smooth running and expansion of industry, so long as a certain status is given to the unions' representatives and they are allowed to have some say in questions affecting their members directly. In spite of this, a very vigorous attack has been carried out by the employers against all trade unionism during the years since the war. The campaign for "the open shop" has not yet ended. Mr. Butler notes this attack on the unions as one of the reasons for their very heavy fall in membership.

Mr. Butler is doubtful of the usefulness and permanence of the plans for "employee representation" which are definitely aimed at excluding the trade unions, and, therefore, at weakening them. He gives, in an appendix, many details of the plans which he considers more likely to serve useful purposes: those which absorb the trade union machinery and, in fact, reproduce very largely the general lines of the British Whitley Council experiments. He considers that the firms adopting these plans "represent the advance guard of American industry."

His final conclusion is:—

If the American pioneers can confirm and extend their success in bringing about real partnership between employers and workers, their example will ultimately spread to the whole mass, with the result that the United States will have secured a further guarantee of supreme importance for the maintenance of its material prosperity and for the progress of its social welfare. . . . It may be that the present experiments in the direction of a better industrial order will prove to be barren. If so, they are bound to be succeeded by others which will take account of the reasons for their failure, for the problem which they are seeking to solve is one that cannot be shelved or shirked, if industrial civilisation is to be preserved and developed.

It is possible, however, that industrial civilisation will be developed on completely different lines from those foreseen by Mr. Butler. Indeed, even now, any further development in America or elsewhere along the lines advocated by Mr. Butler is dependent upon factors—such as the peace of an Imperialist World—which, to any unprejudiced eye, have obviously weakened since Mr. Butler wrote this book, and as every Marxist knows, are not likely, for long, to continue in existence.

T. H. W.

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Telegrams: Edcalopres, Kincros, London

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*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
W.C.1*

W 15214

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

October, 1927

Number 10

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British Isles, one year, 7s. ; Six months, 3s. 6d.

Abroad, one year, 8s., or \$2.00 ; Six months, 4s., or \$1.00.

Published at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone : SIOANE 5412.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

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ANGLO-AMERICAN RIVALRY

IN August, 1914, the Governments of Europe watched with anxiety whither the leaders of the Labour Movement would turn: "War or Class-War" was the subject of *The Times* editorial. To-day they have no anxieties. The Trades Union Congress, by their decision to suspend the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Committee, have shown quite clearly on which side they stand. For if it be war, they stand with the Government; and if it be class-war (in the supreme sense of a capitalist attack on the workers of the Soviet Union), still they stand with the Government.

Even in the manner in which the decision is taken and the explanations with which it is accompanied, the model of the Government is closely followed. The tearing up of the Trade Agreement and the recall of the Embassies were not, it was explained to a politely incredulous Europe, any evidence of hostile intention towards the Soviet Union, nor was there any policy of encirclement. Nay more, the British Government was disposed to be friendly to the Soviet Union if and when the Soviet Government altered the attitude which the British Government held was to blame for the breach. Similarly, the Trades Union Congress was anxious to make it clear that there is no hostility to Soviet Russia, that they too, like the Government, have only suspended relations until the leaders of Soviet trade unionism have altered their attitude.

The T.U.C. is, as usual, a little behind-hand. In 1924 it follows the lead of the Government in entering into friendly negotiations with the Soviet Union. In 1927, a few months after the Government, it puts an end to its relations with the Soviet Trade Unions—in all this, behaving exactly as if to demonstrate that trade unions are part of the State apparatus—in the same way as the American Federation of Labour which followed its Government into Europe in the latter days of the war and during the Armistice and returned again from Europe when the Wilsonian intervention came to an end.

No doubt there will be many amongst the delegates who would exclaim against the identification of their policy with that of the British Foreign Office and would resent the gleeful comments of Sir William Joynson-Hicks and the capitalist press. No doubt there are many delegates who hold fast to the belief that they have cleared themselves from all responsibility for a war against their fellow trade unionists of the Soviet Union by the resolution in which they formally dissociated themselves from the Government. It will be a great consolation to a widowed mother in that war to know that many of those who helped to bring it about had befooled themselves with phrases. No doubt when the war is upon us there will be members of the General Council who will fearlessly take their stand against it. But they will be too late. The time to be a fearless minority is now and in the two years during which these Edinburgh decisions were being prepared.

It was on the unanimous advice of the General Council, Mr. Thomas was able to explain, that the Congress took its decision. In the fierce fight against capitalism in the heart of the Labour Movement, unanimity is only possible when it expresses the clear will of the workers to overcome the capitalists. Otherwise unanimity is a concealment of vital differences—unanimity is corruption.

Two years ago, this fatal process of concealment began. The united front—a slogan which meant the struggle of the workers against the capitalists—the struggle for all that made for the liberation of mankind, was prostituted to mean the corrupt avoidance of strife within the General Council and the simulation of internal kindness with the false display to the working class of apparently undivided guidance. Once unanimity is taken as an end in itself the sorry story goes on from concession to concession until at last a final humiliation is reached when the strategists of Trade Union Unity find themselves *unanimously* turning right about face to what they were two years before.

Meanwhile, in face of the war danger, we have to deal particularly with two separate schools of thought. One school pooh-poohs the danger of war. "War against the U.S.S.R.," said Mr. Thomas, "is humbug," and the same sort of statement is repeated privately throughout the Labour Movement in a

thousand offices. The trade union officials, while they may publicly assent to resolutions attacking the Conservative Government for war preparations or warlike diplomacy, do not in their heart of hearts believe in the possibility of war, and mutter to themselves the comforting assurance that "you will never get 1914 over again." This, particularly after the T.U.C. decision, may be called the brazen school.

The other and more vocal school takes exactly the opposite standpoint. Not merely is war likely to arise at any moment, but they persist in predicting the exact particulars as to where and when it may be expected to begin. The personalities of Sir Austen Chamberlain, Sir Benito Mussolini, and Marshal Joseph Pilsudski are for them the three witches dancing round the cauldron. They can point to the time and place of each diplomatic meeting and with their lists of Treaties and Ententes they have become adepts at "spotting" the next war. They may be called the School of War Diviners. This school would be satisfied that war could be avoided, apparently, by a sort of diplomatic musical chairs, Ramsay MacDonald for Austen Chamberlain, and so forth. They see nothing in the nature of capitalism itself (apart from the forms or personalities of Governments) that is driving steadily towards war. Consequently their alarmist predictions have only to be falsified for the working class to be more effectually lulled than by the Brazen School. Objectively, they are a greater danger to the working class than the school that brazens out its support of the Government. In the fable of Æsop it was the boy who shouted "Wolf! wolf!" that was the greatest danger to the flock in the end.

The Antagonisms of World Capitalism

In order to understand clearly the danger of war, it is necessary to understand something of which war itself is a part. Those who are not prepared to follow the whole process of world capitalism are usually to be gulled by the immediate everyday news and to welcome the pacific utterances of politicians as fervently as they shudder when speeches are delivered in war-like tones.

The attempt to grasp the process of world capitalism does away with this form of simple-mindedness just as it wipes out the

over-dramatised picture of the whole capitalist world entering into a conscious coalition against Soviet Russia. That there is a clear consciousness of this aim in the British Foreign Office may be taken for granted. But it is to mistake the whole nature of capitalism to think of it as animated by a conscious purpose. If it were so and if its statesmen could express that purpose, then Sir Edward Grey would have been able to stop the last war. But it is not so, and the study of the working of world capitalism is an extremely difficult and complex business. Nevertheless, certain things may be made clear, and amid all the complexities we can separate out four main factors—factors of antagonism.

First, there is the world antagonism between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist powers. This is the antagonism felt between the old capitalist order of society and the new Socialist order that has begun to replace it. This antagonism is persistent and at any time may lead to a war which will be the class-war on the most terrible scale. At the present moment, the British Empire is busy organising such a war against the Soviet Union.

Second, amongst the capitalist Powers there is the antagonism between Britain and France, each seeking the leadership of Europe. This antagonism, dating from shortly after the armistice, has resulted, after the collapse of the Ruhr adventure in 1923, in a slight advantage to Britain. But since Europe has now become the World's Balkans, the British leadership is precarious and temporary, requiring to be supported continually by fresh diplomatic combinations, each of which in turn gives rise to yet further complications. At times an attempt is made to de-Balkanise Europe. There is talk of a United States of Europe. Professor Cassell puts forward a scheme for a European coinage which he holds can only be brought about by a federation of European States. Mr. Bernard Shaw, on the other hand, according to a Continental paper, expresses himself in favour of a Bank of Emission only without political rearrangements, which he considered too hard to compass (and which, one may note, would involve popular control of the Bank). This typical English banker's view was also put forward by Mr. Ernest Bevin in the Trades Union Congress when he pleaded for Europe as an "economic entity."

Thirdly, there is the slow-moving drama of relations between Britain and the United States, where so vast is the scale that the minor complications and changes that play so big a part in Europe are here evened out so that with terrifying continuity the gradual process towards a world conflict is clearly seen.

Fourthly, there is the struggle of the Colonial peoples amounting to more than half the population of the world against their imperialist oppressors, with which struggle in its development the working-class struggle may also be linked.

Of these four main factors, the big slow movement of Anglo-American antagonism can only be seen clearly in perspective since the armistice. Any full understanding of the world situation depends on an understanding of these relations. The immediate effect of the American withdrawal from Versailles and from participation in Europe was to leave the remaining Allies cock-a-hoop, with Britain crowing loudest of all.

Swiftly the relations between the British and American oil trusts and then between the Foreign Offices became sharp and angry. An acrid exchange of letters took place between Lord Curzon and State Secretary Colby. The San Remo Agreement of April, 1920, appeared to lock out America both from the mandated territories and from the hoped-for spoils of "the territories of the former Tsarist Empire. "To hell with the Yankees!" said John Bull. The other departments were not any less confident than the Foreign Office. The army had learned to be contemptuous of the American soldiers in the Archangel expedition, and did we not possess the 45,000-ton H.M.S. Hood, the prelude of other monsters to follow? Was not the Anglo-Japanese Alliance a useful counterweight to Yankee bumptiousness?

American Preauminance

All this pride went before a fall. The sudden onset of the commercial crises, the slump in the figures of unemployment as swollen by the Miners' Lock-out, 1921, the rising wave of colonial revolt, the Gandhist non-co-operation movement in India, the Zagloul difficulties in Egypt, civil war in Ireland, together with unfavourable changes in the European situation, brought Britain to a position of weakness where she was compelled to make terms with

her more powerful rival. The Washington Conference of October, 1921, onwards, with its breaking of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, its concessions to the Open Door policy in China, and its acceptance of equal naval strength, battleship for battleship, with the U.S.A., marks the beginning of a stage in England's weakness. Without a battle the British Empire was forced to accept terms of peace that made the old two- and three-power discussions in naval circles obsolete, and put an end to that old song, "Britannia rules the Waves." During the period of England's weakness the rôle of loyal if subordinate partner was played out year after year until the end of 1926. The Washington Conference was followed by an agreement, concluded by Baldwin as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Bonar Law administration of November, 1922, to pay a tribute of war debt from the British bourgeoisie to the American bourgeoisie which was offset by no corresponding arrangements on the part of other Powers to repay Britain for the still greater debts they owed to her. But perhaps it would be offset by some other kind of arrangement. Perhaps America would prevent France from entering on this "mad Ruhr adventure"—nay, if only America would grant a loan, the turbulent policy of Poincaré-la-guerre might be stilled. But, though Britain was the loyal partner of America, the United States was not going to give Britain the supremacy in Europe over France. Not until a year later, in the late autumn of 1923, when the rapid tumbling of the German Mark had brought revolution once more on the horizon, did the financial power of America intervene in order to impose, in conjunction with loyal partner England, the Dawes Plan for squeezing German economy "like an orange till you can hear the pips squeak." In the London Conference of August, 1924, under the Government of J. Ramsay MacDonald in England and Herriot in France, the Dawes Plan was accepted by all nations concerned in the Versailles Treaty, including Germany and France, and the loyal partnership of England was most concretely expressed in the joint actions of Mr. Montagu Norman of the Bank of England and Mr. Lamont of the firm of Pierpont Morgan. Higher heights of partnership were yet to be reached. The gold standard had to be attained. Gradually, bit by bit, with the concurrence of the Federal Reserve Bank, the exchange was forced up. The value of the

pound sterling was increased until with the last leap (achieved under artificial stimulus) the long-sought-for parity was attained in April, 1925. But that last leap, as will be seen below, was to cost them dear. It was estimated at the time in banking circles that it would be impossible to maintain the tremendous effort that had been required to reach the gold standard, and whilst export prices of British goods could be brought down in relation to American prices—a policy that meant a cut of some 10 per cent.—a cut of 10 per cent. in prices meant a 10 per cent. cut in costs of production, and that was further interpreted to mean a 10 per cent. cut in wages (or a smaller cut in wages and an increase in hours). It was this to which Baldwin was referring when he said, “The wages of all workers must come down”—a remark which we are now officially informed was never made though it was reported; and the report was sufficiently like what had been discussed in Government circles for Sir William Joynson-Hicks, Home Secretary, to approve it publicly a few days later. It was this policy that was expressed in the attack on the miners, and during that attack the Prime Minister could confidently send a public message to America appealing to them not to send help to feed the miners’ children, in the sure belief that the British Government with its faithful record of loyal partnership with the U.S.A. could count on American public sentiment against the rebellious miners. By the time the miners were defeated, the critical period for the pound sterling was passed, and the purpose of the long six years’ subordination to America had been fulfilled. The defeat of the miners freed the British Government for the attack on the trade unionists of China and of Soviet Russia: it also left the bourgeoisie free to deal with the United States on more equal terms. The tranquillity to which Bonar Law had looked forward was at last achieved. The British bourgeoisie felt that stabilisation had been carried further, and stabilisation was to prove only the beginning of new forms and shapes of antagonism.

The New Period of Anglo-American Rivalry

With 1927, then, the period of real antagonism between Britain and America begins. The rivalry thus shown was seen to exhibit itself in other ways. Just as smaller seismic vibrations

precede an earthquake, so there were a number of smaller vibrations, such as the refusal of America to agree on the sending of an identic Note to the Chinese Nationalist Government after the bombardment of Nanking. Then, unexpected by most people, there came the upheaval of the tripartite naval conference of Geneva with its spectacular failure. Who was to blame for that failure? Pains-takingly the British Government explained it was not to blame. Pains-takingly they protested against misrepresentation of British policy in the American Press and elsewhere. In vain did they protest. The American bourgeoisie were able to convince the world that Britain was the aggressive nation ; while it only needed the resignation of Lord Cecil of Charlwood to convince the world that there were bad men in the Baldwin Cabinet. The first most effectual step in war propaganda was taken, and the onus of it lay with the American bourgeoisie. The victory in this battle of wits more than ships appeared as a presage of how victory would come in any future conflict. Indeed, at first sight it appears as though there was no hope for the British Empire matched with the American Empire. The enormous material advantages of America, her growing trade, her dominant financial position, her compact and rapidly increasing population, seemed to give the United States an overwhelming advantage that nothing could overtake. The disparity between the two was enormous.

An unknown internal weakness in America was revealed by the case of Sacco and Vanzetti, the two Italian emigrants whose judicial murder in the face of a world-wide agitation is the biggest blow American capitalism has suffered. So strong was the agitation and so useful to the bourgeoisie the chance of staging a Dreyfus-like re-trial and pardon (thus re-establishing fading Liberal ideas of justice and equality before the law) that they were bound to have discovered a scapegoat had it not been that the slightest concession would have revealed that everyone in the case—prosecution, judge, courts, State Department of Justice—was deeply implicated in the original decision to kill those two men because they were Reds. So great an instance of class ferocity reveals internal strain in the frame-work of American society.

Nevertheless, great though the disparity is, there are points that tell in favour of Britain. Britain has historic superiority, finesse of

diplomacy, of skill in government. It may appear to have strategic difficulties ; the British Empire has also great strategic advantages. Its Navy has a longer tradition, more highly trained personnel, and the daily tale of deaths of airmen is an indication of the anxious activity and the feverish effort to gain the supremacy in the air. Britain may have been worsted at Geneva : privately she was able to make up to Japan, at the price, it would appear, of concessions in Manchuria. With the Tanaka militarist clique in control of the Japanese Government it should not be difficult to rebuild the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in the form of understandings and direct it both against America and Soviet Russia.

Even the more immediate war against Soviet Russia could enter in as part of the calculations of the Foreign Office mind as it deals with the problem of Anglo-American relations. For a successful war with Soviet Russia could mean spoils for both Britain and America if the U.S.A. would accept, and each division of the spoils, while it clears the way for ultimate conflict, staves off its actual happening. Each Empire must pause after being gorged. But if America would not join the spoils, still the reckoning is that a successful war against the Soviet Union, with its possible partition of the " territories of the former Tsarist Empire," would materially strengthen Britain against the United States of America.

Although it is clear that a period of real antagonism between the British Empire and the U.S.A. is in its opening stage, this does not mean that the tension is as yet great enough to rupture all commercial, financial, and social ties. It has not yet come to the point of shearing through the tissue of relations woven by the banking houses.

The House of Morgan is still available to buttress the gold standard should need arise. Actually, as we have seen, the great final leap towards parity was carried through by an artificial appreciation of British currency (of about 10 per cent. on Keynes' reckoning), and the argument put about in financial circles was that a 10 per cent. wages cut or thereabout was needed to bring British exports down. This line of argument pursued by bourgeois economists depended on the American price level remaining where it was.

Now in the last two years, the relevant price figures for Great Britain show a drop of from 148 to 134, but the American level, which stood at 157, has also dropped in the same period by nearly as many points. This means that on the same argument as seemed to demand a wages cut of 10 per cent. two years ago, now, by exactly the same reasoning, a wages cut of another 10 per cent. (or at least 9 per cent.) is inexorably demanded. This is the moment when the capitalists are asking for industrial peace in order that they may not have any repetition in other industries of the grim fight they had to wage against the miners.

Industrial peace is not being asked for in order that employers should be quietly induced to allow a rise in wages, it is in order that the men should be induced to suffer quietly a reduction in wages. For this purpose, a bureaucracy that broke with the workers of Soviet Russia is the best means of breaking the news of a wage reduction to British workers.

R. PAGE ARNOT.

THE EDINBURGH CONGRESS

By HARRY POLLITT

THE Plymouth Congress of 1923 marked the end of the debate arising from the defeat of Black Friday. From then onwards the trade union movement began to move forward again. Then came in 1924 the strike wave, and the rapid emergence of a "left" wing headed by many General Council leaders, who outdid everybody else in their demand for "unity" and "a fighting leadership." By the time Red Friday in July, 1925, was reached, this movement was at its height, and the Scarborough Congress of 1925 saw resolutions adopted which would test the validity and sincerity of these left-wing professions, for if operated they would have meant a complete change in policy, organisation, and leadership.

The General Strike of 1926, however, was the big test. By this time it was clear that it was not intended to operate any of the Scarborough decisions. Indeed the Labour Party Conference which followed Scarborough, under the leadership of MacDonald, had already decided to stem and crush the developments in the T.U.C., and the operation of the Liverpool decisions was the answer to the pseudo-lefts in the General Council.

The betrayal of the General Strike was caused not by the right-wing leaders, but by the left wing's complete collapse. Then came Bournemouth with its "hush-hush" policy, and finally the special conference of trade union executives in January this year, when, just as on the Russian question at Edinburgh, there was complete agreement in the General Council as to the cause of the General Strike collapse and subsequent defeat of the miners.

Industrial Peace

The Edinburgh Congress therefore took place with all these developments as the background. Thus it was absolutely in keeping with the situation that the Chairman's address should register the complete capitulation of the existing leadership to their capitalist masters, in the hope that the "new spirit" might

be the means of buying off further attacks. It was no surprise to those who know him best that George Hicks should be the one chosen to make this capitulation. It is part of the settled policy of the MacDonald-Thomas combination to make "fiery left wingers" utter the pronouncements of their policy.

The Chairman's address was a plea for "Industrial Peace." Nothing more or less. Beyond its gratuitously patronising insults to our Russian comrades, it contained nothing worth noting. The whole of the more responsible capitalist Press hailed the address with delight, and the passage they fixed on is the same in every case.

We all know—employers as well as trade unionists—that the vexatious, toilsome, and difficult period through which we are passing is a transitional period. Much fuller use can be made under these conditions of the machinery for joint consultation and negotiation between employers and employed. We have not reached the limits of possible development in this direction. It is more than doubtful whether we have seen the fullest possible development of machinery for joint consultation in particular industries. And practically nothing has yet been done to establish effective machinery of joint conference between the representative organisations entitled to speak for industry as a whole. There are many problems upon which joint discussion would prove of value at the present time.

That quotation—the decisive part of Hicks's speech—is the swan song of the "left wing." It has been hailed by the *Manchester Guardian* as "A Move Forward," by *The Times* as "A Basis of Co-operation." It represents the policy of the General Council. The Industrial Peace answer to Baldwin's overtures deceives no one. The speeches of Bevin and Thomas and their resolution were only window dressing. Under cover of the Edinburgh Congress (and it was no coincidence that Messrs. Clynes and Brownlie, of 1919 "Produce More and Industrial Peace" fame, were put up to move the Vote of Thanks to George Hicks for his speech), when the invitation comes, as it will come, for the General Council to participate in an all-in national Industrial Peace Conference, there will be an acceptance of the offer in order that the existing leadership can put itself right with the electorate in preparation for the next election. For in essence the whole Edinburgh Congress was, from the General Council's point of view, a complete capitulation to the demand of the Labour

Party chiefs that everything must now be staked on the next General Election.

The workers need to be warned that this capitulation will not stave off new attacks on their conditions; on the contrary, under its cover plans will be laid to attack the workers on a larger scale than ever. As a matter of cold fact, the capitalists are showing their hand even while the workers' leaders, with tears in their eyes, are crying for Peace. At the last session of the Congress, Ben Turner, the President of the Textile Workers' Union, pleaded for a new spirit in industry, and wanted to know "what was wrong in wanting to work with good men of all classes." At the end of the next week, Ben's tears had moved the Yorkshire Textile capitalists so much that they served notices on his union to end the present wages agreement in November, when they propose to ask for a wages reduction. Quite rightly the *Herald* states this as a "Bombshell for Wool Trade." But what can they expect if the workers' leaders go out of their way to make the bombs? And if workers who object to being consistently betrayed call such leaders "traitors" or "betrayers," we are told it isn't British, or what is called fair play. Bah! the whole thing is simply nonconformist hypocrisy of the worst type. The rapid growth of the Minority Movement can alone succeed in wiping out this sort of policy.

After such a lead from the Chair, it was no wonder that the main features of the Congress should be classified under these four heads:—

- (1) The Attack on the Minority Movement.
- (2) The Break with the Russian Unions.
- (3) The Capitulation on the Trade Union Act.
- (4) The Refusal to deal with Havelock Wilson.

The Minority Movement

I can only deal with these questions briefly, as each really calls for separate and fuller treatment.

In two weeks the *Daily Herald* gave three of its leading articles to the Minority Movement. Any doubts that our movement was not a growing force inside the trade union movement were dispelled by the attention showered upon us by the official organ

of the T.U.C. This fact, coupled with the debate at Edinburgh, and the parting shot of George Hicks in the *Herald*, all show the fear that is developing inside the official bureaucracy.

When we were struggling for a foothold inside the unions, and battling for recognition, we were ignored ; but immediately our policy began to get widespread support, and in the face of official boycotts, suspensions, and exclusions, we began to win important trade union positions on the basis of our policy, a change took place. The success of our Fourth National Conference in August, and the well-organised work of the M.M. supporters at Edinburgh, have put the finishing touches on it, and now the fight is on.

It is a fight to a finish. There is no room for centrist positions. The issue is to save the Trade Union Movement from further defeats at the hands of a leadership that does not, and will not, recognise the new economic period that the movement is living in. It is not a question of personalities, or calling of hard names ; it is a question of explaining to the workers clearly and simply the issues involved, the methods that must be taken, and the organising of the will, and the power, to take them.

Not as outside, yelping, little unofficial bodies, but as a well-organised internal and integral part of the movement, utilising every channel of trade union machinery and organisation that lies to our hand. Not as a bunch of outsiders trying to dictate policy to the official movement, but as men and women, who are a part of the movement, trying in organised fashion to get support for our policy in the workshops, branches, district committees, national executives, and possibly the T.U.C. itself, so that the workers can discriminate and judge as to which policy and leadership meets the needs of the situation, and by their mass support get our present Minority policy the accepted policy of the movement as a whole.

The Break With the Russian Unions

It cannot be too often asserted that the break with the Russian Unions is not a break between the British and Russian workers. If a vote was taken to-morrow on the question of continuing the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, there would be a tremendous

majority in favour. The fact that the *Herald* published protests against the break a few days after it was made is indeed significant of the feeling of the rank and file.

The five fraternal delegates at Edinburgh, who doubtless received their instructions to pave the way for a break, by insisting upon the right of all national trade union centres to have full autonomy, gave a classic example of "interference" in the domestic affairs of the British Movement when it was essential to create the atmosphere for a break. Not one member of the General Council had the courage to protest against the break. Thomas, Citrine, and Bevin exultantly declared that the General Council were unanimous for a break.

So here is the end of all the manifesto-signing and unity-phrase-mongering period. The General Council that has increased its hostility to the Russian unions in tune with the war preparations of the Conservative Government has gained a Pyrrhic victory at Edinburgh that even now the more far-seeing of them are beginning to regret. It was a victory for British "dignity," but that "dignity" covers the politics of MacDonald, Bevin, and Thomas, and the delegates, in staunchly upholding the nonconformist conscience, have delivered a weapon into the hands of the MacDonald-Baldwin bloc that will do irreparable harm, unless it is destroyed by the workers forcing a complete change of policy.

We declare that the break sanctioned at Edinburgh is not one between the British and Russian workers, but one between the British reactionary leaders playing Baldwin's game in the Trade Union Movement.

Over the heads of such a leadership will the British and Russian workers find ways and means of rebuilding a bond that will be unbreakable? We do not envy the consciences of those members of the General Council who have posed as friends of the Russians and who did not even dare to suggest that the General Council should attempt to make a political reply instead of shielding themselves in the baby game of "We won't play in your backyard."

The Trade Union Act

This debate was the most disappointing at the Congress. It was the logical result of the way the whole campaign against the Act

has been conducted. No settled policy, no common understanding, so that when we got to Edinburgh half the important unions had already decided what their own line of action was to be. The only anxiety being shown about the Act is not the question of the strike weapon, or the loss of the Civil Service trade unions, but the probable decline in income as a result of the new procedure in collecting the political levy.

Mr. MacDonald declares the proposal to alter the House of Lords as "a revolutionary act." No leader got up to say the same thing about the Trade Union Act. Only futile talk about it "meaning disrespect for the law," and Hicks's amazing speech in which all sorts of dark hints were thrown out as to how it may be defeated.

Everything was staked on the next Labour Government repealing the Act. But what if there is not a Labour Government at the next election? Then wait until the election after that. In the meantime the Capitalist attacks increase, the war danger grows apace and another 1914 looms ahead. This is really what the present position on the Trade Union Act amounts to. I am confident that had a special conference been held three months ago a policy of complete opposition to the Act and all its works could have been devised, and a fighting Trade Union Movement developed instead of being doped with the promises of a piloted Labour Government being the solution of their present difficulties.

The Seamen's Union

Perhaps the greatest searchlight on the outlook of the General Council is the fact that in their annual report, consisting of 203 pages, in which practically every issue of trade union activity is discussed, they could not find room for one paragraph on the subject of non-political trade unionism. Fifteen and a-half pages to the question of Russian relations; one page to the Minority Movement; scores of pages on disputes and demarcation questions; disciplinary action against Trades Councils affiliated to the Minority Movement, even though the Trades Councils are not affiliated to the T.U.C., but no thought of dealing with a union affiliated to Congress that has given £3,000 and voted

another £10,000 to try and smash another union also affiliated to Congress.

This is one of the most serious questions facing the movement. It is not because the miners are menaced: it is because it is but a short step from capitalist-subsidised unions to Government-controlled trade unions. The whole future of the movement is menaced by this first open attempt of the capitalists, through Wilson, to set up blackleg non-political trade unions.

The workers will not fail to notice how frightened the General Council were of dealing with this matter. They did not want it discussed in public, but they had no objection to discussing the Minority Movement or the Russian Unions in public; oh, no! that sort of thing earns them the applause and gratitude of the Press. Their capitalist friends would not be pleased if the same searchlight was thrown on Wilson's Union, its finances, associates and ramifications.

The position from which there is now no escape is, that the Edinburgh Congress which fought the Minority Movement, lined up with Baldwin against Soviet Russia and was afraid of fighting Wilson and his policy of splitting the trade union movement and setting up a rival Trades Union Congress.

Conclusion

The bright feature of Edinburgh was the recognition on all sides that the Minority Movement is the accepted opposition to the existing leadership. This is of great significance. There is no longer a struggle between rival and conflicting sects, but a straight fight between reformist and revolutionary leadership. At Edinburgh our supporters were alone in forcing debates on vital issues. There was not a challenging note, either on a resolution or the General Council's Report, which did not come from our supporters. The result was that all the way there were keen debates and good fighting. The very fact that the violent attacks on our movement were made is itself proof of our growing influence.

Inside the various delegations there were many big fights for the right of those who supported our policy even to be allowed to express their point of view. Many useful contributions to debates

were made because at last we succeeded in breaking down the cast-iron barriers that have hitherto prevailed, which compelled the delegations to agree to decisions reached before Congress itself met, and so stultify the whole proceedings.

We of the Minority Movement cheerfully accept the challenge of Edinburgh. The fight will be hard, tremendous obstacles will have to be overcome. We must clearly explain what the Congress decisions mean, and prove that the statement that the Minority Movement is hostile to trade unionism is a lie, but that the Minority Movement *is* hostile to a leadership that is heading the trade unions for further heavy defeats.

It is to prevent this that we shall continue with our work of utilising every constitutional channel of union organisation in order that the policy we stand for, as outlined at our Battersea Conference, shall be made the accepted policy of the whole movement. That policy briefly expressed is :—

(1) To fight against the capitalist offensive with its wage-reducing and lengthening of hours policy, and its attempts to destroy trade union rights and practices.

(2) To fight any tendency to leave or split the unions, and to wage an energetic campaign for a 100 per cent. trade union movement.

(3) To show clearly to all workers the real role of the capitalist State in their struggles.

(4) To fight for the unification of workers in factories, in trade union branches, trades councils, district committees, and to agitate for one union for each industry, a centralised General Council and a single Trade Union International.

(5) To build up Minority Movement groups in every industry in the country in order that as a result of organised activity the policy, direction, and ideals of the Minority Movement shall be made the policy of the Movement as a whole.

The Edinburgh Congress marks the parting of the ways ; it is now a fight between those who stand for the Trade Union Movement becoming a more effective weapon in the immediate struggle for the advancement of the workers' economic conditions, and, finally, a weapon in the struggle for complete political power, and those who, under the guise of industrial peace and class collaboration, are heading the whole movement into the camp of the enemy.

NEO-MALTHUSIANISM AND THE WORKING CLASS

By N. LENIN

[This article, which is here translated for the first time in English, was originally written by Lenin in "Pravda" No. 137 (341), June 16, 1913. At the present time the question here dealt with is again to the fore, as evidenced in the discussions at the Labour Women's Conferences and Labour Party Conferences, and the recent adoption of birth-control in the new programme of the Austrian Social Democratic Party: so much so, that it might almost be said that Neo-Malthusianism is on the way to becoming a plank of the Second International. At a time when controversy on this question is commonly divided between the religious obscurantists and militarists on the one hand, and the liberal middle-class reformers on the other, who endeavour to foist on the Labour Movement their propaganda of individual adaptation to capitalism in place of collective action and struggle, the statement here provided by Lenin of the Marxist or revolutionary working-class standpoint on this question is of especial importance.—Ed., LABOUR MONTHLY.]

AT the Russian Medical Congress of the Pirogov Society, the question of abortion, *i.e.*, of the artificial prevention of birth, awoke considerable interest and discussion. The reporter, Litschkus, brought forward data on the extraordinary spread of abortion in the modern so-called civilised States. In New York there took place in one year 80,000 artificial abortions, in France as many as 36,000 per month. In Petersburg the percentage of artificial abortions has more than doubled in five years. The Medical Congress of the Pirogov Society adopted a resolution to the effect that criminal prosecution of the mother for artificial abortion should in no case take place, but that doctors should be judicially prosecuted only when "greed of gain" was present.

In the discussion the majority, while expressing themselves against the judicial penalty for abortion, naturally also raised the question of "Neo-Malthusianism" so-called (artificial measures for the prevention of conception), and touched on the social side of this matter. So, for example, Herr Wigdortschik, according to the report of the *Russkoye Slovo*, declared that "the measures

for the prevention of conception are to be welcomed " ; and Herr Astrachan proclaimed amid loud applause :—

We must convince the mothers that they are bearing children only for them to be later crippled in the schools, to be drawn on for conscription, and finally to commit suicide."

If the report that this kind of outburst of Herr Astrachan awoke stormy applause is correct, the fact does not surprise me. The audience was an audience of bourgeois, middle bourgeois and petty bourgeois elements, with a narrow-minded petty bourgeois psychology. What is to be expected but the flattest liberalism ?

But from the standpoint of the working class there is scarcely to be found a more conspicuous example of the whole reactionary essence, of the whole poverty and deformity of " social Neo-Malthusianism," than the above-quoted sentence of Herr Astrachan. " To bring children into the world, only for them to be crippled, &c." *Only for this ?* And why not for them to wage a better, more united, more class-conscious, more determined fight than ourselves against the modern conditions of life which cripple and destroy our generation ?

Here precisely lies the root difference between the psychology of the peasant, the handicraftsman, the intellectuals, of the petty bourgeoisie in general, and the psychology of the proletarian. The petty bourgeois sees and feels that he is going downwards, that life is becoming for him ever more difficult, the struggle for existence ever more ruthless, and that the position of himself and of his family grows ever more desperate. On this there is no dispute. And the petty bourgeois protests against this.

But how does he protest ?

He protests as the representative of a class which is going under without hope, which has lost faith in its own future and become broken and cowardly. " We can do nothing ; therefore rather let us have as few children as possible, who will have to suffer our tortures, our prison-house existence, our poverty and humiliations," so runs the lamentation of the petty bourgeois.

The class-conscious worker is immeasurably far removed from such a standpoint. He does not let his conscious understanding be obscured by such lamentations, however sincere and deeply felt they may be. Yes, we too, the workers and the mass of the small

peasants, we also have to live a life full of unendurable oppression and suffering. Our generation has a more difficult life than our fathers, yet in one respect we are more fortunate than our fathers.

We have *learned to fight*, and are learning it ever faster—and to fight not only in isolation, as the best of our fathers did, not merely for the to us essentially alien watchwords of bourgeois fine speakers, but for our own battle-cries, the battle-cries of our own class. We fight better than our fathers did. Our children will fight still better, and *they will win*.

The working class does not go downwards ; on the contrary, it grows, gains strength, matures, draws its ranks closer together, trains and steels itself in the fight. We are pessimists in regard to the prospects of serfdom, of capitalism and of small production ; but we are glowing optimists in regard to the prospects of the working-class movement and its aims. We are already laying the foundations of the new building, and our children will build it to the end. Therefore—and only therefore—we are unconditional opponents of Neo-Malthusianism, of that direction which suits some little petty-bourgeois couple who, stupid and self-centred, whisper in panic : “ If we can only keep ourselves, with God’s help, above water ; but children we cannot do with.”

Of course this does not prevent us in the slightest from demanding the abolition of all laws which place penalties either upon abortion or upon the circulation of medical writings dealing with methods of preventing conception, or similar laws. Such laws are nothing but hypocrisy of the ruling class. Such laws do not heal the abscesses of capitalism, but only render them more malignant, and even more unendurable for the oppressed masses.

But freedom of hygienic instruction and the protection of elementary democratic rights of men and women is one thing. Another thing, and a very different thing, is the social teaching of Neo-Malthusianism. The class-conscious workers will always wage the most relentless fight against the attempts to impose this reactionary and cowardly teaching upon the most progressive, strongest class of modern society, which is most prepared to carry through great transformations of this society.

BRITAIN, ITALY, AND THE EAST

By W. N. EWER

FOR a hundred years or more the chief concern of British diplomacy has been with the Near and Middle East. Attention may have been diverted to the Rhine or the Yangtse, to the Baltic or the Caribbean : but it has always swung back to that focal area of the Old World which lies between the Balkans and the Indian borders.

Indeed, even when Downing Street has seemed concerned with quite different regions, it has not infrequently been because of their influence on the "Eastern Question." The quarrel with Germany was in large measure due to the fact that Berlin lay at one end of the railway route of which the other end was Bagdad : in even larger measure (as the recently published documents show) to the fact that hostility to the Kaiser in Europe was the price of peace with the Tsar in Western Asia. And if to-day much attention is devoted to Helsingfors and Reval, it is because of their intimate, if geographically distant, strategical relationship to the Caucasus and the Black Sea.

The reasons for this pre-occupation are, of course, plain enough. It was the acquisition of India, which, coming almost simultaneously with the loss of America, first made the Near East of prime importance to British capitalism. The cutting of the Canal enhanced that importance. The development of Malaya, East Africa, and the Sudan as investment areas, the opening up of the Burmese and Persian oil-fields, the territorial gains at the end of the German War, have still further increased it.

To hold, consolidate, and develop the Middle Eastern Empire; to keep the Old World's central line of communication well under British control; to safeguard that control against all possibility of attack from without or revolt from within; to extend, whenever possible, the controlled area so as to bring within it further important strategic points or further valuable economic areas—these are the chief, and indeed the obvious, objectives.

Equally obvious is that, in the view of Downing Street, the enemy is Russia. There is a perfectly genuine belief, carefully fed by gentlemen of the Intelligence Service who must justify their existence and their jobs, in a great Soviet conspiracy, thrusting down into all those areas upon which—of all areas in the world—British Imperialism is determined to keep its grasp. There is the bitter hatred of Soviet Russia itself and all its ways. There is the lure of the Caucasian oil-fields. There are a hundred reasons, which need not be re-discussed here, why the Eastern Question presents itself to Downing Street as primarily a question of Russo-British rivalry, in which the chief task of the Foreign Office must be to bring as many as possible of the relevant States into a pro-British, anti-Russian grouping, to support and strengthen those which *do* enter such a group, to weaken and harass those which persist in maintaining friendly relations with Moscow. In a word, the job is to isolate Russia diplomatically.

Now that would be straightforward enough in its main lines, though often difficult and complex enough in its tangle of oriental detail, were it not for a disturbing factor which is upsetting all Foreign Office calculations, and causing acute mental disturbance to many worthy gentlemen.

That factor, which is be-devilling and complicating the situation in such distressing fashion, is the colonial ambition and the distinctly aggressive Eastern policy of Fascist Italy.

The British plan of action requires, not, perhaps, that France and Italy shall be entirely subservient allies of Great Britain in the East, but certainly that they shall be allies; that there shall be a united front of the three colonial powers equally against Soviet Russia and against "subversive" nationalist movements in Asia or in Northern Africa. And, indeed, such a united front does, to some extent, automatically exist.

But the devil of it is that not merely is Italy an unreliable ally (Fascism has not tampered with the time-honoured traditions of her diplomacy) but that she is actively and almost ostentatiously carrying on a peaceful war *against* her supposed allies.

The British Press is silent. You will not persuade any British statesman to talk about it. They swallow their resentments and keep their anxieties to themselves.

But the blunt fact is that in the Near East—in the British territories as well as in the French territories—there is ten times as much Fascist propaganda as Bolshevik propaganda going on. And the aim of this propaganda is, almost avowedly, to prepare for the replacing of British and French control by Italian.

Fascist Italy is obsessed to-day by the idea of colonial empire. It could not be otherwise. The psychological basis of Fascism is the tremendous inferiority complex from which the Italian bourgeoisie is suffering. The vulgar bravura of Fascism, the strident boastings and posturings of its leader, the neurotic exaltation of his followers, are all symptoms of the same disease. The craving for colonies is another. The urge is less economic than psychological. This is no reaching out (as was Germany's) of a vigorous and efficient bourgeoisie after new fields of activity and exploitation. It is far more comparable with the craving of the bourgeois snob to become a landed gentleman. Great powers have colonies: Italy must show the world (and assure her own doubting soul) that she is really a Great Power: that she is really Old Rome: that she is Imperial, Cæsarian.

A whole ruling class suffering from those delusions of grandeur which are the premonitory symptoms of collapse—that is Fascist Italy. You have only to talk to them, to read their press, to realise it. Amazing material for the psychopaths. But none the less intensely disturbing to diplomats.

Italy (these themes are quite gravely and seriously debated in the Fascist Press) must replace France as mandatory for Syria. Italy is destined to succeed Great Britain (whose strength is visibly waning while that of youthful Italy is waxing) in control of Egypt. Anatolia, of course, is ear-marked as a future Italian colony. It is under Italian hegemony that the troubled Balkans will at last find the peace they have not known since the Roman Empire collapsed. And so on.

If there was nothing beyond wild chatter in the Roman press, nobody would worry. It is recognised that Mussolini must keep his people amused. But there is much more. There is definite activity.

In Egypt, in Arabia, in Syria, in Persia, even in India itself, Fascist propaganda is busy, and is causing grave disquiet to local administrators and diplomats.

In Egypt (where, by the way, there are 40,000 Italian residents) there is a barely unconcealed attempt to make the Palace party a pro-Italian party. King Fuad's personal inclinations tend towards the country where his youth was spent and whose language he speaks even better than his native tongue. And his recent visit to Rome was made the occasion of demonstrations the magnitude and the purpose of which were quite unrealised here, except by a worried Foreign Office.

Fuad, who had been treated in London with correct, if slightly patronising, courtesy, but entirely without enthusiasm, found himself acclaimed in Rome as a Great King and a popular hero. The thing, of course, was all stage managed; the citizens of Rome were told, in official proclamations, that it was their duty to mass in their thousands to greet the monarch of a great and friendly nation. And they wisely took the hint.

The purpose of it all was very evident—and very disturbing.

In Arabia Italy has established herself, by virtue of a treaty with the Iman of the Yemen, as virtual protector of that small but important territory. She is installed on both shores of the mouth of the Red Sea: Aden will soon be at her mercy unless its defences and garrison are strengthened. As a threat to the communications of the British Empire, the German move at Agadir—which nearly brought war in 1913—was nothing in comparison. But Downing Street squirmed and pretended not to mind. Only, as a reply, it hastily negotiated a treaty with Ibn Saud of which one great object is to ensure that Italian penetration of Arabia goes no further. Whereupon Italian agents at once began to stir up trouble for Ibn Saud in the Hedjaz, and then to intrigue with Ibn Saud himself.

Wherever you turn in the Near East this quiet, unnoticed, unavowed struggle between Great Britain and Italy is going on. Were the British Government not pre-occupied with Russia, it would develop swiftly and openly and dangerously. It has already provided valid excuses for half-a-dozen diplomatic ruptures.

But, occupied with its preparations for a Russian war, the Government is prepared to endure much from Italy. And that astute politician, Signor Mussolini, is taking full advantage of it: full advantage also of the personal influence he has been able to

exercise over Sir Austen and over Mr. Churchill, both men curiously susceptible to those theatrical qualities which the Duce knows so well how to exploit.

Signor Mussolini—advised perhaps by some subtler brain—is blackmailing the British Government for all he is worth. He will cease to annoy his dear friend Sir Austen if his dear friend Sir Austen will do what he wants.

Sir Austen would, no doubt, gladly do so. But the trouble is that he cannot satisfy Signor Mussolini except at the price of messing up all his own plans, and of (in all probability) messing up a great deal more than plans. If the Duce would be content with a new little protectorate in Southern Arabia, all would be well. It is certainly irritating to be compelled to let him get a foothold in the Yemen—with possibilities of trouble to follow in the Hedjaz. Still this would be a localised irritation, involving no further consequences. But the Duce is by no means content with his little adventure in Arabia, or his plans for Abyssinia, or his little war in Tripoli. And when it is a matter not of the Red Sea but of Anatolia or Albania, the game becomes a complex and an alarming one.

Of course if one had made up one's mind for good and all that Turkey was a permanent friend of the Soviet Union, a permanent leader of Asiatic resistance to European domination, then clearly it would be good policy to let Mussolini have a whack at her, as a preliminary to a further and final partition. A troublesome state would have been castigated, and possibly abolished, and the Italians would be so fully employed that they would cease to give cause for anxiety anywhere else.

With that idea the Foreign Office has certainly toyed, and perhaps more than toyed. But it can never rid itself of the belief that it may still be possible to bribe and bully Turkey into changing sides and becoming Great Britain's friend and ally in Western Asia. Angora is notoriously hard-up. Angora is notoriously alarmed at the possibility of an Italian attack. If Great Britain could lend her money and guarantee her immunity from aggression, surely the double inducement would be sufficient. If such a bargain could be struck, it would be a tremendous diplomatic achievement. The psychological effect throughout Asia would be

immediate. The possibility of Anglo-Turkish co-operation would have immediate influence, for example, on Teheran. And, in the event of a Russian war, a Turkish alliance would be of incalculable value. It would give the fleet *de facto* as well as *de jure* right of entry into the Black Sea. It would open the air route from Mosul to Baku. With Turkey on our side or benevolently neutral, a Caucasus campaign would be a hopeful proposition : with her on the other side, it would be a desperately risky business.

Therefore the Foreign Office cannot abandon its hopes of "collaring" Turkey. But it can only succeed in this if it is prepared to guarantee the Turks against attack by Mussolini. And clearly you cannot do that and at the same time satisfy Mussolini's oriental ambitions by giving him Anatolia to eat.

The other alternative—Albania—opens up even more alarming prospects. For—to put it no higher—there is a chance that any definite Italian move into Albania would cause Belgrade to throw discretion to the winds and to try the gamble of "Balkan courage against Italian munitions." And if Belgrade did, and Balkan courage were getting the worst of it, could France hold back? These possibilities are being discussed to-day just as seriously as fifteen years ago the possibilities of a Balkan War, and of the kindling by it of a European war, were discussed. That happened. So may this. And if it does, Heaven knows what would be the consequences and where they would stop. Clearly the Foreign Office is not, if it can help it, going to have any finger in stirring up a new world war, with all its underlying possibilities of a new world revolution just to oblige the Duce.

Here, then, is a worrying situation for Sir Austen. He is—or was—very, very anxious to be on the best of all possible terms with his friend Mussolini. But friend Mussolini persists (*a*) in carrying on a campaign of propaganda in the East, which, if organised from Moscow instead of Rome, would set the whole Conservative Party into convulsions ; (*b*) in nurturing schemes (with appropriate military preparations) which if undertaken must bedevil Sir Austen's whole policy.

I am not surprised that Sir Austen thinks of going to the Balearic Islands in order to avoid another heart-to-heart talk with his "Fascist Comrade."

THE INDIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

By PHILIP SPRATT

[*The author of the following very informative article, who has made a first-hand study of the Indian trade union movement, has recently been committed for trial in Bombay as the alleged author of a pamphlet, "India and China," now declared seditious.*]

IT is commonly said, indeed so commonly that the phrase becomes mechanical, that the Indian Trade Union Movement "is still in its infancy." The present writer has frequently had occasion to combat the use of this phrase, not so much because it is untrue, as because it is misused. Every kind of mistaken policy, sheer inactivity, sectarianism, abstention from politics, are all excused on the same plea. And, on the other hand, it conveys the idea that the only policy for Indian Labour is slow, patient progress on the present lines. It is not intended to deny the truth of what is meant by the statement, namely that Indian labour organisation is poor by Western standards. But the analysis of the situation implied by it is inadequate. It is the thesis of this article that Indian unionism is in its second stage, in which it will remain until there come into being the conditions necessary for the next stage. That these conditions will ripen fairly soon is also expected, and indeed the beginnings are already to be seen.

The broad facts of the present position have recently been given very completely by Mr. Joshi in his pamphlet, *The Trade Union Movement in India*, and the figures in the table below are taken from it. Though necessarily based to some extent on guess-work they are as sound as can be obtained and are near enough in any case for the present purpose.

Of the population of just over 300,000,000, 138,000,000 are taken to be workers, divided according to occupations as follows : Agriculture, 100,000,000 ; industry, with mining, 15,517,000 ; transport, 1,900,000 ; commerce, 8,000,000 ; domestic, 2,500,000 ; public services, 4,000,000. The more detailed facts are arranged under columns : (a) estimated number of wage-

earning employees, (b) wage-earners in organised parts of occupations, or such as can be organised in trade unions, (c) number of unions in existence, (d) total membership.

WAGE EARNERS AND TRADE UNIONISTS IN INDIA				
Occupation	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Agriculture	25,000,000	821,000 (plantations)	—	—
Industry	12,147,000	294,000 (mining)	1	1,500
		773,000 (textiles)	18	34,000
		169,000 (metal)	8	11,000
		82,000 (glass, &c.)	1	—
		(printing,	5	6,000
		100,000 engineering,	5	1,000
		general)	20	15,000
Transport	1,500,000	(wood, leather,		
		chemicals,		
		332,000 food, cloth-		—
		ing, build-		
		ing, gas, fur-		
		niture, &c.)		
		(construction)	—	—
Commerce	4,000,000	800,000 (railways,	25	50,000
		shipping,	6	20,00
		100,000 docks &c.,	6	3,000
		tramways)	6	2,000
Domestic	2,500,000	500,000	6	5,000
Public adminis-			1	—
tration	4,000,000	500,000	60	50,000
Totals	49,147,000	4,727,000	164	196,500

The distribution by provinces is also important. In 1925 the numbers of workers in factories subject to the Indian Factories Act were : In Bengal, 551,342 ; Bombay, 370,460 ; Madras, 123,563 ; Burma, 97,346 ; U.P., 78,942 ; Bihar and Orissa, 73,461 ; C.P. and Berar, 67,104 ; Punjab, 53,533 ; Assam, 48,697. Others, 30,330. Total, 1,494,958.

Government employees, railwaymen, &c., will be distributed roughly according to population. The number of trade unionists by provinces is more difficult to state, but is approximately as follows: Bombay (June, 1927), 76,000 ; Bengal, probably 50,000 ; Madras, about 25,000 ; others up to a few thousands each. The total number of unions affiliated to the All-India Trades Union Congress is now 60, with 125,000 members.

It is also necessary to show roughly how the present situation is related to the past. Organisation on a large scale practically began in 1918, and at the first All-India Trades Union Congress, in Bombay, October, 1920, sixty unions were affiliated, having 140,000 members, while it was claimed that the total membership of unions expressing sympathy, &c., was 500,000. At the second Congress, at Jharria, November, 1921, it was stated that 1,000,000 affiliated members were represented. It is doubtful if these numbers were actually even approached, but it is certain that there was a very big fall after 1922. At the end of 1924, only eight unions were affiliated, but by the time of the fifth Congress, in Bombay, February, 1925, there were thirty-one unions with perhaps 80,000 members. The number has risen steadily from that time.

The more exact figures compiled by the Labour Office for the Bombay Government show the same tendency. There were in the Presidency in June, 1922, twenty-two unions with 58,000 members; in September, 1923, nineteen unions with 42,000 members; September, 1924, twenty-one with 47,000 members, and since then a fairly steady rise to the present figures : sixty-six unions with 76,000 members.

The Bombay Government commented on these facts in its criticism, dated January, 1925, of the draft Trade Unions Bill.

It cannot be denied that the progress of Trade Unionism in this Presidency is at the best stationary at the present moment . . . the movement seems to be able to show solid progress only in Ahmedabad. The quarterly review . . . is a tale of lassitude and disillusionment. The present slump in the movement is due largely to falling prices and rising wages.

The "slump" in the movement after 1922 would be better shown by statistics of industrial disputes. The period, 1919-22, saw a very intense "strike wave," which fell away almost to nothing by 1924. In the character of the Congresses also, a similar contrast is to be seen between those days and the present. The first two Congresses were practically huge demonstrations. At Jharria there were several thousand delegates, and a strike was held specially for the occasion in the local coalfield. Many of the best-known political leaders of the country were present at both Congresses, and took active part. In the Trades Union Congress,

which the present writer attended in March this year, the number of delegates was under fifty, not more than ten of whom were workers. Perhaps a score or so of members of the public were present, while as the place was Delhi, a few Congress leaders "dropped in," but said nothing.

Mr. R. K. Das, in his book *The Labour Movement in India* (1923), remarks that, while in the first years of intense activity the unions were mainly industrial in type, in the later period in which he was writing, craft unions also began to appear. This is an important observation, for though the unions which were then making their appearance, and by this time are the predominant type, are not craft unions in the strict sense, they do closely resemble craft unions in many ways. The figures of unions for the whole country, and especially for the Bombay Presidency, show a large increase recently in the number of unions, but a fall in the average membership, and this is characteristic.

The union movement of 1919-22, and that of 1924-27, are really quite distinct in organisation, composition, and aims, as well as in magnitude and methods. The difference has been compared plausibly with that which came about in the British movement between the 'thirties and the 'sixties of last century. The former movement was the product of a period of universal instability and excitement, and was fundamentally a revolutionary response to a revolutionary situation. The economic circumstances were enough to bring about universal discontent and protest. But the workers were also undoubtedly affected by the political excitement of the time. Thus, during the famous pilgrimage in 1921 of the primitive and ignorant plantation "coolies" of Assam and Bengal, some hundreds of them were suddenly and brutally cleared out of the Chandpur station yard at midnight by armed soldiers. They made no resistance, but shouted "*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai.*" The revolutionary consciousness was of course generally extremely dim, but there can be no doubt that it was present. Strikes took place in every part of the country in all kinds of occupations. There was in most cases no organisation before the strike, but some kind of union was often established afterwards. All grades of workers took part. Frequently the demands of the strikers were not formulated until they had been out for some days, and they were then of

an "extravagant" nature. The chief concrete demand was nearly always for wage increases, with reduction of hours a close second, but there were others often not of an economic character. The unions then formed were what would be expected from the circumstances of their origin. They were industrial in type, but usually covered only a restricted area. They often had no regular membership, payments, &c., and have been, in fact, accurately described as "little more than strike committees."

There are now few remnants of those days. The present movement operates in conditions of economic stability and political quiescence. Only in Bombay in the last two or three years has the depression in the cotton industry brought about a general tendency towards worsening of conditions. But the pressure has only sufficed to give a spurt to organisations of the present type.

The present movement, as has been remarked, while not strictly a craft unionism,¹ is similar in several respects to a typical craft movement, such as that in Britain in the middle of the last century. It is mainly a movement of the upper grades of workers for extremely limited aims. The organisation is fairly thorough, but narrow as regards activities, the classes of workers involved, and the areas from which they are drawn. There is little inter-union organisation or solidarity, little class-consciousness, and a general avoidance of political activity.

It is proposed here to describe the trade union movement as the writer has hitherto seen it, in a little greater detail, in the hope that it will be of interest to Western readers, and will give some idea of present conditions and possibilities of development. The writer's observations are limited to the Bombay Presidency and the Punjab, but conversations and published reports enable it to be said that statements applicable to those Provinces are fairly sound in regard to the rest of India, apart, perhaps, from Madras.

There are several unions which aim at covering the whole of India. They are mainly of long standing, contain only upper-

¹ Practically the only pure craft unions, apart from the Mechanical Engineers' Association of Akola, which could almost be called a professional association, are those constituting the Ahmedabad Textile Workers' Union. It is significant of the atmosphere in which this union, and indeed the movement generally, works, that craft unionism having been introduced, some workers demand more of it than their officials are willing to give them.

grade workers, and remain practically aloof from the general movement.² The All-India Postal and R.M.S. Association and the All-India Postal and Lower Grade Staff Union are loose federations of provincial and local unions. In some places one or other is split, so that in these towns there are three Postal unions with perhaps not more than one or two hundred members each. Poona and Baroda are examples. The Association was founded in 1906, and is well established, with nearly 40,000 members and a fund of perhaps a lakh of rupees. The Union arose from local unions founded in 1918 and later. Both are recognised by the Government.

The All-India Telegraph Association was founded in 1908, and has about 3,000 members and substantial funds. A split occurred in 1923, when the All-India Telegraph Union was formed. The Association contains all the Anglo-Indian and European members, while the Union has only Indians. The lower grade employees have several separate local unions.

There are other All-India federations such as that of the Currency Office Associations.

The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India and Burma has 2,250 members, almost all Anglo-Indians and Europeans (drivers, guards, &c.). It was founded in 1898, and is thus the oldest union in India. It is strictly non-political and tends to separate its members from other railway employees. It tried, successfully, to keep its members at work during the N.W. Railway strike of 1925. There should also be mentioned the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, founded in 1925, after similar attempts had been made in 1921. It includes most of the railway unions, but its existence is only nominal. During the N.W.R. strike of 1925 it sent its secretary to the scene of action, but, according to Mr. Miller's report, he confined himself to mediation, and when that failed, to delivering defeatist speeches. During the B.N.R. strike of this year the federation was entirely inactive.

The G.I.P. railway has at present four separate unions, all

² Only the Bombay section of the Postmen's Union has been affiliated to the T.U.C., and has recently withdrawn because of the protest made by the Delhi T.U.C. against the dispatch of Indian troops to China. About the same time the Department of Posts and Telegraphs announced that unions of its employees must not affiliate to the T.U.C., as the latter is a political body.

situated at Bombay. One is for the Bombay shops, two for the headquarters clerical staff, and one for the suburban station-masters, clerks, &c. The total membership is 5,000 to 6,000. The railway employs in all over 100,000 men. It is perhaps not an accident that the shop union, while perhaps less successful than the others in remedying grievances, &c., is the only one affiliated to the T.U.C. or the Central Labour Board, and has recently established a branch at Kalyan. The B.B.C.I. Railway has three separate unions, one with about 2,000 shopmen at Bombay, one with 6,000 members of all grades at Ahmedabad, and one at Ajmer. Even the N.W.R. has had separate unions at Karachi and Sukkur, but these are dying out. A separate union of railway clerks has recently been formed at Lahore, but it adopted Mr. Miller as its president, and is the result rather of discontent with the old union than of sectarian aims. Other militants, headed by Miller, have also recently broken away from this union and begun to organise a new one.

The N.W.R. union, at one time probably the most powerful union in Asia, really requires separate treatment. It began to organise in 1920, and in the same year fought a long and successful strike. The membership soon afterwards reached 85,000, out of about 125,000 then employed, and included all grades, among them a substantial proportion of the Europeans. It has fallen since then, with a temporary revival in 1925, owing partly to the general stabilisation of conditions, but also because of the special measures taken against it on account of the strategic importance of the line. Mr. Miller was imprisoned, other leading members were suborned, "tame" rival unions started, and so on. The paying membership of the existing recognised union is about 2,000.

Unions are now in most cases confined practically if not formally to upper or skilled grades of workers. Thus, the Bombay Port Trust has three unions (with a purely theoretical joint committee), one for the 600 men on the Port Trust Railway, one for the 1,000 workshopmen, &c., and one for the 1,600 tally clerks, shed superintendents, &c. And this last is the most successful and is the only one "recognised." But the 2,000 or more dock labourers are entirely unorganised. Even in these unions the upper grades are more strongly represented than the lower. The same

thing applies in a less degree to the railway shop unions, and to others.

Thus, the Bombay Port Trust Docks Staff Union shows the following composition (May, 1927) :—

Grade	No. Employed	No. in Union	Wage rates (Rs. per mth.)
Minor officials ..	120	105	125, 175, 225 (3 grades)
Senior clerks ..	200	175	85-110
Junior clerks ..	350	300	50-85
Menial staff ..	900	550-600	18-30

Similarly with the G.I.P. Railway Workmen's Union, which has the following membership (roughly) in the Matunga shops :—

Grade	No. employed	No. in Union	Wage rates (Rs. per mth.)
Foremen ..	25	—	260—
Chargemen ..	250	10	140-190, 200-260
Mistries ..	100	25	86-140
Workmen ..	4,000	1,500	50-86
Smiths ..	700	500	50-86
Assistants ..	2,000	500	30-40
Apprentices ..	100	50	16-32
Coolies ..	1,000	100	23-29

This is partly the result of the natural tendency of the unions to fall into the hands of the more literate members, who in present circumstances do not urgently require the strength to be derived from the solidarity of the lower grades. It is one aspect also of the general difficulty of organising the more illiterate workers, which is exemplified by the failure yet to establish a really successful union in the Bombay textile industry. There are here two unions, the Bombay Textile Labour Union, founded January 1, 1926, which has about 7,500 members, and the Girni Kamgar Mahamandal (Mill Workers' Association), founded 1923, with about 3,000. The total number employed is about 150,000. Even the Ahmedabad Textile Workers' Union, with all its resources and traditions, is finding it difficult to keep its members. Though 20,000 strong in 1922, and successful in regaining nearly 15,000 members in two years after the strike of 1923, it is now losing members, and has about 11,000 (out of over 50,000). Similarly the textile unions at Broach and Sholapur have disappeared, though on the other hand one has been recently established at Indore. The migratory character of mill labour, of which much has been said, is decreasing, and is no longer of much importance, at any rate at Bombay.

Many other classes of workers of similar skill and education remain practically or wholly unorganised—in Bombay, building, oil, gas, tramway, and other workers, and generally miners, jute workers, &c. Even when organised, either in their own or in predominantly upper grade unions, workers of this kind tend to form a "floating population" in the union. All textile unions say the same thing. The Bombay Textile Labour Union had in January, 1926, 6,000 members. It increased to over 9,000 by the end of the year, but again fell to just under 7,500 in June, 1927. The Girni Kamgar Mahamandal speaks of a "steady stream of members through the union."

The aims of the present movement are very limited. Though petitions and memoranda are continually being presented on general grievances, such as wages and hours, they are almost always unsuccessful, and there are not the spirit or material resources necessary to conduct a struggle for improvements. Strikes occur fairly frequently, mainly on account of attempts to worsen conditions, or victimisation, which is very common. Employers and managers are almost always arbitrary and provocative in their attitude, except when dealing with superior grades.

The efforts of unions are, therefore, directed mainly towards the remedying of individual complaints, and in this the upper grades are markedly more successful than the lower. The usual complaints are excessive fines, arbitrary dismissals, irregularities in promotions due to bribery and favouritism, &c.

There is a general sentiment in favour of benefit funds. The older unions, especially the A.S.R.S., have them in plenty, but the new unions and the customary contributions (1 to 8 annas per month) are too small to make them generally successful. Many unions already have Death Benefit schemes, and voluntary benefits with special subscriptions are becoming more common.

A few unions conduct educational classes for their members, the Girni Kamgar Mahamandal, the Bombay Postal and Lower Grade Staff Union, and the Ahmedabad Union in particular. (The last-named runs also temperance work, a research department, a hospital, &c.). But the education provided is in all cases the "three R's" (*plus* religious instruction at Ahmedabad). Mr. Joshi has attempted

an inter-union class in the history and principles of Trade Unionism, but without great success.

The organisation of unions is commonly good for the very limited purposes. The proportion of actual to possible members is often high, at any rate for upper grade workers. A committee is appointed in the early stages, usually representative of all grades, and is re-elected at annual meetings. (It is not unusual, after the first month or two, for the annual meetings to be the only occasions on which the mass of members meet or take any part, save payment.) The active officers, owing to the danger of victimisation, are often "outsiders." The union has an office, usually a small room with a typewriter. These are sometimes shared with another union, especially in Bombay, where unions are numerous and rooms expensive. The older and bigger unions have permanent officials, and many of the newer unions in Bombay employ for part of their time the paid servants of the Social Service League or the Central Labour Board. The committees in most cases meet regularly and conduct the small amount of routine business. Rules and reports are published, in many cases in vernacular and English editions. The older unions publish journals, which rival their European counterparts in dullness, and some of the newer ones publish occasional bulletins. Contributions are usually collected at the place of work by committee members, and receipts are passed. A few unions adopt the system of membership cards. The books are in most cases well kept. In short, "Strict Business" might be the motto of Indian Trade Unionism.

A warning should at once be uttered against accepting this as a picture of the movement as a whole. It is correct of those unions of the upper grade type, which are active, as nearly all the Bombay unions are at the moment. But in a few cases there, and in many elsewhere, when demands are temporarily satisfied, or further advance is found to be impossible, or a severe defeat has been suffered, stagnation sets in. The union may simply cease to work, or if individuals try to keep it going, members drop away. There is little or nothing, material or moral, to keep them together.

It is typical of social conditions generally that women's organisation hardly exists. Women are employed in large numbers, but as lower grade workers. The Girni Kamgar Mahamandal has abut

twenty women members, and there are a few organised in Ahmedabad and Bengal (jute workers).

Inter-union organisation is not of importance. The All-India T.U.C. contains a majority of the organised workers, though not of the unions. It and its subsidiary bodies, the Provincial Federations (in Bengal, Bombay and Madras, and in a nebulous form in the Central Provinces and the Punjab) exist mainly because they are the representatives of the labour movement officially recognised by the Central and (sometimes) by the Provincial Governments. Owing to the great distances and the general poverty of the movement, meetings can seldom be held between Congresses, and the work done is mainly of a routine character. The members of the unions take little interest in its doings, and if they send delegates they do not usually receive reports.

There is only one body in the country which can in any way be compared to a Trades Council, the Central Labour Board of Bombay.³ And that is solely because of its constitution. It does not work as a Trades Council. It, or rather Mr. Jhabvala, organises separate unions, and sometimes conducts temperance propaganda. The former he does as provincial organiser for the T.U.C., the latter as secretary of the Central Labour Board.

There is commonly great solidarity among members of the same union, especially of the same grade, and strikes often result from this. But general class-consciousness is seldom to be noticed, except among lower grade workers. It may be mentioned that the writer was present at a meeting of railway workers at the time of the agitation against the dispatch of Indian troops to China, and although the men in question have grounds for grievance against the Chinese, who are employed in the railway on the same work for higher pay, they brought forward a young Chinese worker and cheered him loudly as a demonstration of class solidarity.

The first May-day demonstration was held in Bombay this year, and was attended mainly by municipal-, mill-, and railway-men, *i.e.*, by lower and middle grade workers. (It is possible that the

³ The Provincial Federations of course tend to become in practice confined to Madras City, Calcutta, &c. And there is in Rangoon a general labour union with 10,000 members from different industries. It appears to be an unusually successful lower grade organisation, and is probably in practice nearer to a genuine Trades Council than any other.

upper grade men were kept away by their characteristic petit-bourgeois "respectability complexes.") It should be said that men of the lower grades, though generally unorganised, have some knowledge of what the Labour Movement means. Every worker in Bombay appears to know and respect Jhabvala, just as all Punjab workers know Miller.

A word should be said on the difficulties in labour organisation arising from differences of language, religion, &c. They are no doubt obstructions, but are not as important as is commonly thought in Europe, even in the Punjab, where communal feeling is at its worst.⁴ The chief difficulty of this nature is due to the relatively large differences in the wage rates of various grades (see tables on page 613). It comes about through the greater effectiveness of upper grade workers in pressing their claims, through the scarcity of persons with elementary or technical education, and partly, no doubt, through a deliberate dividing policy.

The influence of "outsiders" as officials and leaders is a delicate question, and one of great importance. They are certainly necessary, especially for lower grade unions, because of general illiteracy and the risk of victimisation. Only one such union, the Girni Kamgar Mahamandal, is carried on nominally without outside helpers. They tend to be eliminated for practical purposes by upper grade unions, when the need for them disappears. But it is the writer's impression that the present "outsiders" as a whole

⁴ Efforts are occasionally made by employers to arouse communal passions, e.g., recently in the Bombay Port Trust Docks Staff Union, and previously in the N.W.R. union. Neither had any success. In fact only three cases have come to the writer's notice. The Moslems have recently withdrawn almost *en bloc* from the Ahmedabad Weavers' Union. The Punjab Press Workers' Union is said to have collapsed last year from this cause, but it was in any case a feeble body. The Indian Seamen's Union, Bombay, has split nominally on this ground. Many of the saloon crews (Indian Christians, mainly Goanese) have withdrawn to form a new union, as the old one also contains engine and deck hands (non-Christians, mainly Mohammedans). Communal feeling is present, but the split was promoted by the shipowners and brokers, because the old union was opening its doors to the other crews, and was trying to extend its activities beyond the traditional limits of a mere employment bureau. The differences which often separate Indians from Anglo-Indians and Europeans are economic. The latter are invariably privileged, and often paid much higher rates.

deserve their bad name. Many enter the movement with interested motives, and though they may promote efficiency they are not to be relied upon. A notorious case is that of the B.N. Railway strike of this year. Even if, as is often the case, their motives are purely unselfish, they generally strengthen the sectarian and otherwise reactionary tendencies to which the movement is so prone. The Ahmedabad Union is perhaps the worst case. Here the President is an ordinary humanitarian, a member of a mill-owning family, and a conscious advocate of class-collaboration. Other officials, though they see something of its dangers, allow themselves to be completely led by Gandhi, whose policy is (in most respects, but not all) the same.

Bombay is blessed with disinterested and not unprogressive leaders. The Punjab is not so fortunate. The policy of the officially recognised body is one of sheer servility. Bengal has officials of both kinds, and has for years been divided by quarrels, which have more than once split unions, probably of purely personal origin. Many of the unions seem to be of the type described by Mr. Tom Johnston in his report on the jute industry. Three out of the four unions in that industry were bogus, and served merely to advertise their presidents. Madras has leaders who do not commit the usual error of abstaining from political activity, but their politics is not that of the working class. A Labour Party has been established which runs candidates in local elections. These make the grave mistake (in present circumstances) of opposing Congress candidates. The Party in fact seems to be entirely for electoral purposes, which are of very minor importance for labour at the present stage, and to have been organised in support of the reactionary remnants of the Home Rule League.

The acknowledged national leader of the trade union movement is Mr. N. M. Joshi, the General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress. With all respect it must be said that he is as much out of place in his position as, let us say, Mr. Sidney Webb would be as Secretary of the Miners' Federation. He carries on his work with the same disinterested care that Mr. Webb would no doubt devote to the position suggested, and undoubtedly does the best that is possible along his lines. But his function is observation, research and the drafting of Bills, not leadership.

Enough has now been said to give some idea of the movement as it stands. It is clear that the most important circumstances determining the present phase are the economic stability and the political deadness—the slow collapse of bourgeois nationalism, and the continued paralysis of the *petit-bourgeoisie*.

India can expect on general grounds a prosperous industrial future. But Indian industry and economics generally are still very closely dependent upon Britain, which is becoming more and more a broken reed in these matters. And it is almost certain that the immediate political future of the British Empire, and Asia generally, is a stormy one. It seems in any case safe to prophesy that the decades of peaceful progress, which many Indian leaders, apparently on the example of Britain, appear to expect, will not materialise. But it is even safer to predict that the present political quiescence in the country will not last for more than a year or two. The *petit-bourgeoisie* in the national movement are beginning to revolt against the bourgeois leadership, the last remnants of which are fast going over to the Imperialist camp, in preparation for the Statutory Commission. It is to be expected, in view of the generally difficult position of British capitalism, that they will not be disappointed. Substantial concessions, probably "Dominion Status," &c., will be offered, and obviously the whole of the bourgeois political school will accept them thankfully. All pretence of Swarajist opposition will probably disappear fairly quickly. The mantle of nationalism will fall upon the shoulders of the *petit-bourgeoisie*, who will be forced to seek the assistance of the Labour Movement. (The example of Ireland must not be taken too seriously, as there the civil war upset the "normal" course of events.) The emergence of the Workers' and Peasants' Parties, of which four,⁵ counting the Young India Society of the Punjab, now in existence, shows this tendency. They have already made some impression upon the Labour Movement. Owing partly to their

⁵ In Bengal, Bombay, Rajputana (Ajmer) and the Punjab. The Punjab Society was the first to organise a May-day demonstration in India, in Lahore in 1926. The Bombay Party has established itself as leader of the opposition in the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee. It organised the May-day demonstration this year, and is leading the present (end of August) strike of protest against the attempt to make the weavers in some mills work three looms instead of two.

influence the T.U.C. at its last session carried a resolution in favour of industrial unionism. Unfortunately, a last-minute amendment by a railway representative was accepted, substituting "federations of unions" for "unions." Thus the resolution, which might have had some little effect, was rendered absolutely useless, by the action of the industry which stood most to gain, at the moment, from its application.

In Bombay in particular, the Workers' and Peasants' Party is carrying on propaganda for greater activity in the unions (some unions have now commenced monthly general meetings) and for the transformation of the Central Labour Board into a genuine Trades Council, &c. It is clear from what has been said above that they will have largely to depend upon what has here been called "lower grade" labour, and the solution of the still unsolved problem of the organisation of the great mass of Indian Labour probably lies with them.

There is a general realisation in political circles of the future importance of the Labour Movement, and though nothing is done, Congress leaders speak more frequently than ever of Labour work. At the Delhi Congress, two leaders, Mr. Chaman Lal and Lala Lajpat Rai, who had been out of touch with labour for some years, reappeared. The former rejoined the movement because, after three years of Swarajist politics, he realises that bourgeois nationalism is dead, and that the future conduct of the struggle will depend upon Labour. The latter came for exactly the contrary reason, that he saw the future danger, for the bourgeoisie, and wished to check it in time.⁶ The struggle between Nationalism and Imperialism for the possession of the Labour Movement has begun. When it has fully opened out, the next great stage in the history of Indian Labour will have commenced.

⁶ Cf. his remarks in the *People* (Lahore, March 20, 1927) on the Delhi session of the Trades Union Congress: "It (the Labour Movement) is a tender plant which requires careful nursing—careful watering and protection from the rigours of the climate. . . . What the Indian worker wants is not dogma, but help in organising, and in the redress of his grievances against the Government and the employers. To feed him on doctrines . . . is to lead him astray."

THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION in CHINA

By KARL A. WITTFOGEL

THE Kuomintang promised land to the peasants. The rural masses held on to this promise. It is true that in the proclamations of the Kuomintang mention was made that the new regulation of peasant property should be carried through by *legal* means, by cautious *reforms*. This restriction alone (which in actual practice amounted to a betrayal of the promise) troubled the peasants little. The Kuomintang has said that it desires the welfare of the working masses? Well, then, they can have nothing to object to if the solution of the agrarian question proceeds somewhat rapidly.

So the agrarian revolution in Hunan, early in 1927, began under the illusion that the leadership of the Kuomintang in Wuhan would approve of the revolutionary actions of the peasants. This appeared so probable that the *local* Kuomintang organisations and even the *provincial leaders* of the Kuomintang in Changsha were throughout friendly disposed towards the advance of the peasants. The landless peasants led the movement. The small landowning peasants similarly showed themselves extremely active. The first object of both groups (which were, moreover, energetically supported by the workers' organisations) was to break down the political-military bulwarks of the old power. The Min Tuan, a tool of the rich peasants, was disarmed. Obedience was refused to the "gentry" of the villages. The armed self-defence corps of the peasant organisations turned openly against the exploiters and the gentry, the plague of the Chinese village.

The principal object of their attacks is the gentry, the large landowners, the religious way of life of the village, the old officials, the bureaucrats in the towns and the wealthy usurers in the villages. . . . In consequence of these attacks the thousand-year-old rights of the feudal landowners were swept away and thrown on to the dust heap.¹

¹ Quoted from the *Communist International*.

The thousand-year-old rights of the feudal landowners, however, are, before all, their *property rights*. Every report which has come to hand from Wuhan since the spring tells of *land confiscation*, which the peasants—without having consulted the officials—are undertaking. The reports from China leave us in doubt as to how far the redivision of the land in Hunan had already advanced in May, 1927.

It is certain, however, that the idea was everywhere in the air (the group around Wang Ching Wei and Sun Fo directed their theoretical arguments against such ideas), and that the peasants of Hunan had in a number of cases proceeded to expropriate their landlords. That was the signal for the outbreak of the reaction. May 21 saw the end of the first important advance in the agrarian revolution in Hunan.

The Wuhan Government Sanctions the White Terror.

The Wuhan Government had formerly always declared that it was the unselfish friend of the Chinese masses. But it was the troops of this same Government which, on May 21, marched to attack the workers' and peasants' organisations of Wuhan.* The first authentic account which reached Hankow states that:—

The 23rd Regiment of the 36 "Army," inflamed by reactionary reports, and together with other military units of Changsha, turned, during the night of May 21, against the workers' and peasants' organisations and disarmed their members. At the same time the offices of the provincial and town Kuomintang as well as numerous schools were searched, during which about twenty persons were killed and a considerable number of others wounded.¹

The violent acts of the military were naturally not limited to the provincial capital. For weeks longer the White Terror raged in the various parts of the Province.

It is very instructive to study the effect of the events of May 21 in the area of the Wuhan Government. The town of Wuhan shook before the rebellious cries of the masses. The reports of the revolutionaries who had fled from Changsha excited the working-class masses to such a degree that under their pressure the Government itself pretended to consider seriously the sending off of a punitive expedition against Changsha (this was the demand

¹ *The People's Tribune*, June 4, 1927.

* Wuhan (Wuhan) is the capital of this province.

which the representatives of the workers and peasants in Wuhan had immediately made). The gestures of the Government were not seriously intended. Confronted by the actuality of the incipient agrarian revolution, the majority of the leaders in Wuhan hastily shrank back. The bourgeois elements, who were materially and mentally interested in the maintenance of the conditions of ownership, won the upper hand. At the end of June the newspapers of Wuhan reported that the Government *expressed its agreement* with General Tang Cheng Shi, who approved in principle of the events of May 21. Tang declared :—

Since the local Kuomintang and the other people's organisations, misled by their leaders, have not kept themselves within the limits of law and order they should, according to the resolutions passed by the Central Government, be prohibited until they are reorganised.³

That gave the catchword to the counter-revolution. Fight against the agrarian revolution! Put an end to the irregular mass associations! Break with the Communists, the leaders of all revolutionary mass actions. The cue came from Changsha. Soon all the other provinces of the Wuhan area followed.

The Wuhan Government which went over to the counter-revolution "triumphed" over the mass movement in the summer of 1927. But it was a Pyrrhic victory. It is a victory which has torn the ground under their feet away from them. The *masses*, to whom they could once look for support, are now their *deadly enemy*. But the revolution has certainly suffered a serious setback, although it is by no means defeated. The revolutionary actions in the first month of 1927 have shown the most narrow-minded peasant of Hunan—and not only of Hunan : what happened in Hunan was repeated with modifications in the whole of Central and South China—that a radical solution of the agrarian question is possible, and *by what means* it is possible. The Communist Party of China is already preparing to lead the masses in an open military struggle against the enemies of the Chinese agrarian revolution. The practical conduct of the Chinese peasants proves that they know how to interpret the meaning of the present struggle.

THE OLD AND THE NEW AFRICA

By CLEMENTS KADALIE

(National Secretary, Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of South Africa.)

[We are very glad to print the following article from Mr. Kadalie as a representative of the African Workers' trade union. At the same time we must frankly state that British Workers have been unfavourably impressed by some of the actions taken by this trade union. One point in this connection is taken up by Mr. Roux in this number. A further article on South Africa will appear in a forthcoming issue.—ED., LABOUR MONTHLY.]

FIVE months ago I was commissioned by the Annual Congress of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa, an organisation with a membership now of close on 100,000, of which I have been National Secretary since its formation nine years ago, to bring to the knowledge of the Labour Movement in Europe and of all believers in democracy the story of the struggles of the African workers for economic salvation and a decent standard of life. Although we live thousands of miles away, we have watched the development of the trade union movement here, and our infant movement in South Africa is being built closely upon the model of the British trade union movement.

We quite realise that a large proportion of the British working class have but little knowledge of the existence of any trade union movement amongst the African workers, and the reason is not very far to seek. Until quite recently there has been practically no communication between the British trade union movement and ourselves, and the fact that our organisation has not been allowed to affiliate to the South African Trades Union Congress has prevented news of our development reaching the Labour Movement here through the ordinary international channels. Most of the information that has reached this country in the past will have come through the capitalist Press, in whose interest it has obviously been to assume the black workers to be members of an inferior race, who have to be treated as children, unfit for responsibility or the ordinary rights of civilised human beings.

Some very short summary of the history of the opening up

of Africa by the white races is essential for an understanding of the present position in Africa.

Old Africa

About four hundred years ago, a pastoral people lived in the so-called Dark Continent. They had their own primitive forms of government ; and, primitive though they were, in comparison with European civilisation to-day, they did at least ensure that every man, woman, and child had enough to eat. There were no class distinctions. Our kings helped build huts, and our queens could be found among our women folk, working as they worked. It is true that in some parts of the continent we had our tribal wars, but they were not one millionth part so destructive as your gigantic wars of modern western civilisation.

I was born an African. I have lived in Africa all my life, and I have studied my history well. The most certain thing in the history I have learned is that my forefathers had of themselves no desire for white civilisation. The white men came to Africa of their own free will, and told my forefathers that they had brought with them civilisation and Christianity. They heralded good news for Africa. Africa must be born again, and her people must discard their savagery and become civilised people and Christians. Cities were to be built in which white and black men might live together as brothers. An earthly paradise awaited creation. And after death there was a heaven for all well-doers in which there was no colour bar !

The strangers were allowed to settle on African soil. Our chiefs were powerful, and very easily those first white people could have been exterminated. But they were made welcome, and our people laboured mightily to help in the creation of the new world. They cut down great forests ; cities were built, and while the Christian churches were spreading the gospel of universal brotherhood, the industrialisation of Africa began. Gold mining was started, and by the close of the nineteenth century European capitalism had made its footing firm in Africa.

Law and Order

The churches still preached universal brotherhood, but capitalism has very little to do with the ethics of the Nazarene,

and very soon came a new system of government for Africa, with "Law and Order" as its slogan. Police and prison systems were introduced. In old Africa there had been no necessity for police. Tribal law had been obeyed unquestioningly, and our chiefs had not needed to be guarded when they appeared in the streets. They neither oppressed nor starved their subjects, nor did they rob them of their land, and therefore they had no fear for their safety. Our chiefs, although they had not read the Old Testament, believed that the land belonged to a Supreme Power. Private ownership was outside their philosophy, and they held all land in trust for the tribe.

The new civilisation, however, was founded on no conviction of inherent safety, which can be secured only by justice and brotherhood. To maintain itself it knew that it had to employ force.

In 1909 Great Britain granted self-government to South Africa—a Government of white men, who refused to allow the natives of the land to take part in their political councils.

The Empire

We had now become members of a great Empire, but, as Keir Hardie prophesied in the House of Commons, in the debate on the South African Act of 1909, we soon had to abandon all hope of sharing in the privileges and fruits of that Empire, and of the new civilisation in Africa which we had helped to build. The way to political freedom was barred against us, and industrially we were oppressed and exploited. Nowhere were we paid wages that touched subsistence level, but indirectly capitalism, in allowing us to be employed in the various industries, was itself showing us a new road to freedom. With the white workers we toiled in the bowels of the earth, and with them we worked on the farms and in the various other industries of the country. We found that we were fully as capable as the white men of carrying out most of the processes of this new civilisation. We watched the machine at work, and learned how it was made.

Then came the Great War, and we were called upon to fight to make the world safe for democracy and to defend the rights of small nations. And from the Great War we emerged, dis-

illusioned as to the fulfilment of the things it had promised, but fully conscious of our rights, and trained to fight for our humanity.

The Formation of the First Native Trade Union

The beginning of 1919 witnessed the formation of the first Trade Union for African workers. It was formed at Cape Town with a membership of twenty-four, and was called the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa. I do not propose here to give its history in detail, but you must know that just as the pioneers of English Trade Unionism have gone through fearful things to make possible the strong and powerful movement that is in existence to-day, so our officials have been gaoled, our members have been shot and victimised, and every possible obstacle has been put in our way. But we have not been discouraged, and from the struggles and victories which have been passed through and won by the Trade Union Movement in Europe, we have found our inspiration.

It is of paramount importance that the Trade Union and Labour Movement here should know what this new trade unionism in Africa stands for. It has been alleged in South Africa that we are advocating other things than trade unionism—that we are promoting racial hatred and want to turn the white man out of Africa. A Bill known as the Native Administration Act has recently been passed by the Union Government, with the implication understood, though not explicitly stated, object of suppressing our organisation altogether. But I want here to state quite definitely that we feel no racial hostility. We are not so stupid as our rulers, who have not only advocated, but are actively carrying on, both class and racial war. (This latter is a grave charge, but can be substantiated by a study of the Statute Books of South Africa. The Colour Bar Act, which prevents Africans from using any type of machinery, is one of the many obvious examples of racial tyranny and oppression.)

We are not fighting the white man as a white man ; we are fighting for elementary political and human rights for ourselves and our children. We want adequate wages for the work we do, social status, opportunities of education, and the ordinary privileges of humanity, which the white man takes as a matter of course.

At the moment our activities are confined to the industrial side of things, but it is certain that in these days of world-wide democracy, we cannot confine our movement very long merely to industrial issues. But when the time comes for us to agitate for our political rights, we are not going to follow the narrow path of nationalism. We shall be guided by the spirit that permeated old Africa, of accepting every man as our brother. We are utterly opposed to nationalism. Our goal is international Socialism.

Attempts to Co-operate with White Labour in South Africa

During the nine years of our existence, we have endeavoured to influence the growth of our movement in this direction. We have sought the co-operation of the white workers, but in the past they have not responded to our appeal for solidarity. Our 1926 Congress approached the South African Trades Union Congress to receive a fraternal delegate from our organisation, or to authorise one of its officials to open our Congress ; but we met with emphatic refusal. The repeated rebuffs we have received from the white workers, however, have not discouraged our belief in co-operation. Again this year our Congress, which met at Durban in April, demonstrated its belief in co-operation between the white and black workers by passing the following resolution :—

That in the opinion of this Congress we consider the time has arrived when both white and black workers of South Africa join in one national Trade Union Movement, with a view to presenting one united front against a common enemy—namely, the arbitrary and unlimited power of capitalism—and that this resolution be telegraphed to the South African Trades Union Congress, now in session at Cape Town.

I am glad to report that the white workers responded to this gesture of our desire for solidarity, and passed the following resolution in response to ours :—

That this Congress instructs the incoming National Executive Council to invite all workers' organisations, irrespective of colour, to affiliate to the South African Trades Union Congress ; and

That Congress instructs the National Executive Council to arrange a meeting with the Executive of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa for the purpose of discussing matters of mutual interest.

Affiliation with the I.F.T.U.

Not being fully versed in the international Trade Union Movement, our 1926 Congress passed a resolution seeking

affiliation with the British Trades Union Congress. The Congress advised us instead to apply for affiliation with the International Federation of Trade Unions, which body has now accepted our affiliation.

Already we have done practical work, which will demonstrate that we are inspired by a genuine conviction of international solidarity. During the British Seamen's Strike of 1925 many of our branches opened funds to assist the strikers ; during the General Strike last year special efforts were made to raise funds for the miners, and we were willing to instruct our members to handle no coal which was to be shipped to England. When we approached the South African Trades Union Congress with a request to co-operate with us in this latter direction, however, our request was turned down, and we were advised that the only possible way the South African Movement could help the miners was by raising funds.

The Native Administration Act

Notwithstanding our record, we have been maliciously misrepresented in South Africa. During our nine years' existence we have suffered every form of persecution, but we have won through triumphantly so far. Last year the Government planned a big attack on the organisation, choosing me as the scapegoat. My free movements were restricted, and I was forbidden to move about the country. We fought the ban. I disregarded it, and was convicted in a magistrate's court. But I appealed to a higher court and won my case, and my victory dealt the Government a heavy blow.

The Government was determined to avenge its humiliation and to make another and more successful attack on our organisation, and to this end it has recently passed the Native Administration Act (with the support of the Labour Party, who form part of the Coalition Cabinet) empowering the Governor-General to deport any Native from one town to another, and to define Pass areas, outside which no Native is allowed to go without a special permit (which permits can be refused on purely arbitrary grounds, or on no grounds at all, and will obviously not be issued to I.C.U. officials). The Act is aimed directly at Native Trade Unionism,

and under it a new era of Native slavery will commence in the British Empire.

A Two-fold Battle

We have, as Africans, a two-fold battle to fight in South Africa. We are not only struggling against British Imperialism, but we have also a tremendous uphill fight against the prejudice of the South African Labour Party. I am reluctant to say anything against the South African Labour Party at this juncture, for immediately before I left South Africa, it seemed, from the fight they put up on the Native Administration Bill on our behalf, in Parliament, that a change had taken place in their attitude. I cannot claim a full knowledge of the development of events since I have left, but it is absolutely certain that, in spite of their original attitude, all but three members of the Labour Party finally voted for the Bill in a form differing very little from the original, and the following resolution, passed by the Executive of the Party, has just reached me :—

That the British Labour and Independent Labour Parties be advised not to interfere with or express uninformed opinions upon the burning question of colour in South Africa. After years of struggle, the South African Labour Party has succeeded in establishing the principle of acceptance of the Coloured Man on terms of equality with whites (that is, equal work, equal pay). The Native, however, who is still in a state of semi-savagery, has not yet been so accepted, and any outside interference will be, we are sure, a great hindrance to any forward march, and no help to the Native or Coloured man, but will tend to excite feelings that are undesirable.

The resolution undoubtedly refers to my presence in this country. I came here to arouse the International Trade Union and Labour Movements to a sense of their responsibility towards the Native races in the various colonies in Africa. While Britain has two-thirds of the African Continent under its dominion, I consider that it is the British Labour Movement, political and industrial, that must take the initiative in demanding the liberation of the Native workers from political and industrial slavery. The British Labour Movement has a great responsibility to the people of the British Islands, and also to the millions of people of subject race under British rule.

International Trade Union Unity

I am still a student in the Trade Union Movement, but notwithstanding this fact, I cannot help but emphasise again and

again the factor in modern civilisation which is exerting the most radical influence in world politics to-day, and which the International Trade Union Movement seems to me to ignore a great deal more than it can afford to do—the fact that capitalism recognises no frontiers, no nationality, and no race. I have attended two Trade Union Congresses in Europe—one national and one international—and I could not help but feel profoundly disappointed at the spirit and prevailing tone of these assemblies. The workers' leaders are attacking one another; they are pinning their faith to such impossible doctrines as that of "co-operation in industry"; and they have not the international mind. They are still thinking in terms of outworn nationalism. And, besides all this, there are two Internationals in Europe. How in the name of heaven can the workers of the world be effective in their struggle against world capitalism while they are under dual leadership? The Red International, though we may not care to think about the fact, has done a great deal to encourage the organisation of coloured workers in Asia and America, and has given them financial and moral assistance, while the I.F.T.U., to which my organisation has recently become affiliated, has made in the past no concrete effort to assist the coloured workers of the world. Let me make the position of my organisation clear. We joined the I.F.T.U. with the specific object of advocating within it one Trade Union International.

Although the Edinburgh Congress has given no definite lead in this direction, it is hoped that the General Council will, nevertheless, lead the agitation for a World Workers' Trades Union Congress. Time is pressing. War mongers are at work in Europe, China, and Africa. During my travels in Europe and England, I have discovered everywhere among the rank and file the realisation of the urgent necessity for an all-inclusive International and a World Congress. The workers are ready for it; only leadership is wanted. Cannot the British Trade Union Movement—the oldest in the world—lead the way to a World Trade Union Congress? The new Africa is ready to follow courageous leadership, and to fall wholeheartedly with any movement that will mobilise the workers of the world to fight world capitalism.

WHITE AND COLOURED WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By E. R. ROUX

THE recent visit to this country of Kadalie, the South African native trade union leader, has prompted the Executive of the South African Labour Party to pass the following resolution :—

That the British Labour Party and I.L.P. be advised not to interfere with, or express uninformed opinions upon the burning question of colour in South Africa. After years of struggle the South African Labour Party has succeeded in establishing the principle of acceptance of the Coloured man [as distinct from the pure native] on terms of equality with whites (that is, equal work, equal pay). The Native, however, who is still in a state of semi-savagery, has not yet been so accepted, and any outside interference will be, we are sure, a great hindrance to any forward march, and no help to the Native or Coloured man, but will tend to excite feelings that are undesirable.

The S.A.L.P. may well try to discourage any "interference" in what it considers its own preserves ; for the more the British working class learns of conditions in the "dark continent" the more hideously reactionary will appear the policy of the S.A. "Labour" Party. Not only is the above resolution as evasive as could be, but the statement with regard to the status of the mulatto is a palpable untruth. The coloured man certainly has a little more freedom than the native, but this has been so for generations, and is in no way due to the S.A.L.P. Coloured men and natives in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal are excluded not only from the Labour Party, but also from the trade unions. The "Labour" members in the House of Assembly have recently supported "colour bar" legislation of the most oppressive kind. A little while back the Communist members on the Johannesburg May Day Committee aroused the most vehement opposition from the "Labourites" because they suggested the participation of native workers in the May Day demonstration !

In an endeavour to placate the South African Government and prepare the way for affiliation to the I.F.T.U., Kadalie, last

December, brought about the expulsion of the Communists from the native trade union. The C.P. remains the only organisation in the country which includes both black and white workers, and which strives consistently to secure a united working-class front. This is illustrated in a recent decision of the Executive of the South African Trades Union Congress. This body has submitted the following resolution to its constituent organisations :—

That the Executive invite all workers' organisations, irrespective of colour, to affiliate to the Trades Union Congress and that the Executive arrange a meeting with the Executive of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (the native organisation) for the purpose of discussing matters of mutual interest.

The chances of this resolution securing a majority in the S.A.T.U.C. (a purely white affair) may appear rather slender at present. Kadalie, however, claims that the very fact that the Executive could be induced to come forward with such a resolution constitutes a victory for native trade unionism. No doubt it does ; but Kadalie fails to mention that resolutions of this sort have resulted almost exclusively from the efforts of the Communists in the S.A.T.U.C. who are continually fighting for co-operation with native trade unionists in the face of opposition from the majority of orthodox race-prejudiced white workers. W. H. Andrews, who is Secretary of the T.U.C. and a member of the Communist Party, has gone as far as the rank-and-file of his organisation will let him in approaching the native union. The I.C.U. leaders take credit for this, but fail to mention that Andrews is a Communist.

Thus, while the native members of the Communist Party have been expelled from the I.C.U. and are compelled to work outside it, the white Communist trade unionists continue the struggle for inter-racial working-class unity inside their own organisations. This state of affairs cannot last : it is only a matter of time before the native masses in the I.C.U. replace Kadalie and other reactionary officials by fighting members of the Communist Party.

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INTERNATIONAL

The Paris Conference of the I.F.T.U.

THE characteristics of the International Federation of Trade Unions are that it is practically confined to European Workers (the membership, it may be added has continuously declined since 1920), and secondly, that the finances are practically all paid by the German and British Trade Unions—all the other countries together paying in affiliation fees in 1920 less than a third of the amount those two countries paid, although the English contribution sank from 52,000 florins in 1924 to 36,000 in 1926 and the German from 89,000 to 54,000 in the same period. The lowest contribution of all was paid by the French Confederation—about 2,000 florins. As a result the International is financially bankrupt.

The I.F.T.U. maintains intimate relations with the League of Nations Labour Office. It is also anxious to get the American Federation of Labour to affiliate. At the recent Conference at Paris, Grassmann, the German Trade Union leader, remarked that, important as it was to get the Colonial workers, it was still more important to get the American Federation.

Under these circumstances, naturally, any idea of rapprochement or co-operation with the Red Trade Unions was out of the question, and when the English leaders found it necessary to keep up the appearances of fighting capitalism, as was done by Purcell in his presidential speech, he roused the ire of the ex-Anarcho-syndicalist Jouhaux—who instead of confining himself to the usual formalities of an address of welcome went bald-headed for him. Incidentally the British delegation struck a truly British note in their defence of Purcell against "them foreigners," which called up reminiscences of the recruiting platform—and rather aptly illustrated the flimsiness of the international veneer.

The Mexican incident was another instance of the same kind. Having accepted an invitation to send delegates to Mexico, and refused to do so when it was discovered that the R.I.L.U. had also been invited, the Amsterdam leaders were furious when they found that Purcell, Brown and Fimmen were determined to go on their own. An attempt was made to make out that Brown, the British Secretary, had been guilty of a breach of discipline, and he was told he ought to resign his post as secretary. He then turned the tables by reading the following letter from the Dutch Secretary, Oudegeest, to the French leader, Jouhaux, in regard to the relations with Russia.

Confidential

November 6, 1924

L.J. 52

To M. L. JOUHAUX, Paris.

DEAR LEO,

Enclosed I am sending you a copy in French of the letter we received from Tomsy. It was written in a very bad English. It seems to me to prove that the Russians are making a genuine attempt to co-operate with us, and for that reason it seems to me that it is time for us to take the offensive. Still, it is possible that they will decline to hear of our relations to Geneva.

In our answer we might, e.g., ask what they think of our principle of the absolute independence of our affiliated organisations from every political and religious influence, of the autonomy of the national executives, which is guaranteed by us but which they infringe with their nuclei work, what they think of our relations to the International Labour Office (which they in distinction to us look on as co-operation with the bourgeoisie) or of our activity in the Disarmament Commission of the League of Nations.

Since the last meeting of the League of Nations, much interest has been aroused in various countries for their work which people are so keen to see carried on that, in my opinion it would be opportune to hear what the Russians have to say on this point. If we allow this occasion to go by of making the matter clear to the European workers, it will not be easy to find another.

When we meet on December 1, the Englishman Hicks will be there, as a substitute for Purcell, who has gone to Russia. Does it not seem to you that it would be well under the circumstances if we, in consultation with Mertens, were to agree among ourselves on the answer to be given before a discussion takes place on the subject in the Executive? I am well informed about this, namely, that the defeat of the English Ministry has called for a lively reaction against the Communists. Purcell lost his seat in Parliament in consequence of the Zinoviev letter, and I ask myself whether his Communist sympathies will be as strong as they were last year. In any case, it seems to me desirable that in our answer to the Russians we, as I have already said, should play as trump cards the points which I have already alluded to, English autonomy and the nuclei, by which I hope to strengthen our position.

OUDEGEEST.

Naturally enough, Oudegeest's letter had to be explained away—it finally had to be admitted as genuine, after stammering all sorts of excuses—it was deplorably in disorder—possibly errors in translation, &c.—and so the matter was allowed to drop.

The English section certainly left the Conference in a huff, but the dispute was more personal than political and the incident was passed over at Edinburgh.

An attempt is now to be made to disguise these awkward facts by changing the offices to some other country and pretending that the International has been reconstructed—but the spirit that dictated the Oudegeest letter will remain.

Among the letters not read at the Congress were the replies from the Indonesian Trade Unions and the All-China T.U. Federation to the invitation to co-operate—in which most inconvenient home truths were told and the solidarity of these movements with the R.I.L.U expressed in no uncertain fashion.

Summary of Resolutions

(1) The resolution in favour of the organisation of professional workers &c., calls for the separate organisation of each worker. This met with the opposition of the Belgian Trade Union leaders, who are trying to split the Professional Workers since Communists are accepted by them on equal terms. The resolution was passed.

(2) The resolution in favour of international assistance in strikes, &c. The demand for an international fund was rejected—although proposed by the Austrians and Dutch.

No country is to receive any aid whose Federation is not a member of the I.F.T.U. unless prevented from joining by political considerations. This would cut out any aid for a union connected with the R.I.L.U., and is in glaring contrast with the fact that the Russians gave many times over for the miners the amount given by the whole Amsterdam International.

(3) The Resolution on the Eight-Hour Day calls on the workers to fight for eight hours—and for the ratification of the Washington Convention.

(4) The Resolution on international action against war calls for a general strike against war. The report on the question was given by Jouhaux, who spoke for exactly five minutes.

(5) Most characteristic is the resolution on the economic position of the workers, where after what is probably not an inaccurate analysis of the present position, describing the miserable condition of the workers, and recognising that capitalism now means the degradation of the workers, the only remedies suggested are to fight against protective tariffs and to support the work of the League of Nations in favour of the trade union control of international and national cartels. The effort of cartels to maintain prices must meet with the greatest resistance from trade unions, &c. It calls attention to the necessity of developing the home market and the spending power of the workers as a means of stemming unemployment.

INDONESIA**The Trade Union Movement**

(Report of Javanese Delegation to the Pan-Pacific Labour Conference, Hankow, China, May 24, 1927)

INDONESIA has been exploited by foreign capitalism for over 300 years. Dutch imperialist-capitalism, when it first began its work, crushed national capital in order to monopolise the whole wealth of this country, so that nowadays trade and industrial capital are in the hands of foreign capitalists. Dutch imperialist-capitalism is comparatively weak. It cannot exploit so rich a country as Indonesia by itself. It has therefore arranged for other big foreign capitalists to assist in this process. The "Open door" policy of Dutch imperialism attracted many foreign capitalists, including English, Japanese, French, and American. The Dutch imperialists used the policy of *divide et impera* to smash the unity of the working class of Indonesia. In this way the Javanese and Malay workers were for a long time separated from each other, and were even a source of cheap labour. Hundreds of thousands of workers were suffering very much from the treacherous and barbaric acts of Dutch imperialism. The very low wages, long working hours,

and bestial treatment were the cause of demoralisation and corruption of the Indonesian working class. The average wages of the Javanese coolies in coal, tin, iron-mining, and especially plantation-workers and other industrial workers, varies from 30-50 cents per day. From these poor wages the Javanese coolies have to pay taxes imposed by the government. No labour security is given by the employers, and because of lack of labour protection, hospitals, and fit dwellings for miners and plantation-workers, there is a high death-rate among coal, tin, ironmongers and tobacco-plantation workers.

Early in the year 1910, the exploited colonial people of Indonesia began to struggle against the arbitrary and barbaric acts of the exploiters. Next to the political organisation there arose trade unions. The Rail and Tramway Workers founded trade unionism in Indonesia, and were closely followed by the Sugar Workers' Union, the Pawnshop Workers' Union, Government Teachers' Union, and many others. Nearly every branch of industrial and plantation workers have their own union. The growth of trade unionism in this country was so rapid that even handicraft workers, house-boys, tailors, &c., established their Unions.

Even before the end of the great war, important trade unions, such as the Railway Workers' Union, the Sugar Workers' Union, and the Government Pawnshop Workers' Union, were trying to enter into political activity, demanding the right to vote, acknowledgment of trade unions as representing the labouring masses, &c., although little success had been obtained. The Government granted to some trade unions, the Rail and Tramway Workers' Union, the Postal Workers' Union, and the Pawnshop Workers' Union, the establishment of the so-called "Complaint and Grievance Committee" to settle labour conflicts and difficulties. This reformist arrangement existed for a few years only. No satisfactory result was ever achieved by this body. Trade unions were tired of it. The Government, protector of the capitalists' interest, suppressed all developing revolutionary trade unions. Hence the series of strikes in Indonesia.

The trade unions of Indonesia, trained by strikes and facing many labour difficulties, were able to resist the arbitrary acts of the exploiters. The well-known Sugar and Plantation Workers' strike in 1919, and the strike of the Railway Workers in 1923 which lasted over two months, proved the power of the Indonesian workers. All attempts made by the exploiting class to create disunion in the ranks of the workers failed completely.

The trade unions of Indonesia, brought up and developed by strikes, and taught by the treacherous lessons of the exploiting class, understand now that Javanese and Malay workers are but one class, the exploited class, and understand the necessity of building the united front against their exploiters and the government. (It is necessary to explain the word "government." The Dutch government, ruling a population of over 50,000,000, has monopolised all the wealth of Indonesia since the establishment of the notorious "Dutch East-Indian Company." It has become one of the biggest monopolists in Indonesia. Most of the traffic and communication, railway, post, telephone and telegraph, are financed by it, and it has the monopoly of salt, opium, teak wood and pawnshops, so that 60 per cent. of the foreign capital is Dutch.)

In the year 1918 a committee was established to federate the existing trade

unions under the leadership of the Railway Workers' Union. In the same year a congress was held at Mid-Java attended by delegates from the following unions :—

Railway and Tramway Workers' Union.

Sugar Workers' Union.

Pawnshop Workers' Union.

Opium Workers' Union

Salt Workers' Union.

Teachers' Union.

Seamen's Union.

Postal Workers' Union.

Forest Workers' Union.

Printers' Union.

Tailors' Union.

Carriage and Drivers' Union.

Bond van Militarian (Military Society).

The Congress represented 300,000 organised workers. At this congress the Commander-in-Chief of the Dutch Indian Army was represented by one colonel to control military delegates. The congress lasted four days and decided on the establishment of an organisation of all workers in Indonesia called "De Indische Vakcentrale." The Committee was formed with two members of the Railway Workers' Union ; one, Sugar Workers' Union ; one, Pawnshop Workers' Union, and one member of the Irrigation and Municipal Workers' Union. Owing to differences between revolutionary and reformist members of the I.V. no important work has been done and no definite programme has been adopted by this body. One of the reformist members accepted election as a member of the People's Council, and the other trade unions proposed to exclude him from De Indische Vakcentrale.

From 1920-1925, Indonesian Trade Unionism showed great activity. Nearly every Union possesses its own organ, weekly or monthly, distributed to its members. Monthly, or once in three months, private or general meetings are held in many provinces. Weekly courses are given to organised members and special propagandists are appointed to travel from country to country to increase membership and to give instructions on labour questions.

The series of strikes carried out by the Indonesian Trade Unions which often ended with the defeat of the workers did not, however, discourage the spirit of the revolutionary labourers : on the contrary, they became stronger and acquired experience. In 1923 the political and trade union situation changed. Many reformist leaders were defeated and replaced by revolutionary ones, so that now the most important trade unions are in the hands of the revolutionary leaders who lead the masses to real class struggle. Courses, lectures, leaflets, and papers are available for members and non-members. Soldiers and police unions are affected by the revolutionary influence of the trade unions.

In the middle of last November revolution broke out in Java and Sumatra, but was defeated by strong military forces. In some parts of Indonesia, revolutionists are continuing guerilla war. As a result of this historical event, over 500 labour and political leaders have been deported to New Guinea for life, hundreds sentenced to ten to fifteen years' hard labour, and four

sentenced for life imprisonment. The government proclaimed martial law, prohibited private and general meetings and disbanded revolutionary labour unions. During the rising, workers were rigidly watched and forbidden to meet each other.

There are still many trade unions, besides the revolutionary trade unions. The latter are now temporarily suppressed, but not disorganised. Left Wing groups are arising in the reformist unions, such as the Teachers' Union, Pawnshop Workers' Union, or Seamen's Union. By doing so we may be certain that within a few years the trade unions in Indonesia will again be able to renew the attack on their enemies.

We, Javanese delegates, are trying to unite all the labour and peasant movements of Indonesia and to link them up with the labour and peasant movements of China. The Javanese labour and peasant movement will do its utmost to help the workers and peasants of China to hasten the world revolution.

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Telegrams: Edcalopres, Kincros, London

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Museum 7777



*Published by the proprietors
the Trinity Trust
162 Buckingham
Palace Road
S.W.1,*

*and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
W.C.1*

w 15380

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9

November, 1927

Number 11

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Published at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone: SLOANE 5412.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

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TO THE FIGHTERS IN THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

By N. LENIN

*A Speech delivered at the Dedication of the Memorial
Tablet to those fallen in the October Revolution on the
First Anniversary, November 7, 1918¹*

COMRADES! We are opening a memorial to the foremost fighters of the October Revolution of 1917. The best and bravest from among the toiling masses have given their lives to begin the battle of revolt for the emancipation of the peoples from imperialism, for the ending of war between peoples, for the overthrow of the domination of capital, for socialism.

Comrades! The history of Russia in modern times for a series of decades shows us a long martyrology of revolutionaries. Thousands upon thousands have perished in the fight with Tsarism. Their loss has aroused new fighters, has drawn to the struggle ever wider and wider masses.

To the lot of the comrades who perished during the October days of last year has fallen the great happiness of victory. The greatest honour, which has been the dream of the revolutionary leaders of mankind, has been their fortune: it is over their bodies, fallen valiantly in the revolutionary battle, that thousands and millions of new fighters, no less fearless, have passed, and been able, thanks to their heroism, to win victory for the masses.

¹This speech, which is here published for the first time in English, has been specially translated for the present issue of THE LABOUR MONTHLY. It was originally published in *Pravda* of April 23, 1924, and reprinted in Lenin's Works, Volume XX, Part II, page 277.

To-day in every country the anger of the workers is rising and seething : in a whole series of countries the workers' socialist revolution is beginning. The capitalists of the whole world are filled with horror and fury, and hastening to unite their forces in order to crush the revolt. Their fiercest hatred is directed against the Socialist Soviet Republic of Russia. Against us the united imperialists of the whole world are preparing an attack ; we are faced with new battles ; new sacrifices are awaiting us.

Comrades ! Let us honour the memory of the October fighters by vowing that we shall follow in their footsteps, that we shall repeat their fearlessness and their heroism. Let their slogan become our slogan, the slogan of the workers' revolt all over the world—Victory or Death !

With this slogan the army of the international socialist revolution will be invincible.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

[The "Notes of the Month," by R.P.D., will be resumed in the December issue. For this month, this article appears in their place.]

THIS month of November, ten years ago, was the Bolshevik revolution; this month of November, 1927, there still is the Bolshevik revolution, the same, but grown greater. The challenge that rang out in November, 1917, has swollen in volume through the years, and has filled the whole earth till now in every land the capitalists cannot get the sound of it out of their ears. To none is the challenge more compelling than to the leaders of the trade unions and the co-operative societies and the political labour organisations. Their answer is—to deny that any challenge exists. This is the meaning of the flood of anniversary articles in which the revolution is treated as some huge unique catastrophe, as something peculiar to Russia, something that *has* happened.

This treatment of the revolution, isolating it, gaping at it, is akin to the canonisation of revolutionary leaders (like the turning of Marx into a hackneyed Liberal). Those who would understand the revolution must seek to understand the process of human history. In that search they will find not only that within the historic period man advances by means of class struggle, but that within the period of capitalism class struggle after class struggle culminates in revolution. Within the last hundred and fifty years alone history presents itself not as a record of kings and battles, but (in spite of all the systematic lying of the Whigs and the Radicals, set forth in every school book, in every scholarly tome, in every speech, sermon and editorial) as a process of class striving with class, culminating in the overthrow of one class by another, the intervening periods being but the preparation for that overthrow.

The American Revolution reacts on the great French Revolution from which in turn there issue the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 (in England the Luddites of 1812, and the suppressed trade union agitation of 1800 to 1825, are succeeded by the

Chartist movement of the working class which in its widest sense spans the years from the late 'twenties to the early 'fifties). Already in 1848 the working class has learned that it must go forward in its own strength; and though the Paris Commune, the first attempt to destroy capitalist rule and to build a workers' society, is drowned in blood, the lessons of these few weeks remain un-forgotten throughout the epoch of imperialism that followed. Then as the violence, punitive expeditions, wars, and massacres of imperialism bring more and more colonial peoples beneath the yoke, the stage is reached of dividing up the spoil anew through the first imperialist world war; and when this stage is reached the decay of imperialism becomes manifest, and equally manifest the rising of new forces, the re-awakening of the working class, the first rally of the colonial peoples against oppression. The revolution of 1905 in Russia marks the beginning of the decline, 1917 the end of the rotten rule of imperialism over one-sixth part of the earth; and at the same time an intenser conflict begins against capitalist oppression in every country. In the midst of this intenser conflict the British working class now finds itself compelled to fight for a livelihood, and in that struggle to attack the whole system that refuses it the bread of life. This is the process of world history, this is the meaning of the stage in that process in which we live, this is the meaning of the Russian Revolution.

How do they see it, the leaders of Labour, the bureaucracy of the trade unions and the co-operative societies, the men elected to parliaments and municipalities? In what shape do they perceive the Russian Revolution? The answer, as shown by thousands of their speeches and articles, is that for them it is something remote, spectacular, inexplicable, and, at close quarters, dangerous. And beneath this surface gaping there lurks a real hostility, only partially restrained by philistine respectfulness towards the might of the Soviet State.

The hostility bursts forth again and again, both in decisions of policy, from the Democracy and Socialism thesis of the Berne International in 1919 up to the rupture of the Anglo-Russian Committee as a pendant to the Baldwin Government's rupture of the Trade Agreement, and also in the declamations of leading

"Socialists." It is especially at the moments when the Soviet power appears least strong that their theoretical objections become most pronounced. "The Bolsheviks," wrote Brailsford, ten years ago, against the first activity of the revolution to bring peace, "are putting themselves outside the pale of our international Socialist society." And through all the vicissitudes that make up a Brailsford, he is in the end as he was in the beginning, impenitently opposed to the world revolution. And Brailsford is typical of all the "Socialists" that pretend to welcome the revolution.

How is this attitude to be explained? It is the outlook born of the between-times, born of the trough of time that lies between the wave-crests of the advancing revolution.

In this century such an attitude was common amongst the Menshevik Socialists in Russia after the 1905 revolution. Because revolution had been defeated once, therefore revolution was at all times and for ever impossible. The Labour Movement, they said, must work within the framework of Tsardom, and give up the dream of its overthrow. So, to their eternal shame and dishonour, these "Socialists" argued—until 1917 swept them into oblivion along with the rotten timbers to which they clung. So now in this country, in the trough of the wave, in a similar time of depression, instead of fighting, stimulating, and heartening the workers, they are preaching industrial peace (submission to the worst the employers can inflict), and dropping Socialism out of their programme. The Edinburgh Trades Union Congress and the Blackpool Conference of the Labour Party mark the lowest pitch of fatalism, of craven submission to circumstance, of complete failure of courage and hope on the part of the leaders.

But this outlook is inevitable amongst men thus blind to the real meaning of the working-class struggle and to the movement it imparts to history. How shall savages understand an eclipse of the sun? To savages, knowing naught of the planetary laws of motion, or the periods of the moon, the sun's eclipse is a catastrophe without past or future, unpredictable, causeless, dire, and destructive. To the astronomer the eclipse, itself predictable, is the means to verify and establish even more fundamental laws

of physics. So with the Russian Revolution. Those who swallowed the hocus-pocus of capitalist politics and disdained any knowledge that lay beyond their own noses, were at once astonished by the revolution (an accident they had not allowed for—like the war which was also left out of their reckonings) and have never ceased to be wrong about it since; and because they were wrong about it, because their scheme of the human universe never rose above the conception of living from hand to mouth, they were bound to mislead the workers in their every-day struggle.

Further, the analogy, if followed up, yields a still more startling parallel between the astronomer of the skies and the social astronomer thinking in the discipline of Marxism. The most learned savage of an Oxford common room, the most bedizened medicine-man on the Treasury Bench, or at the Guildhall Banquet, is less capable of understanding social phenomena than the simple "ignorant" working man who can tell a capitalist war when he sees it (when the savages are prating of nationality, justice, &c., &c.), and who can see that mankind will halt and retreat unless the capitalists are thrown from off the backs of the workers.

Social astronomers, able to calculate the laws of motion of capitalist society, predict the world revolution; and (since man himself is a social force) strive to hasten it. In the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics the endeavour is to build a Socialist society; and in capitalist Britain to build up through daily struggles a workers' movement that will conquer the power of the governing class, and along with the revolutionary classes of India and other lands, set free a quarter of the human race.

R. PAGE ARNOT.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE BRITISH WORKERS

By A. J. COOK

AS one who has followed very closely international economic developments, especially in Russia, and read extensively about the terrible persecution under the bloody Tsarist regime, I cannot express in words how great was my personal feeling of joy when the news flashed through the world on November 10, 1917, that the Russian Workers' Republic had been established. The history of the Revolution in Russia is an epic, and the courageous struggles of class-conscious fighters who for years suffered martyrdom in their attempts to overthrow the tyranny and oppression of Tsardom have thrilled all lovers of freedom. It is well now to remember, and to record clearly, that our Government ruling class were supporters of this bloody regime—in fact, blood-relations. It should be noted also that no protest was ever sent by our ruling class against this notorious oppression.

Although it was the toilers and peasants who suffered most, there were many others who dared to rise against this rule of murder and terror, and who were soon put out of the way—usually without any sort of a trial, or even the pretence of one.

As is always the case, oppression and persecution bred revolt, which—there, fortunately, being a Lenin—was harnessed and organised and courageously used to overthrow the capitalist class and set up a Workers' Republic. Strange but true, we all looked upon Russia as one of the last countries where capitalism would be overthrown. Hence the great surprise and joy with which we greeted the Herculean achievement of the Russian workers. The workers in this country responded with the greatest enthusiasm, which created in their minds a great longing to accomplish the same here, in Britain, and to overthrow the profiteers and exploiters.

We felt that what Russia could do we could do, and must do, if the workers are ever to be freed from slavery.

The miners in particular, who have a record of suffering, persecution and victimisation in Britain, saw in the Russian

Revolution the one great hope for their children and their future. The effect in South Wales, where for many years Marxian teaching had resulted in a class-conscious outlook amongst the more advanced sections which controlled the S.W.M.F., was greater than in any other part of Great Britain. It convinced us, who were working there, of the value of Marxist policy, and of the courageous lead given by Lenin—which has since been proved to be absolutely correct. The example given by the Bolsheviks resulted in a demand for action to overthrow the capitalist system in this country. This demand was first given concrete expression during 1918-19, with the formation of Councils of Action, and in 1921 when South Wales in particular pioneered the demand for a general strike. The fact that a conference of South Wales miners, representing 200,000 men, decided to demand that the British miners should affiliate to the R.I.L.U. is further evidence of the effect upon the minds of the men in Wales. This influence still persists, and is so strong that should any attempt be made by the British Government to make war on Russia it would be resisted even to the extent of a general strike. Whatever reactionary leaders may say about the Russian leaders, whom they fear because of their straight dealing and straight talking, miners will not forget that both the Government and the reactionary trade union leaders have broken with Russia for the same reason—that is, because the Russians have dared to defy both of them and to stand by the miners.

The Russian workers have accomplished a Revolution that cannot be broken, and, I repeat, the surest and most effective way of protecting and helping the Russian Revolution will be for the workers to carry on their struggle and build a real live organisation which will overthrow capitalism in this country. At the same time, the surest way of carrying out our tasks in this country is by supporting the Russian Workers' Republic.

My wife and I have visited Russia, and have seen for ourselves the progress they have made, and are making now. We have lived and fed with real comrades. I have seen Lenin, alive as well as dead, and have seen the effect of his labours, and I repeat again that I am a disciple of Lenin.

The Tenth Anniversary has a great historical significance, for after the ten years of trial we find the Soviet Union firmly established

and increasing its strength. The capitalist powers of the world, and especially of Great Britain, show their fear of this increasing strength. The Red Flag flying over the Kremlin has become a nightmare to capitalists all over the world.

The miners, in particular, will not forget 1917, nor will they forget 1926, when over a million pounds was sent to help to feed our wives and children and to enable us to carry on the struggle. Neither will they forget 1927, when Baldwin, Churchill, Chamberlain and Birkenhead, with the approval of some Labour renegades, broke off relations with the U.S.S.R., raided their premises, and are now preparing for war against the Soviet Union. They know that these men are trying to create a financial and military blockade of Russia and have driven away millions of trade, which would have meant employment to 50,000 workers. The workers of Britain, and especially the miners, are being pauperised in order to satisfy the desires of Baldwinism.

In sending greetings to our comrades in Russia, which I hope to carry in person if I am able to leave England, I speak for the workers of Britain, who are against any break with the Russian workers, and are against war with Russia. Let me now categorically declare that should the capitalist Government declare war, I shall urge a general strike against war, and shall declare war on the Government and the whole gang of warmongers.

In spite of the decision of the Edinburgh Congress, I still appeal to the workers to press for the formation of a real Anglo-Russian Committee, and also for the inclusion of the miners of Russia in the Miners' International, and the formation of an Anglo-Russian Miners' Committee. This question must not be left to the leaders, but must be placed before the rank and file, and then there will be no doubt as to the decision.

To the Russian workers I say : " Take heart, your conditions are improving while ours are being worsened. Russia is moving forward towards real liberty and freedom, while the workers of Great Britain are being driven back to serfdom and slavery." Thus the workers of Russia have cause to rejoice, and ever to remember that Lenin was right in having not only the economic understanding, but the courage and determination to act in the right way. Long live the Soviet Workers' Republic !

THE WORLD REVOLUTION AND THE U.S.S.R.

By N. BUCHARIN

IT is well understood, by both our friends and our enemies, that the tenth anniversary of the November Revolution is an event of world historical importance. Our friends will look with yet greater hope on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as the firm dictatorship of the working class, that for ten years has successfully struggled for the Socialist cause in the land of former imperial Russia. Our enemies, whoever they be, whether representatives of predatory imperialism, agents of the reformist internationals, representatives of the big bourgeoisie or landowners, or of the petty-bourgeois cliques, are all compelled to recognise the magnitude and significance of this historical fact that the working class has been in power for the space of ten years.

The history of revolution has known other dictatorships. There was the dictatorship of the English bourgeoisie, of Cromwell, in England. There was the revolutionary dictatorship of the Jacobins—the petty-bourgeois “lefts” at the time of the great French revolution, and there were the months of the Paris Commune. But the dictatorships of one or other stratum of the bourgeoisie have an essentially different significance from that of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the bourgeois revolution itself has a different significance from that of the Socialist revolution. Our November revolution stands at the threshold of a new world-historical epoch of humanity because it overturned and reversed the old social pyramid, putting in power the most oppressed, most exploited and, at the same time, most revolutionary class known to history, viz., the proletariat.

The celebration of the tenth anniversary of the November revolution reminds us all that this revolution was the offspring of the world war, and that the banner under which our proletariat conquered in these days was the banner of international revolution.

Hence, the first question that we must ask ourselves is whether the Bolshevik party was correct in staking its all on the world revolution, whether the vanguard of the proletariat was correct when, after the March revolution, it came forward with the greatest persistence, energy, strength, and heroism in defence of the banner of world revolution. We are well aware that our opponents inside the Labour Movement answer this question with an emphatic negative. International Social-Democracy, through the utterances of its most eminent representatives, has adopted the point of view that the post-war revolutions, and, in the first place, the November revolution in Russia in 1917, were a peculiar product of the rotten falling to pieces of capitalist society as a result of the war, a specific product of the war, and to a considerable degree, a product which may be characterised as being the result of Russian-Asiatic phenomena. Our revolution is interpreted by these ideologists of the Second International, not as a proletarian revolution, but as a revolution of soldier-deserters and of peasant-soldiers. According to this view, the proletariat only entered this revolution owing to its interest in liquidating the war, and by no means as a class intent on achieving, and with the power to achieve, the Socialist revolution. The latter, they say, must occur not as the result of collapse, rottenness and disorganisation caused by war, but as the result of an evolutionary completion of the development of the full powers of capitalism, which gives birth to its own special "grave-diggers" on the basis of the ripeness of its powers.

The war, however, is past, and the social reformists believe that capitalism has marvellously developed. It has not only not perished, but is going forward with gigantic strides. It has produced new organisations, like the League of Nations, and there has begun a new huge cycle of a new flourishing development of capitalist society. The Bolshevik reliance on a world revolution they believe to be demonstrated as a childish Utopia. This is the judgment of international social-reformism.

It must be said that in our own midst it is quite common for comrades discussing the international revolution to ask, "When will it come, when will be the day?" It seems to me that such a formulation of the question is incorrect. It seems to

me that it would be correct to say that our Bolshevik Party has fully justified itself in placing its reliance on the international revolution, because the international revolution is not something that will occur in the future, but is something that is proceeding now. It is not something anticipated and hoped for, but something actually existing; it is not something that will come after some indefinite period, but is something that is already actually taking place. It is sufficient to remind ourselves of a few of the characteristic events during the past decade. Here is a short list of some important facts. In March, 1917—the bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia; November, 1917—the proletarian revolution in Russia; March, 1918—the workers' revolution in Finland; November, 1918—revolution in Germany and in Austria; March, 1919—revolution in Hungary; January, 1920—revolution in Turkey; September, 1920—revolutionary seizure of the factories by the workers of Italy; March, 1921—the so-called March "rising" in Germany; September, 1923—revolution in Bulgaria; Autumn, 1923—semi-revolution of the German proletariat; December, 1924—the rising in Esthonia; April, 1925—the rising in Morocco; August, 1925—the rising in Syria; May, 1926—the General Strike in Britain; 1927—the rising in Vienna. Finally, we must mention the Chinese revolution, continuing through many years, and now passing through an extremely acute phase. From this simple list, it is clear that the international revolution is something actually in progress.

It is true that there has been no victory of the international revolution in the sense that there has been no simultaneous victory of the working class in a series of countries. But whoever predicted that the world revolution would occur in this way? It is extremely probable that immediate risings are imminent in the colonial subject countries, and, while they are not proletarian revolutions, they are yet component parts of the international revolutionary process. How can it be said that there is no such thing as the international revolution when there is the victorious Socialist revolution in the U.S.S.R., and while there is the Chinese revolution, both of which are parts of the world revolution.

The incorrectness of the view that the international revolution is something that does not exist but will only come in the future

is due to an incorrect idea of the international revolution. There are many people who picture to themselves the international revolution as an occurrence which some fine day will take place simultaneously in a number of countries. This is extremely improbable and unnecessary. Comrade Lenin, even during the war and before November, 1917, insisted that it was necessary for everyone to realise that the world revolution, which would overthrow capitalism, was primarily a protracted historical process, that we were on the eve of an *epoch* of world revolution which would contain a whole series of proletarian revolutions, colonial risings, and national wars, arising from the combination of all the factors breaking up capitalism.

The international revolution is then an epoch of revolutions, a long extended process. Now, ten years since the working class in our country first took power in its hands, we can review our historical development and compare it with the changes which took place in the world during the epoch of bourgeois revolutions when humanity was passing from feudalism to capitalism. Looking back on the bourgeois revolutions, we see in the seventeenth century the bourgeois revolution in England, in the eighteenth century the bourgeois revolution in France, in the middle nineteenth century a whole series of bourgeois revolutions on the Continent of Europe, and in the twentieth century the bourgeois revolution in Russia. The process of revolutionary transition from feudalism to capitalism has occupied a number of centuries.

It is naturally comprehensible that, as regards the international Socialist revolution, matters will be considerably different, since the connections between the different countries are now much closer, deeper, and more extensive. Consequently, the working class will be able to carry through its revolutions over the whole surface of the globe in an incomparably shorter time than was possible for the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, we must also conclude from this historical comparison that the process of Socialist revolution is in the highest degree a long-extended process. Further, the world revolution has also a many-sided character, comprising as it does different component parts—the revolt of the working class against the bourgeoisie in the leading countries, the revolt of the working class carrying with it

huge sections of the peasantry in the more backward countries, wars for national emancipation, revolts of the millions of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples even where there is only an insignificant proletariat, &c. Lenin, in an article entitled, "On a Caricature of Marxism and on Imperialist Economism," wrote:—

The Socialist revolution cannot take place in any other form than that of an epoch, uniting the civil war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the leading countries with a whole series of democratic, revolutionary, and national-emancipatory movements in the undeveloped, backward, and oppressed countries. Why is this? It is because capitalism develops unequally.

Closely connected with the above is a third characteristic, viz., that the world revolution is a process, parts of which occur simultaneously. Thus, for example, our proletarian revolution took place in October, 1917, the German revolution in 1918, the rising in Esthonia in 1924, the rising in Indonesia in 1926. All these are parts of a single process, all are separate facets of the world revolution.

Turning again to our comparison with the bourgeois revolution, it is necessary to emphasise the fact that the most revolutionary country during that period, almost as in the case of our country during the period of Socialist revolution, was similarly subjected to the blows of all the other most important powers which united against her. The difference is, however, that at the head of the States ranged against bourgeois-revolutionary France there stood also a bourgeois country, viz., England, who saw a competitor in France. The armed struggle between the propertied States, headed by England, and the most revolutionary bourgeois State, France, lasted with small interruptions for twenty-two years. In this period, 1793-1816, England organised a "united front" of the European States against revolutionary France no less than four times.

I have called attention to these historical examples in order to make more easily comprehensible the extraordinarily difficult conditions under which a new social order comes into being, and in order to give a view of the enormous historical perspectives of the world revolution. It is inevitable that, sooner or later, there will take place a great war of the imperialist powers against us or

against a coalition of the proletarian States. This can only be rendered impossible by the working class coming into power throughout the world.

Consequently, to the constituent elements of the international revolution enumerated in the quotation from Lenin, cited above, there must be added the war of the Socialist countries defending themselves against the attacks of the imperialist States. This is also a constituent part of the great process of the transformation of the world. Whatever the differences in time and space, and whatever the variety in character of the processes of the international Socialist revolution, it is all the same a single process, for it expresses in itself the crisis of capitalist society, the decay of the latter, and the revolutionary re-fashioning of the world. It is in this sense that we are able to speak of the international Socialist revolution.

It has been necessary to dwell at such length on this question because the wrong formulation of it has great practical significance, for it is reflected in the consciousness, volition, and thought of parts of the working class and of our party. There is a view that in 1917 we are said to have made a great talk of world revolution, that we staked our reliance on it, but that now it has vanished from the scene and will only come again at some future time. We are supposed to have said that capitalism has entered on a cycle of prodigious convulsions, but that suddenly this expected transfiguration has become far removed, so far, indeed, that it is entirely unclear what has happened to it.

It is comprehensible that if we answer the question in a different way by saying that the revolutionary transformation of the capitalist world is a fact actually taking place, that the world revolution, while not yet decisively victorious, still exists and is developing—then it is natural that from that will proceed a different consciousness, a different outlook, and a different sensation of struggle on the part of the working class and those who stand under the banner of Communism.

If we ask ourselves the question, what are the general characteristics of the present position of the international revolution, it must be answered that the crisis of world capitalism is at the

moment developing in a different way from some years back, and is revealing itself in other forms.

The Chinese revolution, with its huge oscillations, and with the huge masses that it sets in motion, is nothing but an expression of the crisis of the capitalist system, but "from the other end." The deepening of the revolution in China is a phenomenon of the capitalist crisis. The successful development of our building up of Socialism is also a phenomenon of the world crisis of capitalism, for capitalism can never again be so healthy as it was before the war, if only because the U.S.S.R. already exists, appearing like a wedge driven into the body of bourgeois world economy.

Consequently, on the one hand the crisis of capitalism is at present being most acutely experienced in the colonial countries and, in particular, in Eastern Asia, and, on the other hand, the successful construction of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. reveals itself as a revolutionary fact of deepest significance. On a third side, the crisis of capitalist society is expressed in the especially sharp antagonisms inside capitalist society which is attempting to stabilise itself; for this stabilisation in Western Europe is taking place within the limits of an actual sharpening of the difficulties resulting from the war. The stabilisation is proceeding under circumstances of heavy pressure by the bourgeoisie on the working class, of heavy permanent unemployment, and of a general intensification of class antagonisms.

Finally, the critical situation of the whole capitalist regime is augmented by the great antagonism and sharpening of the contradictions between the imperialist powers and the U.S.S.R. When now, ten years after the conquest of power by the working class, we inquire as to the extent of our achievement in the international revolutionary movement, the question arises whether we are faced, on balance, with a worsening of the position and an improvement from the point of view of the reactionary forces. The answer is emphatically no. Glance at the "Letter to the Comrades," written by Lenin before the November revolution, when, for proofs that the international revolution was proceeding and that it was necessary to support it, he had to rely on a single revolt of German sailors and on the existence of Karl Liebknecht,

Contrast this with the Chinese revolution alone—a factor of colossal significance. We possess the Communist International with its mass parties, we have our supporters in every country.

Can there be any comparison with the situation in 1917? Our forces have increased many times over, both from the point of view of material strength and of number of supporters, and from the point of view of colossal experience and of the organisation of our strength. All this is in our favour in the event of a conflict between the U.S.S.R. and the imperialist powers. In the event of such a war, we can count upon, I will not say an immediate rising of the workers in all countries, for that would be a mistaken expectation, but such a rapid growth of revolutionary feeling, such a rapid mobilisation of forces of the working class against the bourgeoisie, that within a short time a number of bourgeois States would be shattered into a thousand fragments.

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THE LESSONS OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

By M. N. ROY

THE revolution in China has suffered a defeat. It came very near to success, which, however, could not be attained in this first effort because of the treachery of the nationalist bourgeoisie. Worse still : at the critical moment even petty-bourgeois radical leaders like Wang Chin-Wei turned against the revolution. Indian revolutionaries must study the Chinese experience for their benefit. They will find great similarities in the experiences gained in both the countries.

The history of the Indian revolutionary movement will always remain soiled by the Bardoli resolution which killed a tremendous mass movement in order to save the interests of the landlords. China has also had her Bardoli, only on a much larger scale and with more disastrous effect. Like the Indian non-co-operation movement, the Chinese Revolution has suffered a temporary defeat because of the betrayal of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders. These turned against the revolution as soon as it threatened capitalist and land-owning interests. The development of the struggle for national freedom sharpened class-antagonism inside the Chinese society. Rather than sacrifice the sectional interests of the reactionary landlords and capitalists, the bourgeois nationalist leaders betrayed the revolution. Class solidarity cut across national solidarity.

During the last years, when the national liberation movement acquired such gigantic dimensions, seriously shook the position of imperialism and shattered the forces of its native agents (militarists), the driving force behind it was the working class. As a matter of fact, the Chinese nationalist movement had been a comparatively inconsequential affair based upon secret societies, diplomatic dealings and military intrigues till the working class appeared on the scene as a powerful political factor.

The democratic national bourgeoisie began its political career with cowardice and compromise. The republic founded

by the revolution of 1911 was practically killed almost as soon as it was born. The bourgeoisie deserted Sun Yat-Sen to place Yuan Shi-Kai at the head of the republic. The political views of Yuan Shi-Kai were no secret. Commander-in-chief of the imperial army, he was frankly a monarchist. He induced the boy emperor to abdicate only to strengthen his (Yuan's) hand in the fight against the republic. He went over to the republican side to destroy the republic. This design of his was quite evident. Still the bourgeoisie placed him at the head of the republic. Why?

It was not necessary to compromise with the arch-reactionary monarchist agent. In 1912, when the republican bourgeoisie capitulated to Yuan Shi-Kai, the correlation of forces was essentially not unfavourable to the republic. Fourteen populous and rich provinces of the south and south-west were under the republic. A powerful democratic mass movement swept through these provinces. The rapidity with which the republican movement spread in the south promised its early penetration of the northern provinces. The Manchu court was nearly paralysed with fear. Yuan Shi-Kai opened negotiation with the republicans and went over to them, because, even with his "model army," he was not sure of victory. But the Manchu court and its generals were not the only people who were afraid of the potential forces of the revolution. The republican bourgeoisie was itself afraid that the revolution would go too far—further than the establishment of a National Assembly representing the bourgeoisie and limiting the absolutism of the corrupt court in the interests of the bourgeoisie. A repetition of the Taiping Rebellion was no more desired by the republican bourgeoisie than by the reactionary monarchists.

Yet the sure path to a real republic lay through the promotion of a mass upheaval. Signs of such an upheaval were discernible all around. The republic could be victorious, a democratic state established, modernisation of the country undertaken, a successful fight against foreign imperialism taken up only by leading the masses in the attack not only upon the Manchu dynasty, but upon the entire system of feudal-bureaucratic exploitation. This the bourgeoisie, who stood at the head of the revolution of 1911,

did not want, did not dare to do. They would rather entrust the youthful republic to the mercy of the monarchist Yuan Shi-Kai than commit it to a revolutionary future. Sun Yat-Sen himself participated in that conspiracy to kill the republic. His "idealism" was cowardice. He also did not want to lead the republican movement to revolution. He had organised and led the anti-Manchu movement exclusively from the limited point of view of the bourgeoisie. He had to step aside at the behest of the bourgeoisie. He had not yet discovered the reservoir of revolutionary energy. Twelve years of bitter experience—of defeat and disappointment—finally brought him to the masses. It was only then that the real struggle against native reaction and foreign imperialism began.

The Kuo Min Tang became a real political party with programme, organisation, and systematic activities only in 1924. At the end of his eventful political life Sun Yat-Sen found his way to the people. The Kuo Min Tang became the fighting political organ of the people. Its base was removed from the rich merchants overseas and student clubs to the masses. The national revolutionary movement became a mass movement.

Neither Sun Yat-Sen nor the nationalist bourgeoisie came near the masses by choice. They were forced there. The nationalist centre of Canton could not be defended against native reaction and British intrigues from Hongkong without the support and sacrifice of the workers. The working class had appeared on the political scene independent of the Kuo Min Tang. Revolutionary activities of the proletariat had led to the organisation of trade unions and of the Communist Party. The Communist Party, representing the working class, on the instruction of the Communist International, in 1924, entered the Kuo Min Tang, thereby transforming it into a mass party. The Kuo Min Tang came into organic touch with the masses. It found a solid base.

The nationalist movement entered the new stage of development with two outstanding events. They were: (1) The anti-imperialist movement of Shanghai, beginning on May 30, 1925; and (2) the Hongkong strike of the same year. The dominating and decisive factor in both those events was the working class. The first staggering blow to the power and prestige of imperialism

not only in China, but in the entire Far East, was dealt by the May 30 movement in Shanghai. The Hongkong strike led to a year-long blockade which nearly choked the economic life of that base of British imperialism. Those two events and many less outstanding ones placed the working class in the forefront of the nationalist movement. The political influence of the Communist Party grew enormously. Its influence inside the Kuo Min Tang increased proportionally. The Kuo Min Tang was pushed further towards revolution. It was forced to encourage the peasant movement directed against the landlords.

The bourgeoisie became alarmed. The most reactionary elements put up resistance to the revolutionisation of the nationalist movement. They conspired to force the Kuo Min Tang to break its relation with the masses. Failing to do that, they tried to split the Kuo Min Tang. They went to the extent of assassination of the Left Kuo Min Tang leader, Liao Chung-Hai. Nevertheless, the mass movement grew with tremendous rapidity, adding strength to the nationalist movement.

Supported by the workers and peasant masses, the nationalist armies defeated the forces of the war-lords, Wu Pei-Fu and Sun Chuang-Fang, paid and equipped by Anglo-American imperialism. In less than a year the nationalist armies crossed the Yangtse, occupied Shanghai and threatened the formidable militarism of the North. It should be remembered that before it won the support of the masses, the Canton Government had undertaken several military expeditions to expand its territories. All those purely military ventures ended in nothing. Now the nationalist army was welcomed by strikes and demonstrations paralysing all means of resistance by the reactionaries. Caught between the nationalist army and revolutionary action of the masses, the reactionary forces were driven back with ease. The Nationalist occupation of Shanghai was aided by two armed insurrections of the proletariat. The arrival of the Nationalist Government at Hankow was celebrated by the proletariat taking possession of the British Concession guarded by soldiers and protected by battleships.

Another stage of the national revolution had been passed. The masses had fought for the national revolution—sacrificed for the national revolution. The national revolution had achieved

considerable success. The position of imperialism had been weakened, native militarists had been beaten back, nearly half of the country had been brought under the domination of the Nationalist Government. The revolution must enter a new stage of development. Fruits of victory must be tasted. The programme of the revolution must be realised. The most urgent demands of the workers and peasants must be met.

Military operations had coincided with a phenomenal growth of the mass movement. The peasants in the provinces occupied by the nationalist army had organised themselves into unions, whose aggregate membership came near to 10,000,000. The Kuo Min Tang had promised the peasants land, lower rents, freedom from oppression by the military-bureaucratic apparatus of the landowners, and local self-government. Now that the Kuo Min Tang had acquired power in half of the country, it was felt that it should fulfil its promise. The peasants demanded that. In some of the provinces the peasant unions were the only organised power. Where the Kuo Min Tang hesitated, they began the fight against the landlords. The revolution entered the village and the national revolution began to develop into agrarian revolution.

In the cities, the workers also demanded that they should begin to taste the fruits of victory. They wanted higher wages, they wanted control of capitalist exploitation, they wanted political rights. The membership of the All-China Labour Federation had grown to over 2,500,000. The proletariat was to be found in the forefront of every struggle, whether against foreign imperialism or against native reaction. The trade unions were the bulwark of strength supporting the Nationalist Government and constantly fighting the reactionaries. In the process of struggle they assumed considerable political power. The function of municipal government, including police-power, fell in their hands.

The nationalist bourgeoisie became alarmed. The revolution was going too far. It was going beyond their control. The proletarian and peasant masses were not willing to relapse quietly into wage-slavery and serfdom after having conquered power for the native bourgeoisie. They demanded a share in the power. They demanded the fruits of the victory they had won. The

bourgeoisie looked askance at these tendencies of the workers and peasants. By national freedom they meant the freedom for their class to exploit the Chinese workers and peasants. It became clear that the bourgeoisie and the working class had not participated in the nationalist movement with identical objects. The conflict of class interests was laid bare by the initial successes of the national revolution.

In consequence of this situation, the Kuo Min Tang found itself in a severe crisis. The feudal-bourgeois right wing, led by the commander-in-chief of the nationalist army, Chiang Kai-Shek, broke the united nationalist front, split the Kuo Min Tang and turned against the revolution. A fierce attack began upon the workers and peasant masses whose support had enabled the nationalist army to win the spectacular victories. In the provinces of Kwantung, Kiangsi, Fukien, and Kiangsu, occupied by feudal-militarist associates of Chiang Kai-Shek, workers' and peasants' organisations were dissolved.

At the end of February, when the nationalist forces, under Chiang Kai-Shek, were within striking distance from Shanghai, the Shanghai proletariat declared a general strike and finally rose up in an armed insurrection to help the nationalist army occupy the city. The insurgent proletariat nearly captured power. The Northern forces in possession of Shanghai were demoralised, the imperialist powers did not dare intervene although they had a formidable contingent of troops and battleships ready at hand. But Chiang Kai-Shek remained idle. He refused to hold the hand of the revolutionary proletariat extended to him so heroically. Thus betrayed by the nationalist generals, whom they wanted to help in the fight against Northern militarism and foreign imperialism, the Shanghai proletariat was defeated. While white terror reigned in Shanghai, massacring the proletariat en masse, Chiang Kai-Shek watched callously.

A month later Shanghai was occupied by Chiang Kai-Shek's forces. For years the Shanghai proletariat together with the democratic petty bourgeoisie had fought for economic and political rights. Under the nationalist regime, in the establishment of which they had assisted so heroically, the proletariat demanded an unconditional struggle against imperialism. The bourgeois

nationalists wanted a compromise with imperialism to crush the revolutionary proletariat. Hardly two weeks after his troops had occupied Shanghai, Chiang Kai-Shek turned upon the proletariat. Workers were shot down in the streets just as they had been in the former days by imperialists and northern militarists. Workers' organisations not accepting the military dictatorship of Chiang Kai-Shek were suppressed and their leaders killed.

The imperialists had rushed sufficient naval and military forces to prevent nationalist occupation of Shanghai. But when Chiang Kai-Shek turned against the revolution and attacked the working class fiercely, it became clear that occupation of Shanghai by him would not harm the interests of imperialism. As a matter of fact he waited near Shanghai until he could get the permission of the imperialists to occupy the city. He could not have got the permission except on the condition that he would not touch imperialist interests—that he would join hands with imperialism to fight the revolution.

Development of the revolution menaced the interests of the capitalist and landowning classes. Further fight against imperialism would inevitably have caused revolution in the internal social-economic relations. The land should have been given to the peasantry. The proletariat should have been secured against unlimited capitalist exploitation. The entire economic life of the country needed to be freed from the fetters of feudal-militarist oppression. In short, imperialism could not be overthrown unless its native allies were destroyed. Complete national liberation could be realised, conditions for rapid political-economic development of the Chinese people could be created only by seriously encroaching upon the privileged position of the classes whose representatives led the nationalist movement. This was the social contradiction inside the Chinese nationalist movement.

The petty bourgeois left wing of the Kuo Min Tang, in collaboration with some militarist rivals of Chiang Kai-Shek, resisted the latter's dictatorship. But before long they were faced with the same problem of class antagonism. The design of the feudal-bourgeois elements to betray the revolution and come to a compromise with imperialism could be frustrated only by the action of the masses. The revolutionary nationalist government

of Wuhan could not exist without the support of the working class. When the big bourgeoisie went against the revolution, there were two ways before the petty bourgeois radicals: namely, to join whole-heartedly the workers and peasants in a determined attack upon the reactionary classes that were hostile to the revolution; or to follow the big bourgeoisie into the camp of counter-revolution.

The bourgeoisie, supported and encouraged by imperialism, began to mobilise all the forces of reaction against the revolutionary centre of Wuhan. But the petty bourgeois leaders of Wuhan hesitated to attack the roots of reaction in the territories under their control. The proletariat and peasantry, however, did not hesitate. They began the attack. Led by the Communist Party (the political organ of the proletariat), the peasantry rose up in revolt. The National revolution became essentially an agrarian revolution. In the cities the proletariat began to arm themselves to defend the revolution.

The officers of the nationalist army were mostly landlords. They were hostile to the peasant movement. They were against any agrarian reform. When the peasants put forward the demand for the confiscation of landlords' lands, the army under feudal officers attacked the peasant movement. Counter-revolutionary insurrections took place, demanding that the Wuhan government should suppress the workers' and peasants' movement and that the Kuo Min Tang should break with the Communist Party. The petty bourgeois radicalism of the Wuhan government went bankrupt. It capitulated before the reactionary officers defending the interests of the landowning classes. Workers' and peasants' organisations were attacked by it as fiercely as by the northern militarists and by the counter-revolutionary generals of Chiang Kai-Shek. The Communist Party became the object of bitter hatred. The Communists were arrested and executed by hundreds. Counter-revolution became triumphant throughout the nationalist territories. The petty bourgeois nationalists capitulated to the counter-revolutionary feudal-bourgeois-militarist block which had already sold the country to imperialism.

The nation was sacrificed on the altar of class interests. The democratic (non-class) ideals of the Kuo Min Tang were lost in the fierce clash of class-interests.

The lessons of these revolutionary and counter-revolutionary events in China are, that the nationalist bourgeoisie in the colonial and semi-colonial countries are essentially counter-revolutionary; that the national revolution to be successful must be an agrarian revolution; that not only the big bourgeoisie, but even the petty bourgeoisie, in spite of their radical phrases, cannot and will not lead the agrarian revolution; that the petty bourgeoisie when placed in power by the support of the workers and peasants do not share and defend this power with the working class, but hand it over to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie; and that the working class operating through their independent political party (Communist Party) is the only guarantee for the success of national revolution.

The treachery and capitulation of the petty bourgeois left of the Kuo Min Tang was instantly replied to by the insurrection of the revolutionary troops led by Communists. The insurrection became the rallying ground of all the revolutionary forces, including the petty bourgeois democratic masses. The revolutionary consciousness of these has been quickened by the treachery of their leaders. They are now convinced that the way out of the present political slavery and economic backwardness lies through a revolution affecting the very roots of the existing social system, and that the proletariat is the only force that can lead this revolution.

The temporary character of the victory of counter-revolution is already apparent. The revolutionary army is raising peasant revolts. The peasants are arming themselves and beginning guerilla war covering wide regions. The proletariat in Shanghai, Canton, Wuhan, and other cities are attacking reaction through constant strikes and demonstrations. The big bourgeoisie have become openly counter-revolutionary. The petty bourgeois leaders have sold themselves to feudal-bourgeois reaction. The working class alone stand true to the revolution and will fight till the final victory is won.

CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

By CLEMENS DUTT

Introduction

THE basis of British imperialist exploitation of India is to be found in the exploitation of the agricultural population. India has been primarily valuable to British capitalism as a source of raw material and as a market for British manufactured goods, and the development of India in these two directions has involved the transformation of the old social order, the destruction of the old self-contained village economy and skilled handicrafts, and the conversion of agriculture into a capitalist industry. The effect of British policy is seen in the over-pressure on agriculture, resulting in no less than 72 per cent. of the total population of 320 millions being now dependent on this one form of occupation, and in the extreme and growing poverty of millions of cultivators. This poverty is only partially attributable to the direct burden of Government land revenue exactions. More important, as will be seen, are the less obvious forms of exploitation due to the penetration of capitalism in the village and the conversion of the cultivating peasant into a producer of commodities for the capitalist market. In this process, exploitation by the Government, by landlords, by money-lenders and capitalist merchants all play their part and no remedy for the poverty-stricken conditions of the peasant can be found by considering any of these evils apart and alone, any more than remedies can be found by isolated reforms in the direction of improving agricultural methods, devising checks on sub-division of holdings, &c. The change that is taking place in the village is a whole process of social change, involved in the replacement of feudalism by capitalism and the development of capitalism with its accompanying class differentiations marked above all by the creation of a class of landless agricultural proletarians.

Exploitation by Government

A direct levy on the peasant cultivator or landlord based on the area cultivated or the amount of the crop was the earliest form of government revenue, and for a long time was the chief source of income for the British administration. Sir William Hunter, in his book on *The Indian Empire* (1882), declared that

The land furnishes the chief source of Indian revenue and the collection of the land tax forms the main work of Indian administration.

At that time the gross revenue collected amounted to £22 millions. In 1924-25 the total land revenue from British India had increased to Rs. 37.7 crores or the equivalent of about £22 millions. With the development of other sources of revenue, especially from customs duties and from railways, the land revenue, although greater than before, ceased to represent the most important item of the budget receipts. The report of the taxation inquiry committee issued in 1926 declares that the land revenue which forty years ago contributed 53 per cent. of the total receipts of the Government, now contributed only 20 per cent. Nevertheless, this burden, which falls with especial hardship on the millions of small cultivators, is sufficiently great, added to as it is by local exactions and the payment of indirect taxes on salt, &c., to cause many Indian nationalists to see in it the main reason for the now universal poverty of the peasants. The opinion of Keir Hardie, written after his tour in 1907, may be taken as typical and is worth quoting at length. He says :—

Eighty per cent. of the taxes in India are raised by revenue assessment upon land. The Government steadily discourages private ownership in land as it objects to an idle landlord class coming between itself and the real producers of wealth—those who till the soil. The amount of taxes raised direct from the peasant is from 50 to 65 per cent. of the value of the yield of the land, in addition to which they have to pay local taxes and various other small items so that probably not less than 75 per cent. of the harvest goes in taxes . . . From time to time the revenue charges are revised so that the Government may obtain the last penny which can be wrung from the over-weighted peasant. Increases of 30 per cent. are common, and there are many on record of 50, 70 and even 100 per cent. It is this fact which keeps the people of India in a condition of perpetual, hopeless, grinding poverty.

Keir Hardie quotes also some figures which he regards as fairly conclusive evidence that the peasant pays more now than he did

under pre-British rule. Thus, he points out that when the province of Bengal came under British dominion in 1817, the revenue claimed by its rulers from the peasants was estimated at 8 million rupees or one-fourth of the crop. After 1817 the process of forcing up the land revenue began, so that by 1823 it had been increased to 15 million rupees, and by 1875 to 48 million rupees. According to the latest official report (*Agricultural Statistics, 1924-25*) the total land revenue from the fully assessed area of the Bombay Presidency for which figures are available, and excluding Indian states, was 43.8 million rupees. This, however, excludes about 48 million acres not fully assessed, and another million acres of which figures were not available. The estimated revenue for 1925-26 given in the provincial budget amounts to 56 million rupees. There has been considerable controversy over the question whether or not land taxation is heavier in its incidence now than it was under pre-British rule, but one thing is certain, and that is that the peasant is made to yield as big a tribute as can possibly be exacted without causing his absolute ruin, and that he receives very little in return. The peasant might just as well be paying the money directly to the British Treasury in England for all the return that he sees. There are many villages which pay a contribution of several thousand rupees and never see a British official or any sign of Government enterprise, not even a school. The provision of village education should obviously be the first charge on the money taken from the peasants, yet its neglect in India is a by-word throughout the world, and two villages out of every three will be found to have no school at all. Nor can Government irrigation schemes be regarded as a return for land revenue payments, for irrigation water is made the subject of a special charge, and, in fact, the Government irrigation works taken as a whole yield a return of 7 to 8 per cent. on the capital invested in them.

Apart from its magnitude as a whole, the British system of obtaining revenue from the peasantry exhibits several features which involve special hardships for the poorest part of the population. In the first place, the revenue demand is based on the area and rental value or quality of the soil and is independent of the size of the crop, on which all pre-British land taxation was based.

Only in the case of very severe crop failure can there be a compassionate remission of land taxation. Consequently when the crop is indifferent or poor the peasant usually suffers severely. In the second place, together with abolition of estimation of the tax according to the crop, payment in grain has also been abolished and replaced by payment in money. Thirdly, payment is enforced with the utmost severity. There have been many cases where peasants have had to sell their cattle and household utensils to pay the tax, and even more frequently cases where they have had no alternative but to fall into the clutches of the moneylender to avoid distraint. Even more harsh is the nature of the incidence of the tax, which is levied uniformly whether the cultivator has a holding of several hundred acres or a miserable plot of less than an acre. In the case of a big landlord or cultivator, the payment of land revenue is a comparatively small burden ; in the case of the poor peasant it is an exaction which represents a relatively enormous toll on the amount available for the purchase of the necessities of life.

More than half of the total cultivated area in India is held under the ryotwari system of tenure, where the ryot or cultivator pays the land revenue direct to the government officers under an assessment which is revised at periods of about thirty years. Frequent cases of discontent occur among the peasantry at the enhancement of land revenue on revision of the settlement. Thus, in the Alibagh district there has been this year a considerable movement of revolt among the peasants, who have refused to pay land tax owing to the increases imposed. In such cases, the Government has the power to sell the goods of the ryot and even to alienate his holding. In the report published in March, 1927, of the Committee on Land Revenue appointed by the Bombay Legislative Council there is a minute of dissent by Rao Saheb D. P. Desai which, among other things, calls attention to the "stringent provisions of the Bombay Land Revenue Code which enable the collector to sell the immoveable property of an agriculturist under sections 153-55 for arrears of land revenue," and he declares:—

the present land revenue law of procedure is arbitrary and harsh and even the small concessions that it makes are never carried out in

practice . . . ownership once enjoyed by the ryot over his holding has been snatched away from him and he is made a serf of the Government.

Provincial reports on land revenue show that sale of peasant holdings in default of revenue payments still take place. In 1922-23 the Madras Government sold land estimated to be worth over 11 lakhs of rupees in order to recover arrears of revenue amounting to less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. The sale realised less than 2 lakhs.

The facts relating to land revenue show that it plays an important part in the exploitation of the peasant population. The cultivators holding their tenancies direct from the Government under the ryotwari system are not in the position of peasant proprietors, but are virtually tenants of an exacting and oppressive landlord. The final stage of capitalist agriculture is reached when the land is cultivated by wage-labourers hired by the capitalist landlord. Under the present system in India that stage has not yet been reached, but since so large a proportion of the small peasants are hardly able, or definitely unable, to make a bare subsistence out of the land, they may be considered to all intents and purposes as wage labourers on an enormous State farm who receive for their labour only just sufficient for their reproduction, while the rest of the value that they create goes into the pockets of the exploiters.

Exploitation by Landlords

The introduction of capitalism into Indian agriculture involved a number of processes including as the most important (1) the break-up of the village communal system of production, (2) the introduction of private property in land, (3) the replacement of barter by money economy, (4) the abolition of serfdom and other relics of feudalism. The first two processes naturally go together, and from the earliest occupation of India, the officials of British administration consciously sought to reproduce the social relations of capitalist agriculture with which they were familiar at home. Their desire was to create a body analogous to the landlord class in England and they considered that the best way to secure this object was to confer large property rights in land on loyal ruling chieftains or on their own creatures (often originally mere farmers of the revenue), and to fix the land tax payable by them in perpetuity. This was the origin of the permanent settlement made in 1793,

under which the amount payable as land revenue by the big landlords or zemindars was fixed once for all. Later, the Government found that it was undesirable to be unable to change the rates of assessment, and so the later assessments under the zemindary system, in which the Government collects the revenue not directly from the peasants but through the class of superior landlords, were made temporary. The area under the zemindary system in British India amounted in 1921 to about 318 million acres (*i.e.*, about 48 per cent. of the total area), of which 123 million acres are under permanent settlement.

The big zemindars are still the typical representatives of the Indian bourgeoisie. Of the 229 millions dependent on agriculture as estimated by the 1921 census, including Indian States, 10 millions are put down as obtaining income from rents.¹ The majority of the zemindars are a sheer burden on agriculture, mere rent-receivers, rack renting and exploiting the peasants under them. The total burden of this parasitic class in agricultural production on the backs of the actual cultivators is considerably greater than that of the Government land revenue exactions. Professor K. T. Shah attempts by two different methods to arrive at an estimate of the total income of the landlord class. The first estimate is derived from the figure of the total land revenue paid on land held under the zemindary system. This land revenue amounts to about 18 crores of rupees and on the assumption that the zemindars pay away about ten per cent of their income as land tax, their total income would be approximately 189 crores of rupees, or about £135 millions. Reckoning that there are rather over 10 millions supported by rent in British India, or nearly two million families, this estimate would give an average annual income of 180 rupees per head or 900-1,000 rupees per family. This sum is at least several times as large as the average annual income of a peasant cultivating family, and, of course, while many families of rent-receivers will be also cultivators, there will be a large number of big proprietors with incomes much above 1,000 rupees per year.

¹Professor K. T. Shah estimates the total number of rent receivers in the several provinces of British India as 12½ million as compared with 193 million ordinary cultivators. (*Wealth and Taxable Capacity of India.*)

The second method of estimating the burden of landlordism is of especial interest, as being based on the toll taken of the agricultural production of the peasants. Professor Shah calculates the total net agricultural production for 1921-22 to be valued at just over 2,000 crores of rupees.² Of this, the share of British India on an area basis is about 1,300 crores, or allowing for richer land and greater cultivation, say 1,500 crores. Nearly half of this is produced under the zemindary system, *i.e.*, an annual value of 600-750 crores of rupees. If, then, rent is taken as equal to a quarter of the gross produce, the total income from agricultural rents will be 150-188 crores of rupees.

It is possible that the above estimates are rather on the high side for some parts of the country, but this is certainly not the case for the permanently settled area, particularly in Bengal. In Bengal, the land revenue under the permanent settlement remains what it was a century ago, *viz.*, about $2\frac{1}{4}$ crores of rupees, but the rental value of the land has so much increased that, according to the All-India census report, "the total realised as rent by the landlord class including middle men in Bengal is Rs. 13.5 crores per annum." In some parts of Bengal there are as many as 12 or even 16 intermediate landlords between the revenue paying zemindar and the cultivating peasant, each one of whom does his best to rack-rent those below him, the final oppressive burden being borne by the poverty-stricken ryot.

Formerly, with more land available and fewer possible tenants, the landlords could not afford to dispossess their tenants and rents were lower. During the last century, with the growing pressure on land, rack-renting has enormously increased, so that the Government has been forced to introduce legislation in order to prevent the landlords from demanding exorbitant rents and ejecting the tenants from their holdings. As an example, the Revenue Administration Report for the Province of Agra, 1892-93, notes that in one year at that time "application for ejectment of tenants-at-will rose from 57,875 to 64,353." Two years later the figure rose to 72,105. The Agra Tenancy Act, 1901, attempted to counteract this by defining different classes of tenants, with the object of making it illegal to eject or raise the rent of the established

¹ One crore=10,000,000. A crore of rupees=approximately £7½ millions.

holders. In spite of legislation, the number of non-cultivating landlords and tenants is everywhere on the increase. Madras statistics show that the proportion of non-cultivators supported by agriculture increased from 20 per 1,000 in 1901 to 27 per 1,000 in 1921 (Pillai, *Economic Conditions in India*, 1925). In the Guntur region of Madras, the proportion of non-cultivating landowners increased from 30 per 1,000 in 1901 to 34 in 1911 and 56 in 1921. The number of non-cultivating tenants increased from 2 per 1,000 in 1901 to 32 per 1,000 in 1921. (*Economic Organisation of Indian Villages*, Ranga and Reddi, 1926.) Professor Radha Kamal Mukerji declares that "in the Punjab alone, the number of rent receivers has increased from 660,000 to 1,000,000 during the last decade." (*Forward*, January 17, 1926.) Even under the ryotwari system the number of non-cultivators is on the increase. In his study of the village of Jutegaon Bruk in the Bombay Presidency, Dr. Mann found that there were 146 landholders and only 114 separate cultivators. The following figures quoted by Pillai (*Economic Conditions in India*) give an idea of the growing rate at which land was changing hands in the Punjab at the end of the nineteenth century.

					Average Annual Sales of Land	Average Annual Area mortgaged (area in acres)
1866-74	..	..	..	..	88,000	143,000
1875-80	..	..	..	..	93,000	212,000
1880-85	..	..	..	..	160,000	296,000
1885-90	..	..	..	..	310,000	590,000
1890-95	..	..	..	..	338,000	554,000

Mr. Pillai notes that "the new owners have not generally turned to the cultivation of the soil ; the old cultivators were to remain not as owners but as tenants."

These figures bear witness to the prevalent increasing poverty and distress of the peasant cultivators and the increasing expropriation from their holdings. The peasant proprietors are passing away, they are becoming mere workers for a parasitic landlord class, or are even definitely thrown into the ranks of the landless agricultural proletariat. The following quotation from a recent study of agricultural conditions in Malabar describes the same process of landlordism at work in another part of India.

In a simple lease of the Verrumpattam type it is not at all uncommon that the tenant is called upon to pay to the landlord the whole of the estimated net produce after deducting the bare cost of seed and cultivation and consequently he is merely a labourer on subsistence wages, though it suits his landlord to bind him by contract. It frequently happens that the rent which the tenant covenants to pay is more than the land could yield, and in this case a burden of debt accumulates on him, and his position becomes little better than that of a slave. If he incurs his landlord's displeasure, a decree for eviction and arrears of rent, and his means of livelihood are gone for ever. (*Economic Life in a Malabar Village*, S. Aiyer, 1925.)

This sort of situation could be paralleled from almost every part of India. Connected with the development of capitalism in agriculture and the increase of the landlord class is another feature which is becoming more and more common all over India, *viz.*, absentee landlordism. Formerly only the biggest landlords left their estates to be managed by an agent and themselves lived in the towns or abroad. The majority of the lesser zemindars were themselves interested in agriculture and were not yet attracted by the new methods of spending money available under capitalist civilisation. Since then more and more have left their holdings for the luxuries of a town life. Thus we have reproduced in India all the evils associated with "absentee landlordism," familiar in the history of Ireland. Sir P. C. Ray, giving evidence before the Economic Inquiry Committee in 1925, declared, "one of the principal causes of the growing poverty of the rural population is absentee landlordism." Naturally, with the hierarchy of landlords in Bengal under the permanent settlement, absentee landlords are more common there than elsewhere, but similar reports are available from all parts.

In Malabar, it is declared that

The big janmis or landlords are more often than not absentees living in a distant place interested only in the punctual collection of their dues. (*Economic Life in a Malabar Village*, S. Aiyer, 1925.)

A study of a village Bheka³ in the Allahabad district reports that "practically all the zemindars are absentees," and comments on its evil results in the lack of example and assistance to the cultivators, (such as could be afforded by the running of model farms) and the absence of communal activity. The author declares that whereas

³*Studies in the Rural Economy of the Allahabad District*, B. G. Bhitnagar, 1924.

indifference to neighbourly obligations was formerly a characteristic only of the towns it is now finding its way to the village also.

The modern system of landlordism in India is predominantly on a capitalist money basis. Nevertheless many relics of feudalism still exist in many parts of India and especially in the Indian States. The depressed classes or outcasts, the so-called untouchables, were at one time in many cases serfs bound to the soil. Landlord oppression of these classes and of the poorer cultivators takes the form of the exaction of many other services and contributions besides that of rent. Such exactions consist especially of compulsory labour for the landowner and forced contributions and levies on special occasions paid either in money or in kind. Professor Mukerji (1925) says that many serfs still exist in most villages of the central provinces. In Malabar a peculiar feature of agricultural labour is the existence of a class of semi-slaves called Cherumas or Pulayas. It is only half a century ago that their legal status as slaves was removed and even now they are agricultural slaves attached to their master's soil and transferred to the buyer of land when it is sold. Their wages are paid in kind. In Cochin, they comprise 50 per cent. of the field labourers in the State. In Bombay Presidency there occurs a well-known form of tenancy known as the "Khoti" system, under which the owners of the soil, the "Khots," regard themselves as having various feudal rights over the peasants, who complain of exaction of forced labour and other semi-feudal dues. These relics of feudalism are survivals from the pre-capitalist period. They are now rapidly passing away with the conversion of the former serfs into free proletarian labourers, but the exploitation of the latter is not any the less intense under their new status.

(To be concluded.)

CAPITALISM AND TRADE UNIONISM IN EGYPT

By U. ZIMRING

EGYPT is an agrarian country. Three-fourths of the population are tillers of the land. Having no developed industries, Egypt constitutes, despite her nominal independence, merely an object of economic and political domination by the British Empire.

We are not going to dwell on the history of the subjugation of Egypt by British imperialism; we shall only recall a few phases which characterise the relations between Great Britain and Egypt. Prominent among these phases are such facts as the crushing of the national-revolutionary movement in the post-war period by armed British forces and the bestowal of a constitution on Egypt which made her the direct vassal of England. Or let us recollect the ultimatum in 1924, in connection with the murder of Lee-Stack, which furnished a pretext for the seizure of Sudan and the violation of the Treaty concerning the joint British-Egyptian administration of the Sudan. Finally, the very latest action of British imperialism in Egypt is the British naval demonstration in Egyptian waters in the summer of 1927 as an answer to the questions raised by the Egyptians about reforms in the command of the Egyptian army, about nationalisation of the State apparatus, about frontier lines and so on. In reply to the demands, which simply meant that the Egyptians did not wish to be dragged into a future war, and were an attempt at securing the real independence of Egypt, the British Government dispatched armed cruisers to the shores of Egypt.

It is in the interest of British imperialism to retain Egypt as a feeble agrarian country. By artificial methods Egypt was transformed by England into a country cultivating only one kind of crops, namely, cotton to supply the English textile industries (England being the principal consumer of Egyptian cotton). The results of this policy may be seen from the fact that Egypt,

ever since the forced development of cotton cultivation, has steadily increased the importation of various crops. Thus, in 1897, the Egyptian imports of foreign crops amounted to 1,793,940 Egyptian pounds sterling. Since then these imports have increased, reaching in 1925 the amount of 8,983,140 Egyptian pounds. The reason for this is readily seen, since the area under cotton was increased at the expense of other crops. The great mischief of such a state of things becomes particularly revealed in years of crisis (such as a drop in cotton prices), since Egyptian exports are based chiefly on cotton (over 93 per cent. of the total exports). Hence the sudden drop in cotton prices last year was the cause of a catastrophic crisis in Egypt.

Egyptian society has lately become confronted with the acute problem of the rationalisation of national economy, of the cultivation of a series of new crops, and of *industrialisation of Egypt's national economy*.

The Egyptians realise quite well that only through economic rationalisation and industrialisation the country will acquire the power and force for securing economic and political emancipation from the yoke of imperialism. This aspect has become quite prominent lately in the nationalist press.

The opponents of industrialisation, consisting chiefly of the big cotton-growers and the landed aristocracy, as well as the Anglo-Egyptian bourgeoisie and its associates among the native merchant classes, usually talk about Egypt being handicapped by a scarcity of fuel which does not permit the building up of a native industry despite the abundance of raw materials. But these arguments are baseless if we bear in mind, for instance, Egypt's extensive resources in water-power. Naturally, the basic branch of Egyptian industry in the future will be the textile industry. Nevertheless, Egyptian economists are pointing out a series of other lines of industry that are capable of great development in the future, such as the chemical, paper, glass industries, &c.

For the purpose of encouraging native industry the Egyptian bourgeoisie has founded the new bank (the Egyptian National Bank), its capital stock subscribed entirely by national capitalists. This new bank, according to the Paris newspaper, *Le Temps*, is

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destined to play a great part in the new industrial developments and in the new economic life of Egypt.

A great part is also beginning to be played by the "League for the Encouragement of Egyptian Industry," whose president is M. Viso-Vasif-Bey, one of the leaders of the Nationalist Movement. This league comprises representatives of the various branches of Egyptian industry with a total capital stock of 40 million Egyptian pounds, giving employment to no less than 200,000 workers. The League presented a memorandum to the Trade and Industry Commission of the Ministry of Finances in June, 1927, in which it urged the need of relieving the customs duties and taxes on the new industries and on their products, and suggested a series of measures for furnishing credits to the new industrial enterprises, such as the participation of the State in the newly organised industrial concerns, the buying up of most of the shares of a number of foreign companies, and so on. The basic slogans of the League are : (1) Governmental preference to the native industries ; (2) protection of native industry against foreign competition ; (3) improved means of communication and adaptation of the railways to the new conditions (the transportation of raw materials &c.).

What is the position occupied by the working class amid the present economic developments in Egypt ? Naturally, the question of labour power comes to the forefront. Bearing in mind the general growth of the population (every ten years the population increases by nearly 2,000,000),¹ and the intense pauperisation of the agricultural population, coupled with the growing concentration of land-holdings in the hands of the large proprietors (40 per cent. of the entire land proprietors), it is easy to understand why Egypt has such a great abundance of labour power. For a long time already there has been talk in Egypt about a surplus of 2,000,000 workers. If Egypt's industrialisation, on the one hand, will have a favourable effect upon these large numbers of unemployed workers, on the other hand, owing to the excessive supply of labour power, it contains the menace of increased exploitation and a general capitalist offensive against the working class. The bourgeoisie

¹ The following figures are sufficient indication : in 1882 the population was 6,831,000, in 1900 it increased to 10,176,000, in 1917 to 12,751,000, and in 1927 to 14,168,000.

naturally intends to build up the national industry by means of imposing worse conditions upon the working class.

Owing to last year's crisis the conditions of the masses of the workers have grown bad already. The question of labour power and of the relations with the workers has been lately debated in the bourgeois press. Hence it is the most essential task of the working class in Egypt under the new conditions not only to secure the normal working conditions, but also to fight for a general improvement in the conditions. An intensification of the class struggle is dictated by the very facts and circumstances of actual life.

Standing upon the threshold of the new phase in the economic development of the country, the working class in Egypt is confronted with the question whether it should sacrifice itself for the sake of the native bourgeoisie or whether it should take up a class struggle directed at the same time at the foreign capitalists as well. That the workers are bent on taking the second course is evident from the mass demands presented by the workers for increased wages, better conditions of labour, and specific labour legislation.

This trend of the working class is particularly manifest in the fight for labour legislation and for the recognition of the workers' unions. Let us deal with these two aspects.

The campaign for labour legislation became particularly strong in 1926. It had already been started by the revolutionary Confederation of Labour, but the subsequent reaction had put an end to the activities of the Confederation. In 1924, a labour member of parliament, Hasan-Nafi (one of the leaders of the Cairo Federation of Labour), moved a resolution in parliament for the election of a "Commission on labour questions." Owing to obstruction by the bourgeoisie the question was shelved, and only in 1926 the resolution was brought in again by the re-elected Hasan-Nafi and carried this time by parliament under the pressure of a great clamour from the working class. A commission was then elected, with Hasan-Nafi as chairman. The government did its best to hamper the work of the Commission, appointing reactionary members to take part in its deliberations. So far there has been published no parliamentary Bill dealing with labour legislation.

The fight for recognition of the unions is vigorously carried on.

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A number of unions appealed to the Egyptian government for official recognition. In many cases the government replied to the effect that owing to the absence of a Trade Union Act it could not extend to them recognition *de jure*. Of course, such conditions have always handicapped the work of the trade unions. Nevertheless, in Egypt there is hardly to be found any more or less considerable industrial enterprise without a trade union or some other organisation of the workers. Most of these unions are controlled by the firms, and they are numerically small and dwarfish. If among the industrial workers we find a relatively high percentage of organised workers, on the other hand the agricultural labourers are entirely unorganised. Besides, the absence of labour legislation hinders the formation of a strong trade union centre in the country.

True, there exists the Egyptian Federation of Trade Unions at Cairo which at one time embraced about 100 small unions (according to official data for 1925). Nevertheless, this Federation is quite inactive, carrying on a precarious existence, and having no contact with the trade unions. The Federation was founded in 1924, after the suppression of the revolutionary Confederation of the Egyptian trade unions. Taken under the high protection of King Fuad, it carried on a reformist policy from the very first day of its existence. Its popularity among the masses of the workers is quite insignificant. At the present time the Federation is in very bad condition, and the number of its affiliated members has considerably shrunk. The largest trade organisations of the Egyptian working class do not belong to this Federation, and its future is by no means bright. One of the largest unions is that of Government employees, which has its branches in all the important commercial and industrial towns. Its headquarters are at Cairo, whilst in the Cairo branch alone there are 7,400 members. Altogether this union has a membership of 13,000 people. Next in importance are the Tramway-men's Unions of Alexandria and Cairo, the unions of the railwaymen, tobacco workers, sugar refinery workers, textile workers, the union of Suez Canal workers, the union of motor-drivers, &c. Altogether there are in Egypt at present about 120 unions embracing from 50,000 to 60,000 workers. Notwithstanding the hard conditions generally prevailing, there is at present going on a brisk growth of new unions, which no doubt indicates the growth

of class consciousness among the workers. The demands of the workers, which we have already mentioned, reach beyond the existing organisations and attract ever increasing masses of the workers.

It is hard to tell as yet whether the Egyptian working class under the new conditions of capitalist industrialisation, containing the menace of worse conditions to come, will be able to rally to the pure class-slogans, or whether it will follow its leaders who drag the movement in the train of the bourgeoisie. Will the existing trade union organisations prove capable of taking the proper class-struggle course? Upon this depends not only the future of the Egyptian labour movement, but also that of the whole struggle for national independence in Egypt, which can be successfully carried on only by the working class in alliance with the Egyptian peasantry.

THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE U.S.A.

The Migration of Industry to the South
By J. WILENKIN

THE migration of the United States industries from one region to another occurs periodically. Before the Civil War (1861-1865), under the rule of the cotton magnates, the country was divided into three economic fields : Southern states, which planted mainly cotton ; Northern Atlantic states, which were engaged mainly in manufacturing ; and North-Western states and territories, at the outset chiefly in agricultural pursuits.

But a short time before the declaration of the Civil War there set in some changes in the economic life of the country. The West had taken the preliminary steps in developing the heavy industries, especially the iron and steel manufacturing. The manufacturing industry of the New England and Middle Atlantic states did not absolutely diminish, but on the contrary, even increased ; however, in proportion to the development of the industry of the nation as a whole it declined. In 1859 New England produced, according to the United States census, 24·8 per cent. and the Middle states 42·5 per cent. of the total products of the country ; in 1899 their percentages were only 14·4 and 38. The Southern states produced 10·3 per cent. in 1859 and their manufacturing would have continued to grow but for the Civil War, which as a matter of fact precipitated chaos in the South by abolishing the economic basis of that region—slavery.

Thus, at the end of the last century the South did not even reach the height of its pre-Civil War industrial development. But this does not mean that the manufacturing industry of the South ceased to develop after the war. It had been lagging in comparison with other regions of the nation, for the industry of the Northern and Western states was enhanced immensely during and after the Civil War. The increase in manufacture for

the decade ending in 1869 was 124·4 per cent. for the country as a whole, but the South registered little of that gain.

On the other hand, the Central and Western states advanced in manufacturing more than any other region of the United States : their percentages were in 1859 respectively 18·1 and 0·4; and in 1899, 30·7 and 4·3. With the growth of agriculture in the West, the manufacture of agricultural implements had to increase there. Before the Civil War they were produced mainly in New York and Ohio. During the reconstruction period New York and Ohio declined in importance with regard to the manufacture of the above-mentioned implements, but some states to the West increased to a great extent. Still another migration from the East to the West was that of slaughtering and meat packing, because of the growth of the Western ranches. The industry really began at Cincinnati in 1818, and that city held first place until surpassed by Chicago in 1861. The leather industry furnished another example of drifting of manufacturing towards the West. Its migration began from Massachusetts and New York to Pennsylvania and the Central and Western states about 1879 when the tan bark supply was becoming exhausted.

As stated, the industrial development of the South till the end of the nineteenth century had been backward due to its application of slave labour and due to the after-effects of the Civil War, which it had felt more than any other region of the country. Hence after the emancipation of the negroes the Southern manufacturers could not follow in the footsteps of the Northern and Western states, which were developing their industry at a tremendous pace, though the South possessed and still possesses great natural resources of latent wealth. Notwithstanding all this, some of the large industries of the South achieved a great progress in their development as soon as the Southern planters ceased to struggle against the Northern manufacturers and devoted all their time to the economic reconstruction of their region.

The early Southern industries were : cotton ginning ; wheat, corn and rice milling ; crushing of sugar cane ; distillation of turpentine and rosin ; lumbering ; and iron ore smelting. These industries did not require great skill and were closely connected with agriculture. All these industries were steadily increasing during

the last decade of the nineteenth century. Three other industries—tobacco, cotton seed oil and cake, and cotton—were rapidly increasing. In 1899 the value of tobacco manufactured in the South was \$78,091,650 as compared with \$25,938,212 in 1879, a gain of 201·1 per cent., or six times that of the United States as a whole. The leading Southern producers were, in order : Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida. The lumber and timber industry was also more rapidly increasing in the South than in any other section of the country towards the close of the last century. In 1869 the value of the products was \$28,156,671 ; in 1899 it was \$185,727,890. The gain was 559·6 per cent. ; during the last decade of the nineteenth century it was three-fourths of the entire increase registered for the nation. Although the industry was fairly well distributed, Arkansas was ahead of other Southern states ; the other leaders were Tennessee, Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi in the order named. In 1899 the South, reporting 363 of the 369 establishments for making cotton seed oil and cake, enjoyed an actual monopoly. For the country as a whole the products were worth \$58,726,632 as compared with \$12,808,996 in 1899, *i.e.*, the increase was 203·7 per cent.

Cotton Manufacture in the Southern States

Possibly the most marked sign of the new industrial South could be noticed in the development of cotton manufactures. Although Massachusetts led all other states in 1899, as she had done from the beginning, her proportion of the whole had steadily declined to 32·8 per cent. in 1899, while the production steadily grew in the Southern states, especially in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia, the percentage share of which was enhanced from 6·2 of the total in 1879 to 11·7 in 1898 and 22·6 in 1899. The main reasons for this growth were the proximity of raw material, the abundant water power, and above all cheap labour as a sequel to the low cost of living and the lower standard of life left over from the times of slavery.

The rapidity of the growth of cotton manufacturing in the South is indicated by the fact that in the decade from 1869 to 1879 the increase in value of products was 43·8 per cent., in the decade from 1879 to 1889, 153·8 per cent. ; and in the decade

from 1889 to 1899, 128·8 per cent. as compared with 5·8 per cent., 28·9 per cent., and 7·8 per cent. respectively for each decade in all other states. The South also contributed 56·5 per cent., to the increase of spindles in the whole country, but the average consumption to the spindle in the Southern states was 164·4 lb. as compared with 72·9 in New England. The value of products to the spindle was \$22·09 in the South and \$14·91 in New England. The Southern products, because of their coarser character, averaged about 13·4 cents. per yard. The eleven-hour working day in the Carolinas and Georgia as compared with the ten-hour day in Massachusetts also tended to increase the consumption of each spindle. The value of the cotton product in the South was also reduced due to the practically unlimited woman and child labour, while in New England special laws against this are enforced.

In the twentieth century the textile industry of the nation continued to grow, and in about 1919 it was surpassed only by two industries—food and kindred products, and iron and steel (in the order given).

Among the textile manufactures cotton, worth about \$2,100,000,000 in 1919 (according to the census of 1920), is the most important. The United States is well adapted for the development of a large cotton industry because of its exceptionally large supply of raw material. The continuance of this industry has been made more certain by the rapid development of cotton seed oil and its by-products. Moreover, America has a very large market at home, and even if labour is dearer than in European countries, there is an abundance of cheap material, the most improved machinery, modern organisation, as, for instance, the Taylor system, which aids the exploiters in their attempt to enhance the intensity and the productivity of work.

Since 1919, cotton manufacturing in the Southern states is developing at a much more rapid pace than in the New England states. According to the statement of the March issue of the *National City Bank of New York Magazine*:—

The cotton goods industry is one of the country's largest industries and if cheap cotton has indeed put it back on its feet its recovery will exert an important influence for general business stability. Certainly the industry is due to a turn for the better, as it has been passing through very trying times for a number of years.

High prices for cotton, changing styles, and competition of silk have made hard sledding, particularly for mills located in New England, where conditions have been less favourable than in the South. Earnings have been unsatisfactory, and prices of mill shares have undergone a sharp recession, as indicated by the following table comparing the Fairchild indexes of representative Southern and New Bedford mill shares in February of this year with previous years :—

COTTON MILL SHARE AVERAGES

February				Southern	New Bedford
1923	..	..	..	145	162
1924	..	..	..	154	146
1925	..	..	..	138	138
1926	..	..	..	137	118
1927	..	..	..	126	82

This table proves that the cotton mill shares of the Southern states are more reliable than the stocks of New England mills, for the market price of the former has been very little reduced while the New England stocks fell in price almost 50 per cent. This shows clearly that the Northern cotton mills are being supplanted by Southern ones.

Many New England cotton manufacturers either open branches or entirely migrate to the South. This is the best proof that the South produces more cotton goods than New England. For otherwise the market price of the stocks of the Southern cotton mills would not stand higher than the shares of the New England establishments. Moreover, there are enough facts proving that the New England cotton mills are very frequently going bankrupt or, as stated, migrating to the South. The Northern cotton mills must give way to the Southern manufacturer, because the latter installs up-to-date machinery, up-to-date improvements, and up-to-date system of work.

And not only the cotton manufacturing industry is migrating to the South, but also all the other textile industries as wool, silk, and rayon. The last industry cannot prosper without wood pulp, which is, as stated, in abundance in the Southern states.

The Coal Industry Moves South

Another important industry which is gradually migrating below the Mason and Dixon line is bituminous coal.

Bituminous coal was in the beginning of the nineteenth century widely scattered over the country, but anthracite coal was and is confined almost entirely to Pennsylvania. Bituminous coal did not come into use for industrial purposes in the United States until about 1800, in the vicinity of Pittsburgh. The consumption of coal for the production of gas began in New Orleans in 1834. With the exception of Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee there was little production in the interior prior to 1860. But, speaking generally, during the nineteenth century and the first twenty-two years of the twentieth, bituminous coal-mining centred in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and western Pennsylvania, which until 1922 were the chief stokers of the furnace of the American industries. About this period the above-mentioned fields, having the best roofs and bottoms, and being freest from underground water, had been worked to the point where increasing costs of production had placed them at a competitive disadvantage in comparison with the newer fields such as those of western Virginia and eastern Kentucky. In these newer fields, coal at moderate depths is abundant. Many thick seams crop out on hillsides and along banks of streams, which make their mining easy. Many lie so near the surface that even if shafts must be sunk they are relatively inexpensive. Moreover, the newer fields contain a relatively high percentage of what is known as semi-bituminous, low volatile, smokeless coal, which is in great demand not only for steam-raising but also for domestic use.

Up to the time of the world war, these newer fields remained largely in the back-eddies of the westward migration. The first great trunk railroads had pushed toward the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific without much regard to the coalfields of west Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama. But the war stimulated a great advance of transportation throughout the newer fields. In 1900 the mileage of railroad line in actual operation was equal to 198,964, in the calendar year 1917 it reached 266,059, but fell to 261,984 in 1922. In general, we notice a great increase in railroad construction, for in 1923 and 1924 we witness a revival of railroad building. Thus the mileage in 1923 was about 263,000. Since 1920, many branch as well as trunk lines have crossed the above-mentioned Southern states with their new coalfields and brought them within easy reach of the domestic markets. All

these factors accelerated the development of Southern coal mines. Moreover, the Interstate Commerce Commission in its effort to equalise competition tended to establish freight rates that discriminated in favour of the newer fields, for they are, as a matter of fact, controlled by the Morgan interests.

All these developments in the United States produced an actual economic revolution of as great importance as the migration of the industry towards the West after the Civil War. Up to 1921, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and western Pennsylvania employed about two-fifths of the bituminous miners of the country and produced 38 per cent. of the tonnage, while the outlying districts produced 21 per cent. of the bituminous output, making the total production of the unionised fields about 60 per cent. of the nation's tonnage. In that year the non-unionised newer fields in south-west Virginia, eastern Kentucky, Alabama, and Tennessee were struggling for domination of the coal market. During the great strike of 1922 it had been obvious that non-unionised coal mines had reached such a high stage of development that they could produce 60 per cent. of the nation's average weekly consumption. This fact had convinced the Southern mineowners that the great shift was on and playing into their hands. They certainly did not miss this opportunity of increasing the development of their mines in the South: in 1923, the non-unionised fields produced 34 per cent. of the nation's tonnage; in 1924, 38.5 per cent., and by 1925 they were producing 65 per cent. of the nation's bituminous coal. In the process of this development many mineowners of the central competitive field acquired some mines in the new fields.

During this period there has been a strong tendency towards the formation of vertical combinations in American industry. One great industry after another, one trust after another or one corporation after another, has reached out to control the sources of its own raw material. The movement got under way about the time the new non-union fields were coming into use. These industrial corporations were buying out comparatively cheap coal mines in the newer fields and set up their own mining subsidiaries there, rather than in the old fields, where population was denser and land values and tax-rates correspondingly higher.

These vertical combinations, dominated as they are by the directors of the latest type of mechanised industries, have been the leaders in advancing mechanisation into the bituminous mines of the newer fields, where mechanisation under the old order had made extremely slow progress. Not only because their manufacturing experience has made them masters of the newer technique, but because they are able to command large blocks of capital (backed as they are by such large financial interests as Morgan, Mellon and Rockefeller) they have been able to introduce machinery beyond the capital resources of the independent bituminous operators. One cannot glance through the coal trade journals without being impressed by the increasing amount of space devoted to the editorial and advertising display of new coal-mining machinery, electrical cutting and loading machines, conveyers, electrical drills—an array of new inventions for revolutionising the methods of mining coal. And the United Mineworkers' Union quite often opposed these improvements, confident that it was able to resist the introduction of the new machinery and the new methods of work, as only a short time ago it was considered one of the strongholds of the American Federation of Labour, counting in its ranks over 600,000 members. Due to this resistance and due to the fact that the leaders of the United Mineworkers' Union neglected to organise the miners in the new fields, the great vertical combinations of the Morgan, Mellon, and Rockefeller interests find it easier to introduce their new technical improvements in the unorganised maiden fields in the South, rich in high quality of semi-bituminous coal. Besides, it is less difficult to install new improved machinery, new methods of work and new technique in new mines. The introduction of new machines in maiden fields is usually accompanied by diminished expenses, while in old mines it is necessary to lay out capital for the removal of the old worn-out machinery. Thus we see that invention, coupled with the financial power of vertical combinations in the form of trusts, corporations, &c., has given fresh impetus to the shift to the new coalfields in the old "solid" South. The old "solid" South is disintegrating and a new one is growing at a pace unknown in the history of the economic progress in the United States.

Migration of the Iron and Steel Industry

Thus the South is becoming ever more industrial. And besides the above-mentioned great industries, there is still another heavy manufacturing industry which is migrating from Northern, Eastern and Western states towards the South—the iron and steel industry. Iron and steel products were worth over eight times as much in 1899 as they were in 1859, according to the United States census of 1900. In 1899, 13,896 establishments, representing thirty-five industries, turned out products worth \$1,793,490,908, or 13·8 per cent. of the gross production of all industries.

The United States in 1900 was indeed the greatest iron producing country in the world. In that year, iron production was largely concentrated in three districts : Pennsylvania and Ohio, Illinois, and Alabama and Tennessee. The first of these produced nearly two-thirds of the product, for coal was abundant and cheap, and ore from the Lake Superior mines could be easily and cheaply obtained.

In the twentieth century, Pennsylvania, or rather Pittsburgh, though still leading in the manufacture of iron and steel, has to meet quite extensive competition. In the State of Illinois, Chicago has become an important centre for the production of iron and steel. Not far away, at Gary, Indiana, is one of the largest steel plants in the world. Numerous other lake ports, such as Duluth, Cleveland, Buffalo, &c., are now important centres.

But the most important competitors are now being found in the two Southern states—Alabama and Tennessee. Birmingham, in Alabama, favoured by ore, coal and limestone, is the great Southern centre. Neither the United States nor any other country of the world has such a field where three such important raw materials could be concentrated in one locality, especially limestone, important as a flux. Hence the manufacture of iron and steel in Birmingham is greatly increasing. It is shipped to the North and East as well as to the South by rail and water, the latter of which brings this city in close contact not only with all the parts of the United States, but also with all the countries of the world, for it is situated not far from the Panama Canal.

(To be continued.)

The World of Labour

THE QUEENSLAND RAILWAY STRIKE

THE recently ended strike of South Johnstone sugar workers (Queensland) supported by the local branch of the Railwaymen's Union is an event pregnant with serious consequences for the whole Australian labour movement. It showed up the touching unity between the Queensland "Labour Government" and the reactionary Australian Government as soon as a real industrial conflict arose.

The facts are, briefly, as follows. A strike broke out in the South Johnstone sugar refineries in Northern Queensland, owing to the discharge of several workers after many years of service. The strikers turned down the arbitration imposed upon them by the Executive of the Union (the sugar workers are organised in the Australian Workers' Union). The conflict became extremely protracted. The Queensland railwaymen organised in the Australian Railwaymen's Union supported the strikers. They refused to load and carry sugar prepared by scabs. The Queensland Government then declared that all railwaymen not fulfilling the orders of its representative would be discharged. The railwaymen declared a strike and the conflict threatened to spread and paralyse the whole industry of Queensland.

After a short struggle (the railwaymen's strike continued only about a week altogether) the Government was forced to give in. The sugar workers' strike soon came to an end, the strikers agreeing to arbitration under pressure from the Executive of the Australian Workers' Union, which threatened them with expulsion.

In the very beginning of the railway workers' strike, McCormack, Prime Minister of the Queensland "Labour Government," spoke out "in plain terms." His declaration earned for him the approval of the *London Times*, which made sympathetic comment on his words. It declared :—

The Labour Government is a Government like any other, and it cannot with safety to itself . . . suffer any trade union or any combination of trade unions to usurp its functions. Mr. McCormack sees that to tolerate a usurpation of the kind would be fatal to trade unionism as well as to the government. . . . Revolution must follow if they (the members of the legislative assembly) give allegiance to some body outside parliament.

McCormack follows the path taken by Baldwin last year for the smashing of the general strikel. He was unsuccessful this time, but the question of introducing legislation on strikes after the model of the British Bill, to prevent conflicts spreading from one industry to another, has already come under discussion in Australia.

Bruce, Prime Minister of the Federal Government, was still more definite in his views on the strike.

The railway strike was nothing less than a revolt. Means must be found to ensure that there was not a repetition of such a crisis. The extremists who preached class-war must be curbed. If I had my way I would throw these men out of Australia.

He went on to express the hope that measures would be examined at the next session of the Federal Parliament for the prevention of such conflicts arising. The new trade union bill passed by the British Parliament has long been the object of the yearning of Australia's reactionary Federal Government, and now the "Labour Government" is beginning to dream about it too, inciting the Prime Minister to persecute the left wing of the Labour movement.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Workers' Health and Safety: A Statistical Programme.* By Robert Morse Woodbury. (The Macmillan Company, New York. Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London. 205 pp., 12s. 6d.)
- A History of Socialist Thought.* By Harry W. Laidler. (Constable & Co., Ltd., 713 pp., 15s.)
- Socialism and the Living Wage.* By R. Palme Dutt. (C.P.G.B., 238 pp., 2s.)
- General Economic History.* By Max Weber. Translated by F. H. Knight, Ph.D. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 400 pp., 12s.)
- Poems of Human Service.* By G. Spiller. (The Utopia Press, Ltd., 79 pp., 1s.)
- The Stabilisation of the Mark.* By Dr. Hjalmar Schacht. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 247 pp., 8s. 6d.)
- Mr. Baldwin Explains.* By Peter Ibbetson. (The Hogarth Press, 143 pp., 4s. 6d.)
- The Case for Family Endowment.* By M. D. Stocks. (Labour Publishing Co., 95 pp., 1s.)
- A Defence of Communism: In Reply to H. J. Laski.* By Ralph Fox. (C.P.G.B., 96 pp., 1s.)
- War: The Communist International's Position.* By A. J. Bennet. (C.P.G.B., 40 pp., 3d.)
- Communist Party Training.* With a Preface by T. B. (C.P.G.B., 130 pp., 6d.)
- W.E.A. Outlines.* (Longmans, Green & Co., 90 pp., cloth, 2s.; paper, 1s.)
- (1) *How to Read Literature.* By G. E. Wilkinson.
 - (2) *The Economic System.* By G. D. H. Cole.
 - (3) *Local Government for Beginners.* By M. I. Cole.
 - (4) *Capitalist Combines.* By G. M. Colman.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE DOWNFALL OF TSARISM¹

By HAROLD GRENFELL

IN some ways it is a pity that this translation, which appeared only so late as last spring (though it must have been written before 1924, the year of Rodzianko's death in Serbia), had not earlier been available for English readers, since it throws much light upon the rapidly growing rot in Russia's political, economical, and social conditions during the generation preceding the 1917 revolutions. However, its publication here comes at a useful time, just when the Tory attack upon Soviet Russia, her institutions and her ideas, is being renewed with fresh ferocity.

There are, therefore, certain advantages in that the reading public now has before its eyes an objective sketch of the old Russian State's degeneracy, drawn by an extremely "respectable" Russian country squire, of convinced Conservative outlook, whose high official position as President of Russia's last pseudo-Parliament before and during the War brought him exceptional opportunities and occasions for observation.

Rodzianko himself was a sympathetic personality. Big, burly, bluff, and breezy; honest and courageous, but full of the prejudices of his noble caste, and more remarkable for character than for brains. Physically and mentally, he bore strong resemblance to our well-known popular figure of the Victorian and Edwardian eras, Mr. Chaplin; and, probably, knew as much about the ways of life and thought of the mass of the Russian people, outside the narrow circle of landowners, bankers, industrialists, officers, officials, and "intelligentsia" (together not 5 per cent. of the nation), as did Mr. Chaplin about the habits and mentality of British workers. In other words, he knew practically nothing (or less than nothing, since many popular ideas were wrongly founded), although he shared this ignorance, it now appears, with practically every other Russian holding high position before 1917.

Indeed, ignorance of this nature alone provides a rational explanation for the succession of steps by which Russia's ruling class itself brought down upon its own head the very fate that it was always fearing and seeking to avoid. But, in spite of these limitations, Rodzianko has left us an illuminating book—a book that, although not itself a tale of personal revelations, does help greatly to complete the picture of Tsarism's last stages during the War and up to the February revolution. Coming, as it does, from a highly-placed official, whose special functions and social relations gave him unequalled opportunities for hearing facts, gossip, and opinions of all kinds, it forms a valuable complement to the memoirs of the ambassadorial trinity—Paléologue, Buchanan, and Isvolsky—who ingenuously have already thrown so much light upon many dark doings of the Entente Powers before and during the War.

¹*The Reign of Rasputin: An Empire's Collapse.* By M. V. Rodzianko, President of last Russian Duma. (A. M. Philpot, London, 1927. 12s. 6d.)

The main thing that strikes a reader of *The Reign of Rasputin* is not so much the evidence that it provides of the truly Byzantine decadence of Court circles and general "Society" under the last Russian Tsar as the extraordinarily matter-of-course view taken of these phenomena, not only by Russians, but also by the foreign diplomats whose clear duty it was to draw proper inferences from all that they saw or felt around them. It is true, during 1916, when the fact of Russia's military exhaustion and defeat by Germany began to be realised among the privileged classes, opinion rapidly changed, and one heard officers of the Russian guards and navy vehemently rail against the Emperor as well as against the Empress.

This, although, of course, only in private conversation, was—with a foreigner—a proceeding quite unthinkable two years before. But the Entente Embassies, equally with this kind of people, had been aware of Rasputin's behaviour and influence for years past. No intelligent man, however little acquainted with Russian life or with Russian administration, could after five minutes' reflection have failed to see that a country whose governing class furnished by its irresponsible, frivolous, cynical conduct such glaring stigmata of moral corruption must also be undermined in the material sense by a corresponding rot that left it weak, unreliable, useless, as a political or military ally—a rot that could not be stopped, so widely had it now extended, by anything short of some kind of national convulsion, not a palace, or oligarchal revolution, of which Russia had already experienced many, each leaving the main evils as before, but a change springing from and effected by the outraged instincts of the mass of the people.

These signs were present on every hand for any objective observer to see, and to understand, their meaning. One is therefore pushed to the conclusion that, on the contrary, since the adulterous political Entente of 1907, those responsible for informing the Foreign Office (and, through it, the Government and the public that paid them) were either subjective in their reports or silent. An opinion formed by five years of seeing a British Embassy at work from the inside before and during the War leaves no shadow of doubt in one mind that both these attributes were present during that period. The German obsession by then had so thoroughly saturated the official outlook upon all exterior affairs that clearly it would have been fatal to the now known resolved Governmental policy had the Embassy been in the habit of making objective reports upon conditions in Russia.

To the same mind it is equally clear that objectivity of outlook at Petersburg being felt undesirable at Downing Street, its employment was thence officially discouraged; with the natural result that the Embassy occupied—one need not write "busied"—itself merely with the superficial aspect of things, and cared not at all to look beneath the surface. From this attitude arose its extreme ignorance of Russia, and especially of the Russian nation. So little had it troubled to gain knowledge of the people's ideas, as apart from those voiced in clubs, at dinner parties, in drawing-rooms, and bedrooms, that right up to the spring of 1916 it seemed wholly unaware that anything existed in the shape of an "internal situation." As for the February revolution, this not only took the Embassy entirely by surprise, but found

it without any conception or understanding of the underlying causes of the upheaval.

Consequently, the Ambassador was quite unable to advise, or to pursue, anything but a false and fatal policy. By the irony of fate, too, this policy was a main cause of the success of the October revolution. It is therefore the case that our Foreign Office, its satellites and their friends, can now fully enjoy the melancholy pleasure of realising that they themselves were those who furnished the greatest help towards bringing their most mortal enemies into power.

Herein lies the special value of this book to the Labour Movement.

Rodzianko draws with so firm a pencil the picture of the Russian oligarchy's degradation and decay (Rasputin, base figure that he was, *was* no more than a symbol, and much more a product than a cause of Tsarist degeneracy) that one can well see how facts and indications of the real state and strength of Russia had been staring people in the face for years, but yet disregarded by those whose fate they most nearly affected, abroad as well as at home.

Blindness, caused by hate directly of Germany and—through her—even more directly of the workers, it was that shut the eyes, ears, understanding, of British officialdom to a proper estimate of Russian potentialities. Now, recent events, nearer home, seem to indicate that the same blindness, arising out of the same hatred, hinders it still from seeing that, in the long run, similar potentialities in all modern countries require only sufficient amounts and periods of imbecile and corrupt (Arcos Raid and oil!) administration to turn them into active forces. Probably, since like causes produce like effects, it is not very long before we shall see British prototypes of Rasputin. But when that happens we may begin to rejoice, since it will be a sure sign of the nearing ripeness of the social ulcer.

ANTI-BOLSHEVIK PROPAGANDA

Bolshevist Russia. By Professor A. Karlgren. (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.).

THE stronger the Soviet Union becomes, and *the more its organisation as an increasingly socialistic community improves*, the more the capitalistic forces in the world try to keep people ignorant of facts, by spreading, through newspapers and books, wrong statements about Russia. "Much of what is told is, of course, invention"—this is the judgment given by Anton Karlgren himself in his book *Bolshevist Russia* (page 78), regarding some of the reports which he quotes from the country of the revolution. Unfortunately this statement is not meant to apply to his book. This neither is nor purports to be a book of adventure like Ossendovsky's *Gods, Men and Beasts*; it is something much meaner, a dirty compilation of true or false scandals and quotations taken out of their context—and this is presented *under the cloak of science*. Chapter after chapter is made up of criticisms and complaints from the various parts of the vast Soviet Union. And there is hardly a single date

throughout the book whereby its statements can be verified. But the author is always careful to add, as an "axiom," that the examples given are only comparatively mild cases, while the worst facts are hidden from the public. And then he completes the account at every point by assuring the reader that he himself has seen the same thing again and again in town after town, village after village.

As regards the "axiom," the fact is that in a collectivist community it is a fundamental principle that faults and shortcomings should be dragged out into the light so that, through criticisms and united efforts, they may be remedied. It is in order to bring this about that the so-called worker and village correspondents have been posted over the whole of Russia, for the purpose of getting all available criticism summarised in the papers.

If someone, with the aid of a thousand disconnected newspaper cuttings about cocaine and opium dens and the like, attempted to paint a picture of England as being in a state of decay, no one would take him seriously. Yet this is precisely the method that Karlgren uses in regard to Russia. And regarding that country ignorance is so great. . . . Statement contradicts statement ; the public can be deceived, and *likes* to be deceived. Karlgren's book is written for the wealthy public, who find pleasure in a few hours' scurrilous abuse of the Soviet power.

Before his English readers Karlgren has seen fit to present himself as the man of science pure and simple. In his home country, Sweden, on the other hand, he has not thought it advisable to stress the scientific value of his book too much, and has therefore refrained from putting his professor's title on it ; for there he would in any case be known chiefly as the newspaper man who, after a trip to America, introduced yellow journalism into Sweden.

On the very cover of the English edition of his book Karlgren is guilty of a glaring untruth when stating that he "at first viewed Bolshevism with distinct favour." The Swedish reader knows that in Karlgren's newspaper, Soviet Russia from its beginning was painted in the darkest possible colours—pardonable in itself, considering the personal disappointments which the Bolsheviks have caused him. But his efforts now to turn facts upside down, only to form a background for his dark colours, are disgusting.

After the revolution Karlgren has *only once*—in the summer of 1924, now three years ago—visited Russia, for a period of barely two months. He then stayed some weeks in Leningrad and Moscow, and passed on a very short rural expedition (page 220) through a few villages. He thus lacks both competence and first-hand information for forming a judgment as to the process of *development* going on in the country of the revolution. His book simply is *a prostitution of the scientific profession in the service of anti-Bolshevist interests*.

Karlgren's whole book gives a fairly good illustration of the development up to now of anti-Bolshevist journalism in Western Europe. He has been forced to retreat from one standpoint after another. In a criticism published by me in Swedish I have shown how Karlgren, faced with the actual developments, in chapter after chapter has retreated from the position he proclaimed in his newspaper articles published immediately on his return from his visit to Russia three years ago. In spite of this a number of the statements which I have proven to be false are retained in the English edition of his book ; others,

however, which formerly he defended with the aid of spurious quotations, he has now thought well to leave out ! He has also, forced by the development of events, made other modifications. But, relying upon either the short memory of his readers or their ignorance as to his previous shufflings and mistaken prophecies, he never tires of repeating how conditions in Russia grow steadily worse. Together with the hatred of Bolshevism, which the anti-Bolshevists have succeeded in implanting in the public mind, there is, however, also a growing feeling that if things really are so rotten out there they cannot hold together much longer. This feeling, fed by one-sided statements, has now for ten years past repeatedly given rise to the expectation that something would happen—but in vain ! And not even Karlgren has in his book been able to show his readers that what ought to be the logical result of his findings, a catastrophe, has taken or is about to take place. With all his carefully selected, one-sided material he has only succeeded in keeping the misconceptions alive, at the same time leaving his readers completely at a loss to understand how anything so terribly rotten as Russian Bolshevism is still able to live. And as for himself he has, since his first report was published in his paper in 1924, and being faced by undeniable facts as to the development which has actually taken place in Russia, been compelled to make one reservation after another, first in the Swedish edition of his book in 1925, and then in the English edition of 1927.

The personal hatred which shines through nearly every line of the book has blinded the author. In his eagerness to blacken he goes to extremes, in trying to show that conditions are in *every* way equally hopeless. The consequence of this is, however, that in chapter after chapter one statement unavoidably contradicts another.

We can only give one example here, out of all referred to in the Swedish criticism.

The whole of the *first* chapter, which takes up a quarter of the book, aims at proving that Russia is now a red Tsar-empire, autocratically ruled by the Communist Party and its leaders. The discipline within the Communist Party is stated to be an "automatic obedience . . . a drill unequalled in any Prussian barracks" (page 67). In reality the Party is neither exclusive nor "upper class" (page 27); it steadily receives a fresh influx of new members, 10 to 20 per cent. every year, and just from the proletariat ; while a certain percentage of the old members are dropped—significantly enough, and purposely, just such individuals who have been exposed as "upper class" types and "despots." Were these individuals the rule within the Party, as Karlgren maintains, the Communists themselves would certainly not so readily and so indignantly (as is stated in the book) show them up and expel them !

In the *seventh* chapter, "The Proletariat's Profit-Sheet," the surprised reader learns that "practically quite large numbers of the Russian proletariat are attached to it (to Bolshevism), not only from compulsion, but from devotion, and even with an enthusiasm bordering on fanaticism" (page 206). And when the author realises that his fact does not quite tally with his previous dark colours, he takes refuge in "the hypnotism exercised on their minds by the revolution catchword" (page 207). The Bolsheviks are hardly such wonder-workers that in this way they could hypnotise a whole class, with the result that, after nine years, forgetting starvation, cold, and need, it clings to

Bolshevism merely "from devotion." But this is not enough : the hypnotised worker, in the first chapter described as a slave of automatic obedience, has since the revolution "perceptibly straightened his back and raised his head ; the crouching trait in his character and his browbeaten manner—the inheritance from the time of serfdom—have disappeared ; he has acquired a greater feeling of human dignity" (page 208), and so on, in many words, which altogether neutralise what has previously been said.

Professor Karlgren has, perhaps unconsciously, annihilated two of the most common misconceptions as regards Bolshevism when, on the one hand, he emphasises how every workman and every peasant that one meets (page 232), shouts out his criticisms without fear of the Cheka, and when, on the other hand, he points out that private industrial enterprise by no means will be able to surpass Soviet industry (page 92). Also the description of certain details is excellently done. But the large, fundamental lines, and the evidence of progress made, are either entirely ignored, or so distorted and covered up by a selected mass of unfavourable details as to be impossible of recognition ; and so the total impression that the reader gets of Soviet Russia is that of a State thoroughly rotten and falling to pieces. From this point of view the book—unreliable though it is, as I have shown, on all the most important points—is written as our bourgeois public and literary critics wish it to be. Nor is it very pleasant to have to contradict the book. For Karlgren has given various influential people that support which now more than ever they feel themselves in need of for their hopes that Bolshevism is in the throes of dissolution. The author has succeeded very well in giving a picture of the "Anti-Bolshevists' Russia." But no one who knows anything about the *real Russia* of 1927 can dispute that Karlgren's picture is, on the whole, an *unrecognisable caricature*.

P. EMIL BRUSEVITZ.

NEW LIGHT ON KARL MARX

Karl Marx : Man, Thinker and Revolutionist. A Symposium edited by Professor D. Riazanoff. (Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 6s. net. 282 pp.)

HITHERTO, the Labour movement of this country has had much of the insularity of its capitalist masters. Its practical contact with the workers' movements of other countries has generally been ephemeral in character. Its theoretical contact with socialist thought on the continent of Europe has been more slender still. Even though Marx made England his workshop for his post-1848 activities, "the British socialist movement," in the words of Sidney Webb, "has at no time been predominantly Marxian" (*Economic Journal*, September, 1926, p. 438). Prior to 1914 England's monopoly position in world markets laid the objective possibility for the rise of a privileged labour aristocracy, and made Reformism even for the unskilled masses of the New Unionism the easy line of least resistance. English Socialism became merely the principle of State action *versus laissez-faire*, having a logical conclusion in the view of Webb and Bernard Shaw that the Fascist State has "socialist characteristics" ; and English Socialists eschewed wider generalisations about the supersession of capitalism, in favour of the detailed

approach to specific problems where immediate reform was possible, priding themselves the while on their healthy English practicality and distrust of abstract generalisation. The tendency was for English Reformism to influence foreign Revisionist thought (*e.g.*, the influence of Webb on Bernstein) rather than for continental Marxism to influence the British movement.

True, there was in the few years before the war a certain revival of Marxism in England. For many years Hyndman had been preaching in the wilderness a kind of hermaphrodite Marxism, and (like Henry George) peopled the odd corners of English Socialism with sectarian cranks. This was reinforced about 1906-10 by a more healthy proletarian reaction against Parliamentary Reformism, which took the form of revolutionary "impossibilism" and an "economist" obsession with industrial organisation. This new tendency snatched at certain De Leonist pamphlets and at fragments of Marxian doctrine which had passed through the medium of the American language and American editorship, losing much of their essential quality and acquiring a distinctly *doctrinaire* twist in the process. Certain elements of materialist philosophy, culled from the writings of Dietzgen, were hitched on to the tail of the "secularist" and radical "freethinker" movement, and donned an air of academic detachment and of somewhat sterile, cramping "finalism." From these elements the movement for independent working-class education drew life: a movement which played an important rôle in introducing a new ideology to the British Labour movement, but which, because of the circumstances of its birth, was destined to fill the rôle merely of a John the Baptist, and not that of the actual Messiah.

The last ten years, however, have opened a quite new epoch. The decline of British capitalism and the revolutionary drift among the rank-and-file of the British workers has entirely changed the setting of events. To re-establish contact with continental Marxist thought—not with the Kautskys and Bernsteins and Bauers, who have merely "revised" Marxism in the direction of Webbism and Guild Socialism, but with the really creative minds who have developed Marxist thought in line with new knowledge and new conditions—has become an urgent necessity. We sorely need a real creative school of British Marxism—not a hole-in-the-corner affair, but a live body of critical, creative, first-rate minds who understand the present and are organically part of the active working-class movement. A beginning has been made already with the publication of brochures of Lenin and a few others; but it has been no more than a beginning, and the knowledge of Marxism even among our "Marxists" is still elementary in the extreme. Now with the enterprise of the new firm of Martin Lawrence in issuing in England some of the work of the Marx-Engels Institute and of Leninist classics, a very great change in this respect is likely to be made. There is now a chance for all of us to start our Marxist education in real earnest from the beginning.

For this reason the appearance of the above volume may well constitute a conspicuous landmark in the history of ideology in Britain. And for the purpose of such a landmark it has been well chosen. Original and pleasing in format and its graceful typography, it offers a several-sided view of the founder of scientific socialism, as a thinker, a human being and a proletarian leader, which forms together a perfect whole. We are given sketches by Elean

Marx, by Liebknecht, Lafargue, and Riazanov himself of Marx in his study, of Marx with his family, of Marx playing the once popular parlour-game of "Confessions," of Marx intervening in a drunken brawl in the Hampstead Road, of the pawning of his wife's family plate, of his love for children and of the traditional Sunday picnics on Hampstead Heath—sketches charming to read, and affording an illuminating and vivid picture of the personality behind the giant structure of Marxist thought. The volume contains some original historical documents in the shape of a speech by Karl Marx on 1848, a letter by Engels to Sorge on the circumstances of Marx's death, and Engels' speech at the graveside in Highgate cemetery. The famous Russian biologist, Timiriazev, writes of the connection between Darwin's principle of natural selection and historical materialism, quoting an interesting letter from Darwin to Marx. Rosa Luxemburg discusses—perhaps a little inadequately—the subsequent development of Marxist thought. Franz Mehring deals with the much-discussed rôle of metaphor in Marx's style; and an article contributed by Plekhanov to *Iskra* on the twentieth anniversary of Marx's death also appears in English for the first time. Of particular interest to us in this country—Lenin deals with "Hyndman on Marx," and shows Hyndman to have been in Marx's own view no more than "a British bourgeois philistine" with a smattering of Marxian ideas. But perhaps the most significant of all the essays in the symposium is an exposition by Lenin in forty pages of the main principles of Marxism which constitutes far and away the clearest and most concise explanation of Marx's doctrines which the reviewer has met. In these forty pages there are presented to us as an integral whole philosophic principles and economic doctrines, analysis of social dynamics and principles of practical political struggle in a form which combines the profundity and breadth of German philosophic thought with that concrete directness of expression which is often regarded as a peculiarly English quality. Stylistically alone this essay could form a model to the younger writers in our movement. Its surprising economy of words serves to enhance the cogency of exposition, which has been admirably preserved in the translation of Eden and Cedar Paul. While its general form has none of the *rococo* adornments of the self-conscious *littérateur*, nor the Gothic sweep of the classical essay-tradition, it possesses the bare simplicity and direct and easy rhythm of a more modern architecture, and gains in strength and popular contact thereby. In subject matter it is no mere telling of an old tale in new words. Lenin's exposition of Marx's views on land rent and on the agrarian and peasant question present an aspect of Marxist thought which is almost entirely new to us in this country. For instance, an article by Engels in *Neue Zeit* on "The Agrarian Problem in the West," in which he wrote:—

When we seize the powers of the State, we shall never dream of forcibly expropriating the poor peasants (with or without compensation). . . . Our business as regards the smallholders will be to see to it that their individual production and individual ownership is transformed into communal production and communal ownership, but the change must not be effected forcibly.

This forms a very interesting anticipation of the peasant policy actually pursued in Russia.

Equally important are citations from the letters of Marx and Engels concerning the actual political tactics of the class struggle. Here we have Marx's attitude towards national and agrarian movements, his insistence on the rôle of conscious political organised activity ("Marx considered materialism without *this* side no more than a half measure, something that was dead-alive"), and on the need for realism and flexibility in adapting tactic and strategy to changing conditions. "Sometimes (in phases of political stagnation when things are moving at a snail's pace, in periods of what is called 'world evolution') attention must be chiefly paid to the encouragement of class consciousness, and to the furtherance of the strength and fighting capacity in the most advanced class; and at other times (during the great days 'which are the concentrated essence of twenty years') we must seize the opportunity on behalf of the 'final aims' of the particular class, and must cultivate its faculty for the practical performance of great tasks." Of particular interest and significance to us is the letter of Engels to Marx, dated August 11, 1881, when he wrote:—

The British working man will go no further at present; he must be shaken out of his rut by the loss of the industrial monopoly.

To-day, that process of shaking has already begun.

M. H. DOBB.

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*Published by the Proprietors, the Trinity Trust, 162 Buckingham Palace Road, S.W. 1, and
Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd., 74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road, W.C. 1*

W 15631

THE
LABOUR
MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

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Number 12

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Published at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1

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Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone: SLOANE 5412.

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

*The "New Course"—Stabilising Class Co-operation—Unstable Basis—
—"Dilly, Dilly"—The Master's Voice—Whom All Praise—
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Expulsions—Company Unions—Amsterdam and
Britain—German Hegemony—Americanisation
—Yellow Unions—Coalition*

IT is impossible to survey the events of the past three months without being aware of the single concerted drive that has taken place throughout the British Labour Movement. Edinburgh, Blackpool, and the Mansion House Conference are the three conspicuous landmarks of a single process. The particular parts of this process are less important than the single policy that is equally reflected through all of them. The essential features of this policy are:—first, in trade unionism the move to an avowed policy of regular organised collaboration with the employers, or the new "constructive period" spoken of by the Chairman of the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress. Second, in politics, the move to liberating the Labour Party and future Labour Government from the obligations of Socialism by the formulation of a programme of immediate non-Socialist reforms for the next Labour Government, *i.e.*, the placing of Socialism, in the words of the leader of the Labour Party at Blackpool, "in the background," with the consequent logical, though not yet avowed, sequel of political coalition in one form or another. The character of the policy as a whole is thus a policy of a conscious systematised class collaboration in industry and politics, such as has not yet been attempted in the British working-class movement since the coming of Socialism (with the exception of the war period to which it is significant that the Chairman of the Labour Party Conference referred as a model), but such as has already been worked out into a completed system in German Social Democracy and the Amsterdam International. It is, so to say, a

would-be capitalist "*Rationalisation*" of the *Labour Movement*. It combines, with the acceptance of the Trade Unions Act, the break with Russia and the concentration of attack on the Minority Movement. It is impossible to survey any part of this policy without being conscious of its unity as a whole. And it is impossible to survey the policy as a whole without realising that it is essentially, and in its whole character and even direct inspiration, the policy of the Baldwin Government. *The "New Course" that it is being attempted to impose on the British Labour Movement is as definite a part of the world capitalist offensive of the Baldwin Government as the Soviet break, the attack on China, the Trade Unions Act, and the Lords Reform proposals already earlier in the year.*

THE "New Course" is, strictly speaking and in principle, not new. Class-collaboration has always been the policy of Reformism, under whatever variant of form. Even in the most powerful periods of mass movement and unrest, right through 1919-21 and 1925-26, despite all the bowings to the storm, manœuvrings, concessions, nominal acceptance of triple alliances, Scarborough resolutions, general strikes and the rest, the basic policy of the reformist leadership has remained the same, only manœuvring and running under false colours for a period until the time is ripe to carry through its decisive betrayal of a Black Friday or a May 12, and then, having dealt a bludgeoning blow at the rising forces of the working class, to resume the quiet path of normal. But this time the attempt is being made to systematise the new position, as was not done in 1922—in the words of Thomas, "to capitalise the great moment," that is, to make the world safe for class-collaboration, to establish an official machinery of co-operation between the Labour bureaucracy and the employers, to exclude once and for all unauthorised "Socialism In Our Time" programmes, to anathematise and prohibit militant policy and militant agitation, even though completely within the constitutional rules and procedure of the movement, and for this purpose to carry out splits and disruptions on a large scale, not only within the political, but also within the industrial movement. What is new is precisely this

attempt to systematise and make rigid the policy of class-collaboration, and to guard against the possibility of another militant revival, not only legally by the Trade Unions Act, but also by the machinery of the movement operating in alliance with the Trade Unions Act.

BUT this attempt to stabilise class-co-operation is taking place at a time when the basis for class-co-operation is more completely broken than ever before. It is taking place, not in conditions of prosperity and peace, with the hope of immediate gains at the expense of larger interests, but in conditions of extreme economic insecurity and poverty, victimisation, wage attacks, the threat of war, and a general offensive on the whole rights of working-class organisation. It is a case of licking the hand that strikes you. At the best, the hope is expressed that the policy of class-co-operation may lead to prosperity (thus reversing the normal order), a hope which is certainly preached in plenty in the employers' propaganda, but which has no real basis in the facts of the economic situation. The economic situation can in reality only be worsened by the acceptance of low wages and intensified production, with the consequence of increased unemployment, as the example of the coal industry has shown. The policy of defeatism and surrender is only covered for the moment by the attempt to spread a cloud of vague hopes and illusions of the future Labour Government, which is put forward as the solution for everything. But when it is found that there is no policy until then save defeat, and that the Labour Government itself when it comes will not be able to do anything, then there will necessarily follow from the whole forces of the real situation the most powerful disillusion and the destruction of the entire flimsy fabric. Thus the entire line of policy is essentially unstable. It is not itself an expression of any real or lasting forces or trend, but rather a reflection of the increasing intensity of entirely opposed forces, of the increasing pressure of the capitalist attack on the one hand, to which reformist policy can offer no reply, and, on the other hand, of the growing power and advance of the militant forces and organised Left movement in the working class, which is beginning to threaten the whole position of the reformist

leadership. The "New Course" represents the supreme attempt of the sinking reformist bureaucracy to entrench itself against the future.

WHAT is most immediately noticeable in the whole line of the new policy is its direct response to capitalist leadership and guidance. "Dilly, dilly, come and be killed!" was the note of Baldwin's Castle Douglas speech before the Trades Union Congress; and the goose (represented by Citrine and company) has slowly and fixedly walked up, at first busily explaining that the approach was not really to Baldwin himself, but only to his kitchenmaids (the employers), but when Baldwin thereupon declared with a hearty laugh that this distinction did not make a pennyworth of difference, dropping even this faint attempt at pretence and consolation. (C. T. Cramp, at Slough: "I will take no part in any conference, under the auspices of this Government, to consider industrial relationships in any shape or form . . . therefore whatever goodwill may arise in the ranks of industry must be directly between the trade unions and the employers, with the Government well out of the picture"; Baldwin, at Cardiff: "I quite agree with Mr. Cramp.") In fact, to attempt to make a distinction in the modern monopolist capitalist state between organised capitalism and the State machine, between the capitalists and their most direct political organisation and leadership, the Conservative Party and Government, is the last extreme of reformist self-delusion and hypocrisy.

I LOOK to the leaders of the trade unions to give a lead in this sense at their gathering next week." This language of Baldwin at Castle Douglas a week before the Congress is the language of a commander to his crew; it is the "England Expects" of this new Trafalgar on the eve of battle with the enemies of British capitalism. And the counterpart of it is Baldwin's speech, again at Cardiff, soon after the conclusion of the Congress: "I welcome the speeches at the recent Trades Union Congress." Here is the "Well done, my good and faithful servants" of the master to his slaves. This open cracking of the whip, in place of the usual more discreet passing of directives

through informal channels, is not mere clumsiness. It is the parallel of Birkenhead's open defiance and contempt of the Labour Party "campaign" against the Trade Unions Bill ("Call all your meetings, blow all your trumpets, make all your speeches, unfurl your red flags. And when you have done it all, it is going through Parliament now.") It is the parallel of the appointment of the Indian Royal Commission in open defiance of every section of Indian Nationalism, with no attempt at the outset to conciliate even those upper-class sections waiting hungrily for the first possible excuse to be conciliated, but so as even to unite the maximum of opposition, and leaving only the servile Labour Party bowing the knee to despotism. All this is Die-Hardism, but it is Die-Hardism with a purpose. It is the open demonstration of capitalist power, of capitalist dictatorship, not against the cringing moderates who are only waiting to be conciliated on any sham, but against the rising forces of real revolt behind them. It is the "I rule" of capitalism, which lies behind all the parliamentary and negotiating flummery.

WITH this bourgeois satisfaction at the new Labour trend harmonise all the utterances of their leaders and their Press. Baldwin's "welcome" is echoed by Churchill's "gladness" ("He was glad to see that the Socialists had been converted to his view of the Russian Bolsheviks. By their action they had ratified the Government's action in turning the Russians out of London"), and by Joynson-Hicks' embarrassing praise ("The Trades Union Congress has followed our example. Do you not think they might almost have proposed a vote of thanks to the Home Secretary? . . . Really I am the best friend of the Trades Union Congress. I am trying to help them in their warfare against Communism"). The *Economist* reports from the City that "It is said in the City that the proceedings at Edinburgh are largely responsible for the brighter tone of the stock markets"; while such representative organs of Conservatism and Liberalism as *The Times* and *Manchester Guardian* praise the "practical" sense of Liverpool in facing facts and abandoning Socialism. It is true that this latter point is protested against as a

capitalist misunderstanding; Socialism, all the leaders hasten to inform us, remains the ultimate ideal. However, the capitalists have usually a sharp enough nose for any real danger to their property, and do not hesitate to make a noise if they can smell the attack a hundred miles off; but for the present they can for the life of them find nothing but the fleabite of the surtax to make a highly unconvincing noise about. In general the tone is one of unrestrained satisfaction and praise at the good sense and statesmanship revealed. This praise from the Conservative Government and capitalist Press is alone sufficient to judge the whole trend and policy for any honest worker. On such praise may be quoted the remarks of a *Daily Herald* editorial of a couple of years back, criticising the Amsterdam Right Wing (written under the last editorship, before the *Daily Herald* had reached its final stage of degradation under the present industrial-peace editorship):—

Their action is approved by the capitalist Press.

Reaction applauds them.

They are congratulated on their firmness and prudence by the avowed enemies of the working class.

Are they satisfied that this is proof of their having acted in this matter in the working-class interest?

(*Daily Herald*, Editorial, December 7, 1925.)

WHAT lies behind this process which has brought back the General Council into the fold of the Amsterdam Right Wing, wiped out the last remains of the "Left" escapade of a couple of years ago, and turned the official world more completely and rigidly, with fewer exceptions almost than at any time since the old Unionism, into a single reactionary bloc? The answer to this question is important, because on the clearness of this answer depends the understanding of the present period, the understanding that it is not simply a question of the swing of the pendulum, the natural reaction after a couple of years of militancy and heavy defeats, but that the present period does in its own way, despite the extreme reaction and low point of movement, represent an advance in the stages of development in Britain and a preparation for a higher point of struggle in the relatively near future.

TWO forces have compelled this practical elimination of the pseudo-Left official element in all responsible quarters and lining up on the extreme Right (leaving the pseudo-Left rôle for the moment only to the irresponsible chatter of the I.L.P.). The first is that the complete smashing of the General Strike which the leaders refused to lead, and the consequent Trade Unions Act binding the trade unions and ruling out the legal possibility of a repetition of mass struggle, have destroyed the practical basis of pseudo-Leftism, making impossible any future playing with these issues, and compelling that every responsible workers' leader shall either face the realities of revolutionary mass struggle with the forces of the modern state, or else for ever hold his peace and revert to the ranks of servile docility and a new discovery of the unguessed-at wisdom and virtues of J. H. Thomas after all. It is not coincidence that the passing of the Trade Unions Act has been followed by this immediate nauseous outburst of servility and would-be co-operation, when any healthy reaction of honest elements would have been the exact opposite.

The second reason is even more important. It lies in the continued strength, deepening and even growth of the Left Wing in the working-class movement, instead of its extinction or decapitation, after the events of 1926. By 1927 the Left Wing, organised in the Minority Movement, has even begun to capture *en bloc* official positions in the advanced industrial districts, where these are open to election. This is the critical fact for the reformist bureaucracy, leading to immediate hardening and rigidifying in their ranks. The Left Wing, so far from being killed by the betrayal of the General Strike and collapse of the General Council "Left," has even reached a stage further in advance, is all the stronger and clearer for the defection of these pseudo-Left leaders who endeavoured to build themselves upon the back of the working revolutionary Left. These pseudo-Left leaders never succeeded for a moment in imposing themselves as accepted leaders or deceiving the revolutionary Left (reference may be made, for example, to the article "A Postscript" in the LABOUR MONTHLY for August, 1924, which completely analysed the character of these pseudo-Left leaders at the start of the whole episode and pro-

phesied their debacle), but they had for a period to receive a measure of support, not for their persons, but for the issues that they raised and as a means of mobilising wider masses. To-day these pseudo-Left leaders are vanished off the scene, as prophesied, at the first shock of battle (General Strike, Trade Unions Act), but the Left Wing goes straight forward as a body, unbroken, into the new and sterner conditions of struggle. This is the new feature about the situation to-day: that for the first time the Left Wing exists, no longer as an inchoate, sporadic and spasmodic tendency, flaring up and dying down without trace, but as a conscious, organised and coherent movement, developing continuously through victory and defeat, deeply rooted in the working-class organisations and in every struggle of the workers, with a central lead, in union with a revolutionary political party of the working class, and bound up with the world revolutionary movement. This is the new situation in British history (itself a reflection of the new and more advanced stage of class struggle) which is transforming the face of all political relationships.

IT is here that is the vital difference of the present period from the period following Black Friday. Black Friday struck the movement low for nearly two years. Then, too, the reformist leadership sought to "capitalise the great moment" by official proposals of Industrial Peace and by beginning the policy of splits and exclusions with the Edinburgh resolutions of 1922 (see the "Notes of the Month" for July and August, 1922, for a survey of the extent of the reaction then). But at that time the workers' revolutionary party was only just come into existence on the eve of Black Friday. Its first task was in that period of black depression to gather up the broken threads of working-class struggle for the renewal of the fight. The result was that the new wave of working-class militancy and unrest, which had already proclaimed itself, defeating the expectations of the reformist leaders who thought that Black Friday was the quietus for a decade, in the host of sectional struggles and fighting ballots in the spring of 1923 (by which time the party was already leading these sectional struggles in the face of the opposition of the official leadership, and had already, by April, 1923, proclaimed

the slogan of the General Strike as the means to unite the sectional struggles and to meet the capitalist offensive, which was to reach fruition three years later), growing and rising from that point steadily in volume and power right up to the General Strike in one continuous line, *this new wave of militancy and unrest grew up from the first in close and organic union with the workers' revolutionary party* as its voice and organiser and leader, and reaching eventually regular organised form in the launching of the Minority Movement in 1924.

IT was only when this movement had already reached strength and volume great enough to raise apprehensions in the reformist leadership that the pseudo-Left leaders came forward and endeavoured to place themselves at its head; and there followed the "Left" episode of 1924-26, with its mingled seriousness below and comic opera buffoonery and cowardice above (space being made for the "Left" heroes by an obliging Government by the imprisonment of the principal revolutionary leaders). But the pace was too hot for this position to last long; the violence of the capitalist attack on one side, and the seriousness of the masses on the other, left no room for the posturings of the buffoons, who rapidly had to vanish with ignominious repudiation of their own utterances into the preaching of industrial peace. From this point it is no longer possible to circumvent the Left by these means. The only tactics left for the reformist leadership is to suppress the Left. And this is the process that is now being attempted.

IN conjunction with the Government and police, by the incorporation of the Trade Unions Act into the constitutions of the Unions, and in conjunction with the employers, by victimisation and dismissals of the militants, the reformist bureaucracy is endeavouring to save its position against the growth of the Left. The Left Wing, organised in the Minority Movement, stands out at present as the recognised opposition (the proceedings at Edinburgh strikingly showed this), as the

sole alternative leadership in the present chaos and defeatism of the movement; it is able to sweep ballot after ballot, wherever open votes of the rank and file are taken. The overwhelming majorities in Lanarkshire and Fife (in Lanarkshire the General Secretary of the miners was defeated and a Communist elected in his place by 9,500 votes out of a total membership of 16,100), the Executive Elections in the South Wales miners, the Workers' Union ballot of 40,000 to 9,000 against the six Executive members, these are the only too rarely available evidence (like the miners' ballots on the settlements in 1926) of the true feelings of the workers in relation to the reformist bureaucracy. It is obvious that if the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party Conference were based upon direct election by the workers, very startling results would at once follow, and the practically certain overwhelming victory of the Left.

IN this situation, the general antagonism of the reformist bureaucracy to militant policy has become reinforced by a new and urgent force—panic for their own positions. This is most conspicuous in the Miners' Federation, precisely where the new forces are strongest, precisely there the official drive to reaction is most extreme; and, after the district conferences had shown a powerful drive to the Left, the national conference at Southport, composed nine-tenths of officials, turned in an exactly opposite direction, and made a complete *volte face* both in relation to Russia and to the Minority Movement, the reformist leaders launching the most extravagant attacks and threatening to break up the Federation. Such outbursts (leading to the most barefaced denials of their own previous words, as in the case of Herbert Smith and Russia) are mere pathology, the frenzy of the beast at bay; the naked instinct of self-preservation had driven out all political principle or reasoning power. And for this reason the extremity of the present reaction in the official Labour Movement is in reality evidence, not of the retrogression of the movement, but of the growing strength of the Left Wing, and therefore of the advance of the movement and the intensification of the class struggle.

A NOTICEABLE sidelight on the present situation and the influences at work is shown by some statements of the Labour Prime Minister of Queensland, McCormack, who has recently earned notoriety by his lockout of the railway-men and conflict with the Labour Movement that raised him to power. The episode of the Queensland lockout, incidentally, illustrates very instructively the inevitable rôle of a constitutional Labour Government as the protector of capitalist interests against the working-class movement ; and, indeed, the whole study of "democratic" and "labourist" Australia, so belauded by our social reformists and imperialists, is of very great value for Britain. (It may be noted, for the benefit of admirers of "ultra-democratic" Australia, that the Australian Federal Government has just officially banned the entry of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* into Australia, so as to preserve the democratic morals of its citizens, thus following the example of the Indian Government, which has long had our journal on its proscribed list.) In the course of the parliamentary debates on the railway lockout Premier McCormack made certain statements which bear not on Australia, but on Britain. According to the report of the Queensland Labour organ:—

Mr. McCormack went on to say that the trouble had a much wider application than as it merely affected Queensland. . . . More care must be taken to control the Labour organisations if they were not to be destroyed. . . . He had heard discussions in the House of Commons, and following upon the Arcos raid in London, *he had access to places where Communist propaganda was revealed*, and the translation of Russian documents in which the methods of starting a revolution were outlined in similar manner to that adopted here recently. . . .

"What is behind this propaganda?" asked the Premier. "*I had an opportunity of meeting leaders of the Labour Movement in Great Britain, not only Parliamentary, but leaders of the Union Movement, and I found out there was a real fear that this propaganda was going to create a difficult position in Great Britain itself.*"

(*Brisbane Daily Standard*, September 21, 1927.)

THESE highly interesting excursions and interviews of a Labour Colonial Premier in London took place, as the reference to the Arcos raid shows, in May of this year. In May of this year, we note, as a part of the imperial activities

of a beneficent government, a Labour Colonial Premier is trotted round to the haunts of the secret police to be initiated into the horrors of Communism. (How many British Labour Ministers and Labour leaders have been similarly initiated?) On his return he does his duty by the capitalist class and by the British financial overlords of Australia. But we further note that in May of this year the "leaders of the Labour Movement in Great Britain, not only parliamentary, but leaders of the union movement" (who are at the same time busily proclaiming to the world in public that Communism in Britain is a bogey, only manufactured by the capitalist Press, and without a scrap of influence in the Labour Movement), are in private conversation informing their confidants that they are possessed by a "real fear" that they are going to be faced by a "difficult position" in relation to Communism in Britain. And it is precisely this "real fear" that is operating in the panic measures which these leaders, in conjunction with the police and employers, are beginning to take against the Communists and Left Wing, even at the expense of disrupting the movement.

IN consequence, the Minority Movement is now made the centre of a concentrated attack, no longer for its policy or its militancy as being incorrect, but for its existence as a crime. A complete and instructive change of attitude has taken place. In June, 1924, the Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, Bramley, could still declare with a benevolent air to his critics (writing on "The 'Red Peril'" in the *Daily Herald*):—

I would urge those who represent advanced minority views inside the Unions to seek a remedy for their grievances through the proper use of trade union rules and opportunities.

(F. Bramley in the *Daily Herald*, June 26, 1924.)

This kindly advice is invariably given, much as the prison governor informs the trembling prisoner that he can always "appeal to the Home Secretary," or as Lansbury informs the rank and file that they are "responsible" for the crimes of the bureaucracy since they can always "change" them—secure all the time in the confidence that the barbed wire entanglement of official rules, privileges, prohibitions and suspensions is as likely

to be penetrated by an unorganised rank and file with grievances as a tank is to be overcome by savages with sticks.

BUT, unfortunately for the tolerant bureaucracy, this advice has been taken and acted upon by the rank and file *in an organised way*—and the tolerance has suddenly disappeared and been replaced by a very different attitude. It was in June, 1924, that Bramley gave his advice to “those who represent advanced minority views inside the Unions” to “seek a remedy for their grievances through the proper use of trade union rules and opportunities.” Within two months the Minority Movement was inaugurated at a delegate conference of elected representatives from trade union organisations all over the country. The Minority Movement consisted of “those who represent advanced minority views inside the unions.” Organised in the Minority Movement, they proceeded to “seek a remedy for their grievances through the proper use of trade union rules and opportunities.” And then the trouble began. For it was at once clear that a movement of this character, an organised movement of the revolutionary trade unionists, might be able to succeed even against all the barrage and entanglements of officialism. Within six months this movement was able to unite delegates of over half a million trade unionists, within twelve months of three-quarters of a million, and within a year and a half of over a million trade unionists or one-quarter of the entire forces of trade unionism. A new policy had to be adopted. That was the policy of disaffiliations, exclusions, splits, suspensions, to preserve the reformist bureaucracy. The “democrat” Lansbury’s Union was foremost in applying this policy of silencing by disruption, even suspending whole trade union branches, with many thousands of members, for daring to show revolutionary sympathies. The reason for this policy was simply and clearly stated by the representative of the General Council, A. Conley, at the Bournemouth Congress in 1926, in defending the General Council’s ban on trades councils’ affiliations to the Minority Movement:—

If the Council had agreed to this affiliation, within a short time the Minority Movement would become the majority.

(Daily Herald, September 8, 1926.)

THIS, and not the idle chatter about "outside influences," "outside, not inside," "outside dictation," "frankly Communist," is the real charge and basis of attack against the Minority Movement. If the Minority Movement were "outside" the unions, no one would trouble to attack it or answer it. It is precisely because the Minority Movement is *inside* that the trouble has come. The chatter is simply the reflection of the absence of a single argument on principle against it. The Minority Movement has not broken a single trade union rule. It has advanced with super-constitutionalism and respect for the whole machinery of trade unionism (even to an extreme and exaggerated extent, as in the request to trades councils to dis-affiliate from itself, as soon as the General Council required this). Hence the impotence of argument against it save violence. The *Daily Herald* declares:—

Trade Unionists have no need to form a Society of Critics in order to make their voices heard. The place to do that is within the Trade Unions.

(*Daily Herald*, August 9, 1927).

There is room within the Trade Union Movement (which enrolls members of all political views) for constant constructive criticism. . . . But all this must be directed from within the Trade Unions, not from without. [Was the "Greater Unionism" and "Guilds" propaganda directed "from within" the Trade Unions or "from without"?] It must be instinct with a loyalty, not to "Revolution," but to the changing and ever developing trade union movement.

(*Daily Herald*, September 8, 1927.)

This means: so long as criticism is weak, isolated, individual, without either common organisation or common revolutionary conception, it will be allowed because it can effect nothing. But as soon as criticism is based on common organisation and a common political conception, it becomes a crime. The suggestion that any effective criticism or fight for a policy can take place in a trade union movement of four millions without organisation is of course contemptible hypocrisy, as great as the hypocrisy of the "equality" of the citizen in capitalist democracy. It is simply an insincere form of denying the right of criticism. We are further told that criticism is allowed, so long as it is not based on "loyalty to revolution." In other words "criticism" is magnanimously

allowed ("Why was 2d. too much spent on office stationery?"), but not *revolutionary* criticism (which is the only kind of criticism that is of any use in trade unionism, for its true progress). This, at least, is a true statement of the official position. "Loyalty to Revolution" is a crime. (Certainly no one would accuse the Editor of the *Daily Herald* of this crime.)

BUT it is important to follow further this conception that agitation and propaganda within trade unionism is a crime if it is based on a common political outlook and associated with a political party of the workers; and that loyalty to such a common political outlook and political party (which, it is admitted, does not involve in any way infringing trade union discipline) is disloyalty to trade unionism. For such a conception is a complete denial of Socialism and reversion to the most obsolete craft sectional outlook. It is equivalent to saying that the common interest of the workers as a class is less than their particular interests in their particular unions, instead of dominating the latter. For every Socialist, for every Marxist, the class-conception, the interest of the working class as a whole, which is Socialism, comes first, and governs the loyalty to trade unionism. But the expression of the class conception, of Socialism, is the political party. The worker enters the trade union on the basis of his immediate economic interests, of unity with his fellows in his craft or in his workshop. But as soon as he becomes class-conscious, as soon as he advances from trade unionism to Socialism, he puts the interest of the entire class, of Socialism, first, and governs the whole of his trade union activity in the light of this wider understanding.

THIS relationship of Socialism and trade unionism, of Communism and trade unionism, belongs to the most elementary principles of Socialism and Marxism. It is only necessary to quote the famous Kautsky amendment at the Mannheim Congress of the German Social Democratic Party in 1906. Here Kautsky declared:—

It is the duty of every single party member in every trade union activity, as well as in all other public activity, to regard himself as

bound by these decisions of the party congress . . . This is demanded in the interests of the trade union movement itself, since Social Democracy is the highest and most all-inclusive form of the proletarian class struggle. No proletarian organisation, and no proletarian movement, can be adequate to its task if it is not filled with the spirit of social democracy.

Here the absolute binding party obligation on every Socialist trade unionist in his trade union activities is laid down in the most clear and uncompromising terms by Kautsky, the theorist of Marxism of the Second International (long before there was any talk of "Russian" notions), while he was still a Marxist. It is worth noting that at the last moment at the Mannheim Congress itself Kautsky withdrew this amendment, not on the grounds that it was incorrect or disputable, but for "tactical" reasons on the ground that certain party members among the trade union leaders had represented to him that it was a truism universally recognised and therefore unnecessary, but that its passing might be regarded as a slight on themselves as suggesting that they could be guilty of disloyalty to their party obligation in their trade union work. This withdrawal, which was in fact a surrender to trade union separatism, *i.e.*, to capitalism, is one of the many symptoms already revealing the growth of corruption and opportunism in German Social Democracy and the Second International even at that date, and degeneration from Marxism: but the form of the surrender only throws into sharper relief the universal recognition of the correctness of the principle as the elementary principle of Marxism and Socialism. To treat such influence of revolutionary social democracy (to-day Communism), organised in its party, within trade unionism as an "outside influence" is a betrayal of Socialism and handing over of the trade unions to capitalism.

BUT what is the outcome of this official reformist attitude to revolutionary agitation and propaganda within the trade unions? There can only be one outcome. Five and a-half years ago it was predicted in these Notes that the inevitable issue of the process of splits and exclusions of the revolutionary workers begun in the Labour Party at Edinburgh would be the extension of the same process to the trade unions; since the

Labour Party is not an individual political party on an ideological basis (in which case it would have every right, like any political party, to expel whom it pleased and impose any discipline or tests it chose), but is based on the trade unions or mass organisations of the workers, in regard to which the imposition of any test other than that of working-class solidarity and loyalty to the class struggle, or exclusion on any other basis, is fraught with deadly peril to the whole future of the movement, being nothing less than the destruction of working-class solidarity. This process has now begun. The campaign of the Labour Party reformist officials against the Communist Party is now being repeated by the trade union reformist officials against the Minority Movement. The same creeping process is showing itself, first in the disaffiliation of trades councils, then the suspension of trade union branches, then the expulsion of individuals from official or delegate positions, finally—as the inevitable culminating step to come—the expulsion of individuals from trade unions, not for any breach of working-class solidarity, but for holding revolutionary views. This last step is already in sight. The statement of Herbert Smith at the Southport Miners' Conference is already the herald of it:—

If the Communists don't like our system and method, let them get out of it. *They are better out of the movement than in it.* We don't want such men as you inside the Federation.

(H. Smith at Southport : *Daily Herald*, July 7, 1927.)

This last was spoken to a younger miners' leader, known throughout the coalfields as one of the most honest and fearless fighters in the Federation and enjoying the enthusiasm and acclamation of the working (and unemployed) miners in his district. When such language can be used in an old and leading union like the miners, the signal for the working-class movement is full at *Danger*. If the reformists have their way, the smashing of the trade unions is going to begin.

WHERE does this process lead? There is only one issue. The trade unions lose their character of all-embracing organisation of the workers, regardless of their political views, on the single basis of solidarity in the class struggle. In other words, they lose their class character. They necessarily and inevitably become organisations of capitalism.

This process has already been tried and worked out in other countries. In America, the American Federation of Labour has been built on the same exclusive reformist character, with the wholesale expulsions and suspensions of locals, federations, and unions, withholding of charters and the rest of it; and the American Federation stands out to-day as the model of trade unionism in the pocket of the employers. In Germany since the war the once honourable trade union movement has gone through the same process; the membership of 8½ millions in 1920 has fallen to 3,933,931 in 1926: the reformist leadership has retained its hold on the machine, but at what a cost! The leaders are open allies of the employers, and in the British miners' strike the German miners worked overtime. In France the Confédération Générale du Travail reformist leadership expelled the revolutionary minority (organised in the Comité Syndicale Révolutionnaire) *en bloc* on the eve of the Congress when the votes already showed that they would have the majority; and the disastrous scission and paralysis of the French movement has continued up to the present day, when the offer of the revolutionary C.G.T.U. (to-day the stronger body) to enter as a body into the C.G.T. without conditions has been refused by the latter. This is only the picture in country after country of European trade unionism, which finds its composite and concentrated expression in the Amsterdam International; and to this model British trade unionism, which has up to the present been built on the principle of all-inclusive class solidarity, like the Russian Unions (however reactionary the leadership and obsolete the structure here in comparison), and therefore moving rather to affinity with these and disgust at the practices of Amsterdam, is now making its retreat and drawing closer and closer to the full character of Amsterdam.

THE Amsterdam International is the conscious expression of reformist trade unionism in the post-war period. The old loose pre-war opportunism, which still sought to hold the class-conscious workers in its sway with radical phrases, is no longer adequate to the needs of post-war capitalism in Europe, whose requirements of counter-revolution, stabilisation and

rationalisation demand the strictest disciplining of the Labour Movement, suppression of the revolutionary workers and drawing of the trade unions into the unified capitalist mechanism. Hence the complete concentration of the Amsterdam International on the two objectives of coalition with capitalism and disruptive warfare on the revolutionary workers. This inhuman and unconcealedly clear concentration on the work of betrayal has at first shocked the main body of British trade union officialism, where, corresponding to the slower and more stagnant economic development, the old loose opportunism has still tended to prevail, with the exception of the small conscious Right Wing group in whose hands real power rests. But now the logic of events is bringing British reformist trade unionism into line with Amsterdam. And Amsterdam is consciously welcoming Britain into the fold. Thus the International Federation of Trades Unions Press Bulletin comments on the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress (quoting a German trade union journal, which is declared in this comment to "reflect the view prevalent among Continental trade unionists"):-

The Congress was in every respect satisfactory. . . . It has inspired the British movement with new life, and *prepared the way for the introduction of new methods which have long been found beneficial to the German trade union movement.*

What these "new methods" that have been found so "beneficial" in Germany are, the wrecking of the German Trade Union Movement shows.

BEFORE the war the German Trade Union Movement led the Trade Union International in numbers, in organisation, and in social democratic consciousness. To-day the position is changed. In numbers, the British, French, and German trade unions combined barely equal the Russian trade unions, while the sweeping development of trade unionism in India, China, and elsewhere has shattered the European centre of gravity. Politically, the German Trade Union Movement, purged of the best militant workers, has passed to the extreme of reaction. But the post-war German Trade Union Movement aspires to lead the post-war Amsterdam International in a new sense—as the conscious leader of the process of rationalisation,

coalition, and class-betrayal. How conscious they are of this rôle is strikingly shown in the last issue of the German trade union official monthly organ *Arbeit*, which proclaims the fitness of Germany for the new seat of Amsterdam:—

The I.F.T.U. needs a change of air, and the atmosphere of Amsterdam will for a long time to come be overheated and oppressive.

In sober truth Germany *which is leading the way in a phase of economic development which all Europe will have subsequently to follow*, has the first claim to be the centre of the secretariat.

WHAT is this “phase of economic development” in which Germany is thus proclaimed the banner-bearer for Europe? This phase is nothing other than rationalisation or Americanisation. With the approximation of German and European capitalist organisation to American methods goes automatically the approximation of the German and European reformist (*i.e.*, capitalist-controlled) Labour Movement to the American Labour Movement. The complete consciousness of this approximation to a movement which was once looked down on as the extreme of conservatism and corruption is startlingly expressed in a recent article of the German trade union theorist F. Tarnov, whose remarks are quoted with approval in the I.F.T.U. official *Economic Supplement* (September 22, 1927):—

It is certainly interesting to see how the American Trade Union Movement, which rejects the ideas of socialism and class conflict in our sense of these terms, and the German Trade Union Movement, which is based on Socialist theory, *nevertheless reach identical conclusions in all important and fundamental questions.*

This is the German-American model of trade unionism to which British trade unionism is now being drawn by the reformist leadership in the wake of capitalism.

HOW far off is yellow unionism in Britain? To those who still remain doubtful, even after the display of the extreme and long-drawn-out reluctance to take any step to deal with Havelock Wilson until under the most intense pressure from the Minority Movement, may be commended the following statement from Shinwell in the *Socialist Review*

for October, which is not likely to be based wholly on imagination. He says:—

We have seen how in the Mercantile Marine membership of a certain trade union has become obligatory, the employers actually collecting subscriptions for the Union. The corollary is, of course, acquiescence, and the adoption of stern measures against men who kick over the traces. It is a blunt bargain. The trade union keeps the men in order; the employer in return agrees to employ union men only. *Scores of prominent men in the Trade Union Movement have stated quite openly that no fault is to be found with the system, and indeed regretted it could not be applied to their industry.*

(E. Shinwell: "The Edinburgh Trades Union Congress,"

Socialist Review, October, 1927.)

Here is the final working out. Compulsory "trade unionism" by the compulsion of the employer; exclusion, and consequent automatic victimisation and starvation of every militant worker, the trade union official obligingly assisting the employer to ferret out the rebels, and the employer assisting the trade union official to get rid of his enemies; complete "harmony," alliance, and the "new spirit in industry" between trade union official and employer—this is the literal slave system (the new "constructive period" in trade unionism) to which the reformist trade union leadership and the reformist Labour Party leadership is leading the working class.

IT remains to work out the similar and corresponding process, even more important in its scope, which is taking place in the Labour Party, and which is equally reflected and illuminated, with warning shadows before, in the more advanced model of German Social Democracy as it is at the present day. Here again the confused and implicit tendencies in the British movement, which still illogically denies and repudiates coalition, reach clear and conscious expression, in which (as in Hilferding's recent report on the tasks and policy of social democracy to the Kiel Congress of the German Social Democratic Party this year) the policy of coalition is insisted on as the distinctive policy of modern social democracy and the Second International. To this question we shall hope to return next month.

R. P. D.

THE CONGRESS OF WORKERS' DELEGATIONS IN MOSCOW

By EMILE BURNS

IN the great Trade Union Hall, brilliantly illuminated and decorated with revolutionary slogans, the workers' delegations visiting Moscow for the tenth anniversary met together on November 10 to formulate a common line of policy in connection with the capitalist attacks on the Soviet Union. The meeting was convened on the initiative of the British delegation, which considered that the opportunity of bringing together the workers' delegations from forty-three countries would be something more than a gesture of international solidarity, and would help to secure uniform action by the working class of all countries in defence of the gains of the revolution.

When the 957 delegates assembled on the evening of November 10 they had already, some in Moscow, some in other towns, experienced the anniversary demonstrations; they had already visited factories and institutions, and seen the Russian workers at work, in their homes, and in the streets. They came to the Congress, therefore, with the consciousness of what they were doing, and with an enthusiasm that can only be understood by those who have seen the working class freed of their chains. That enthusiasm received fresh energy from the very composition of the Congress. A glance round the hall was enough to show that here was an historic gathering of the peoples, more widely representative of the races, nations, and nationalities than any congress that has yet been held, while on the platform and in the hall there were delegates who had won international fame in the working-class struggle—Clara Zetkin, Madame Sun Yat Sen, Marty, Sadoul, Bela Kun, Henri Barbusse, and numbers of others.

After Melnichansky had formally welcomed the delegates, Will Lawther, as chairman of the British delegation, explained the

purpose of the Congress, and stated that two resolutions would be put before it, one, on the gains of the revolution, by the German delegation, and the other, dealing with the war danger, by the British delegation. Then came a welcome from the Moscow workers, in which the dominant note was—"The Moscow of the Tsars, nobility, merchants, and manufacturers has become, by the will of the workers, the centre of the International Labour Movement." The enthusiasm of the delegates was tremendous when Rykov, chairman of the Council of People's Commissaries, entered the tribune. It is characteristic of the change that has taken place in Russia that the head of the Government should consider it his duty to report to the workers' delegations what the Soviet Government had set out to do and how far it had been able to carry out its tasks. His report was an absorbing political survey. Among the gains of the revolution there is certainly the fact that Soviet statesmen do not mouth empty words, but have something to say and say it. They have something to say because a revolutionary government has the responsibility for the whole economic and social life of the country, and they say what they have to say because their object is to interest the workers and peasants, and make them take an active part in the government of the country.

The section of Rykov's report dealing with the dictatorship of the proletariat made perhaps the greatest impression on the delegates. He had led up to it by tracing the growth of industry and the steady improvement of the workers' conditions. The announcement of the seven-hour day, he said, had been described as "propaganda," the critics meaning by this either that it would never be carried out or that, if carried out, it would only be because the Soviet Government had to give it as a kind of propaganda concession to keep themselves in power. As for the suggestion that it would not be carried out, detailed plans were now being made, and it would be in force before the end of the year in certain sections of industry. But in general the whole of "propaganda" rested on an absolutely false conception of what the dictatorship of the proletariat really is. In no other country of the world is there such a large proportion of the people politically active. Of the total number of members (827) of the

Union Central Executive Committee, which is the supreme legislative body, 43.6 per cent. are workers, 21.3 per cent. peasants, and 35.1 per cent. clerical workers, technical experts, and intellectuals. In municipal Soviets with a total of 71,325 members, 46.6 per cent. are workers, 4.9 per cent. peasants, 31 per cent. clerical workers and intellectuals, and 17.7 per cent. housewives, students, and Red Army delegates. In the village Soviets 84.4 per cent. are peasants. In the administration of industry 74.8 per cent. of the managers of factories are workers. In the judicial system 34.4 per cent. of the permanent judges are workers and 37 per cent. peasants. In every department of political and social life large numbers of workers are active. To take as an example the health institutions of Moscow, 36,000 men and women workers are now taking an active share in the management. Through the trade unions and the co-operatives and the Party—which now numbers 1,200,000—large numbers of other workers are active. Approximately 30 per cent. of the workers are taking part in administration in one form or another. This is the real meaning of the dictatorship, the rule of the workers; and there is no other country in the world which can show a similar democracy, understanding by democracy the rule of the working people by themselves. The victory of the revolution itself is an expression of the highest form of democracy—the liberation of the oppressed classes from the rule of the wealthy and landed classes. This is why those Mensheviks and others who stood on the other side of the barricades from the workers are in prison: because they were against democracy, against the power of the workers. This is also why the army can never be militarist, can never be exploited for militarist adventures: for the soldiers are the workers, and the army itself is a school for Communism.

On Friday, November 11, the discussion on the gains of the revolution was opened by Clara Zetkin, and delegate after delegate joined in. In every speech the main thesis was the victory of the Soviet Revolution and the material and other advantages which that victory had brought; and the second thesis was the determination of the delegates to bring the truth about Russia to the workers in their own countries. Waddle, of the British delegation

(A.U.B.T.W.), drove home the place of Soviet Russia in the international class struggle, pointing out that:—

If all workers of Great Britain and the other capitalist countries could visit the U.S.S.R. and see what we have seen, there could be no question of war, because no workers would ever go against the Soviet Union. *But there would be an international civil war*, because all workers would want to establish in their own countries a position similar to that which exists in Soviet Russia.

Finally, the resolution was put and carried unanimously. After summing up the achievements of the revolution the resolution pledged the delegates—

To defend in their respective countries the first republic of workers and peasants by all means; to struggle against war which is threatening the U.S.S.R. on all sides; . . . to join the struggle of the proletariat against imperialist wars; to defend the cause of oppressed colonial peoples against their enslavers, first and foremost the revolutionary movement of the toiling masses of China; and to fight for national and international unity of the trade unions based on the class struggle.

The British delegation's resolution on the war danger was moved on Saturday morning, November 12, by Jagger (N.U.D.A.W.), who emphasised the fact that the danger of war is real, that it is growing, and that it may well be immediate; that the five great Powers were now spending 100 per cent. more on armaments than they spent before "the war to end war"; that armies and navies have increased, and the air forces have grown to a gigantic size; that capitalist governments know Russia is the friend of all attempts of the workers to free themselves. Finally, Jagger said the reply of the workers in each country in defence of Russia and the revolutionary movements in other countries must be:—

No thought, act, or deed on the part of any working man in the preparation of ammunition for war, in the transport of soldiers to the seat of war or any other work or occupation which will render possible the carrying on of a war against any nation struggling for freedom.

Henri Barbusse made a tremendous impression with a striking speech in which he spoke of the war preparations and the determination of the imperialists to crush Soviet Russia in order to crush the world revolution, and warned the delegates that

Pacifist ideology is throwing a veil over grim reality. The religion of peace is just as much opium as any other religion.

There followed speaker after speaker, from European countries, from colonies, from every part of the world. In the evening the discussion was suspended for a few minutes while the Order of the Red Banner was presented to seven international revolutionaries who had suffered for the cause, including Clara Zetkin and Marty (who had led the mutiny in the French fleet operating against Soviet Russia in the Black Sea in 1919).

Finally, late on Saturday evening, the resolution on the war danger was unanimously adopted. The resolution pointed out the determination of the imperialists to crush the revolutionary movements throughout the world, and especially the Soviet Revolution; called on the workers to expose the deception practised by the League of Nations and the organisations which support it; and urged the workers of all countries to give courageous support to the U.S.S.R. and to the Chinese revolution, such support involving systematic preparation for action to defend the revolution by all means.

From the first moment to the last, the Congress took up a determined class attitude. In the resolution on the gains of the revolution, and in all speeches on it, what exists in Russia was taken not as an accidental fact, but as a stage in the world victory of the workers and peasants over the capitalist class. And the war resolution, with the discussion on it, was based not merely on the objection to war as war, but on determined opposition to capitalist war against the revolution, against the working class. It was from this clear class standpoint that the spokesmen of the delegations pledged the delegates to carry on the work when they returned to their various countries. They pledged them to tell the working class what they have felt and heard and seen in Soviet Russia, because knowledge of the revolutionary gains, consciousness of the new power held by the working class of the world through the Soviet Revolution, will give a new consciousness and a new confidence to the workers of every other country in their own struggle. That struggle is not mere defence against capitalist attacks; in the last resort even the defence against capitalist attacks must necessarily develop into attacks against the capitalist defence—the substitution of the State power of the workers for the State power of the capitalists. This is the only

way of class struggle, the only way to victory. Those who stand aside from the Soviet Revolution, those who on one pretext or another adopt an "impartial" if not openly hostile attitude to Soviet Russia, the Soviet Government, or the Soviet Trade Unions, are not only doing their best to undermine the Soviet Revolution, but are leading their own workers away from the main front of the class struggle, and paving the way for defeat. On the other hand, those who bring home to the workers of their own country the facts of the Soviet revolutionary gains, the essential need for the whole working class to unite in defence of those gains, and *the reason why this is necessary*—because the Russian revolution is the first stage in the world revolution—those who carry out this work are safeguarding the revolutionary gains in Russia and bringing their own workers forward to stand side by side with the Russian workers in the later stages of the world revolution. The Congress of delegations made this clear to the delegates; and the duty now devolves on the delegates to make it clear to the workers in this and other countries.

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POSSIBILITIES OF 1928

By J. R. CAMPBELL

AS the New Year approaches it is usual for various captains of industry, newspaper financial experts, and other professional optimists to make glowing announcements as to the possibility of a trade revival in the New Year. We may expect this annual chorus during the month of December, but it will have no more reasonable basis than it has had in the last six years. There is no ground for capitalist optimism as to the situation in which the main industries of the country find themselves. The depression in the coal industry is growing more acute every month, and the capitalist class are helpless in face of this growing depression. In spite of the fact that the low price of coal is acting as a subsidy to other basic industries, the position of those industries is not good. In iron and steel, in ship-building, in cotton and wool the depression continues, and the collapse of the attempt of a section of the Lancashire cotton manufacturers to regulate prices shows the difficulty with which the capitalist class in Britain, within a section of a single industry, are faced when endeavouring to arrive at a common policy in relation to the conduct of their industry. In this continuing stagnation of industry the Tory Government is drifting along with no other policy than that of facilitating wage reductions, economising on social services, nationally and locally, and hoping that, as a result of these measures, industry in some way or other at some time or other will pick up and improve.

The Labour "Rationalisers"

In this situation the clamour for capitalist rationalisation is likely to grow and form a link between the Liberal capitalists in the finishing industries and the trade union leaders. To the voice of these Liberal capitalists and their economist, Mr. J. M. Keynes, will be added that of the Labour advocates of industrial co-operation with the capitalists for the purpose of the rationalisation of industry. These Labour advocates of rationalisation, like Mr. Citrine and Mr. Bevin, while believing that Socialism is the hope of the workers theoretically, at the same time insist that

capitalist rationalisation is the most practicable proposition at the present moment, and that it is the duty of the trade union movement not to meet reduction in wages by a mere "negative" policy of refusing to concede the reduction demanded by the employers, but to go out boldly as the advocates of capitalist rationalisation and efficiency. By a strange paradox, the trade union advocates of efficient capitalist organisation are also the supporters of inefficient Labour organisation. The General Council presented to the T.U.C. at Edinburgh a report on reorganisation, in which they refused to do for the T.U.C. what they are urging the capitalist class to do for capitalist industry, namely, reorganise it in a rational fashion.

It is unlikely, however, that this advocacy of industrial co-operation and rationalisation will have any definite results in the sphere of practice during the lifetime of the Tory Government. It will, however, have the result that the Liberals (with their industrial policy) and the trade union leaders (with their advocacy of industrial co-operation) will be propagating the same things for the same reason. The main body of the capitalist class, however, while lending an ear to the rationalisation propaganda will only be disposed seriously to consider such aspects of that propaganda as involve the breaking down of working-class standards and the speeding up of working men in industry. In 1928, therefore, while the trade union leaders are pursuing a campaign for rationalisation, wage attacks are likely to continue, as is also the attack on unemployed relief.

Curbing the Workers' Initiative

The dominant tendency in the Trade Union and Labour Movement with regard to these attacks is, apart from the propaganda of rationalisation, to surrender ignominiously to them and to wait for the next general election.

At the present moment two important bodies of workers, the Durham miners and the wool and textile workers, are being threatened with reductions in wages, and the whole policy of the trade union bureaucracy is to let these reductions take place with a minimum of fuss or agitation. They bring forward the excuse that assistance to the workers who are threatened is impossible.

We do not agree with this for a moment ; but suppose it were so, suppose it were impossible for the movement to render assistance, by means of a strike, to workers facing wage cuts, does that mean that nothing should be done ? Surely, even in that situation, the Labour movement should arouse the other workers by means of a campaign to a sense of the wrong which is being done to their fellow-workers, driving home to them the danger which they themselves will be facing if they do not help those workers to resist wage reductions and getting the workers not immediately affected at least to render to the workers involved in the struggle a powerful measure of financial assistance.

It is a cowardly lie to suggest that the workers at the present moment are apathetic and will not move. Wherever the workers have had a chance of striking a blow at capitalism, as in the municipal elections and in the miners' march, their response has revealed their willingness to fight in defence of their interests. The trade union bureaucracy, however, gives them no lead. It stifles the initiative of the workers at every possible opportunity. It preaches a policy of defeatism in relation to the defence of wage standards, it holds out as the only possibility a general election in the future, and then—when it has done these things—it has the audacity to complain that the workers are apathetic.

The Rôle of Unofficial Movements

The tendency on the part of the bureaucracy to repress the initiative of the workers, which is likely to grow rather than to diminish in 1928, deserves some examination. Many of the vital, formative movements which have left their mark on the British Labour Movement have been initiated by workers outside the ranks of the "recognised" leaders of trade unionism. The idea of an independent political party of the workers, the industrial unrest of pre-war days with its ideas for the amalgamation of the trade union movement, the Shop Stewards' Movement during the war, the "Hands off Russia" Committees, the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, and the Minority Movement are all movements which have made some contribution to the British Labour Movement, and they have done so without the sanction, indeed with the opposition, of the "recognised"

leaders of the trade union movement. The British Labour Movement would have been a much poorer thing than it is to-day if the workers had waited for official sanction and permission for every movement which they undertook.

Imagine the pioneers of independent labour representation waiting for a lead from the Liberal-Labour bureaucracy of their day ; imagine the workers from 1911 to 1914 waiting for a lead from the bureaucrats crouching behind their money-bags, fearing the Labour unrest even more than the employers; imagine the engineering workers during the war waiting for guidance from leaders who had transformed their trade union into an appendage of the capitalist state; imagine "Hands Off Russia" committees waiting for a lead from the pro-war Socialists who formed the majority of the Labour men in the Coalition Parliament and whose enmity to Russia was due to the fact that she had pulled herself out of the imperialist war. Imagine the N.U.W.C.M. waiting for sanction to organise the unemployed, or the Minority Movement waiting for sanction to put forward new ideas with regard to trade union re-organisation. If these movements had not sprung up and acted on their own initiative, the British Labour Movement to-day would have been something like the American Federation of Labour, if not worse.

The whole history of the Labour Movement shows that movement being renewed, united, and advanced by unofficial movements rising from among the workers themselves. Oblivious to this fact, the blind leaders of the blind in the General Council and a few of their half-witted, career-seeking satellites in the localities are preaching the doctrine that the workers must not inaugurate any movement without official sanction. We have seen the spectacle of the miners' march being repudiated because it was undertaken without the sanction of the South Wales Miners' Federation or the M.F.G.B., though it had the support of the miners' lodges in the Rhondda. The excuse that it was a Communist stunt will not bear examination. How the Communists could get more out of it than the official Labour Party is a mystery shared by Messrs. Wall and Citrine, but incomprehensible to everyone else.

The value of the march as a means of rousing the attention of the country to the situation in the mining industry and to the unemployed situation throughout the country was never discussed. It was simply condemned on the ground that it was not an official movement. It was not condemned because it was a bad method of demonstrating for improvements in the condition of the miners or of the unemployed. It was not condemned because officialism had thought of a better method of raising this question in a mass form. Officialism has no method of agitation, unless sporadic deputations to the Ministry of Health—alternating with periods of vacuous inactivity—can be dignified as such. It cannot be claimed that the issues which the march was going to force on popular attention were not important. They were doubly important, because the march was timed to take place at the very moment when the Government was introducing its Unemployment Bill, based on the Blanesburgh Report. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress, which has conducted no campaign against this iniquitous Bill, which proposes to conduct no campaign against it, tries to damp down the march and keep the workers in a state of complete inactivity. Starve quietly and wait for the next Labour Government is the only policy that it appears to be able to think of.

The same policy of official repression of working-class activity is taking place in relation to trades councils, not because trades councils are pursuing an unofficial policy of activity instead of an official policy of inactivity, but because trades councils are pursuing an unofficial activity rather than sink to the level of bovine inactivity that the General Council desires them to do.

The General Election

In this situation the Government will probably last out the year, and will endeavour to carry not only its Unemployment Bill but its policy of House of Lords reform. It is unlikely that a general election will take place in 1928 unless, through some turn in the political situation, the Government thinks that in this situation it can get the maximum amount of votes, or unless the workers force the leadership to undertake a mass campaign against the Government instead of vegetating in masterly inactivity.

The main hope of a general election in 1928 lies in a great mass agitation against the Government. The whole policy, however, of the Labour leaders is to prevent this agitation taking place. Yet in this agitation lies the hope of an early general election, to which the same Labour leaders have been directing the attention of the working class in recent months. One would have thought that seeing the Government's intention to reform the House of Lords, the Labour Party and the T.U.C. would have done everything possible to arouse the working class. On the contrary, they are drifting along without a policy of agitation themselves, only becoming energetic when it becomes a question of stopping someone else from doing what they ought to be doing.

The Defence of Workers' Russia

The need for the workers to start a great campaign of agitation against the Government without waiting for the bureaucracy is clearly necessary with regard to the foreign situation. It is now evident that, in spite of the declarations of leading trade union leaders, the break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee, initiated by the General Council, has strengthened the Government enormously in its anti-Russian policy, and has encouraged the anti-Russian elements in the Labour Movement, who are now attacking the U.S.S.R. as they dared not do before. One can see this clearly in contrasting the speech made by Mr. Citrine at Edinburgh with the speech made by Mr. MacDonald a month later at Blackpool. Mr. Citrine said:—

I would remind Congress of the fact that the Anglo-Russian Committee's existence is not necessarily a guarantee against war. The action of the British Trades Union Congress in 1920 when the Council of Action was set up was taken before we had any relations with Russia at all, and I am expressing the view of the General Council when I say that if the Russian Revolution were menaced with the attack of war, Anglo-Russian Committee or no Anglo-Russian Committee, the British Trades Union Movement will stand unitedly against it.

Mr. Citrine's attitude was one of alleged sympathy with Russia, declaring that the British workers would defend Russia in the event of an attack being made upon it. Mr. MacDonald, at Blackpool Conference, attempted to put the blame for the

warlike situation entirely on the Russians and prepared the way for lining up with the British Government if it attacked Russia. He said:—

He would say to those who were always talking about defending Russia that the most effective way of defending Russia was not to give Russia excuses for having a wrong international policy. They were told that Russia had done this, that, and the other thing. It was not true. Russia had taken no effective steps whatever to get into a relationship of neighbourly union with the other States of Europe. Again and again that question had been raised, and it had been pressed upon the Russian Government, but no satisfactory answer had been given. Until the Russian Government made its relations perfectly clear with the Third International that desirable step could never be taken. It was no use talking nonsense about it. They knew perfectly well that every time a move was made to get an understanding with Russia it was upset by the political propaganda of an organisation which was destroying goodwill towards Russia on the part of millions of people who really desired to show their good sense.

At the moment Labour is nearer to the Government in its anti-Russian policy than it has been at any time since the days of war-time coalition. The workers, however, are still the staunch friends of the U.S.S.R., and it is to be hoped that the return of the British Workers' Delegation from Russia will be the beginning of a great campaign which will bring the British and Russian workers closer together, and force the leaders to undertake positive measures for preventing an attack on the U.S.S.R.

Getting Ready for the Election

During the year 1928 the general election will dominate all the thoughts of the Labour leadership. At the present moment their attitude towards the general election is two-fold. When workers are demonstrating against cuts in unemployment relief or against wage cuts, the cry of the Labour leader is that nothing can be done now and we ought to wait until the election. On the other hand, a section of them are busy telling the workers not to expect too much from the next Labour Government as it will have many difficulties to overcome.

The chances of Labour increasing its strength and becoming the strongest of the three parties are good. The chances of it getting a majority are, in our opinion, absolutely nil. We believe that the present distribution of British electoral divisions and the

social composition of these divisions is such that it is quite possible for the Labour Party to win over a majority of the electorate without, at the same time, winning a majority of the seats in the House of Commons. Every effort, therefore, ought to be bent to ensure that Labour pulls its maximum strength everywhere. We believe that at the present moment the leadership of the Labour Party is pursuing a policy which is calculated to prevent the movement from pulling its whole strength with a view to returning the maximum number of candidates.

It is, for example, busily engaged in watering down its already reformist programme, and 1928 will see the results of the labours of the Committee which has been appointed to perform this task. Nationalisation is, in the main, dropped as a practicable proposition. It will still, of course, remain on the programme as an ideal to be aimed at, but the immediate practicable programme itself will be so designed as to make the Labour Government not a government of nationalisation, but of capitalist rationalisation. As the capitalist class cannot, because of vested interests, agree amongst themselves as to the appropriate methods of consolidation and re-equipment of their industries, the Labour Party may endeavour to force such measures of capitalist efficiency upon the capitalists in a number of the leading industries. In addition, the programme will contain a number of measures of social reform defined in the vaguest possible way. Unemployment will be mentioned, but no positive scale of unemployment relief will be advocated. Reform of the Poor Law will be mentioned in a vague, general way. The main plank of the programme will be the Surtax, which is an even less revolutionary proposal in 1928 than Mr. Lloyd George's famous budget was in 1909. This Surtax will not enable the Labour Party to raise sufficient money for purposes of social reform, and its social reform achievement—if this basis is accepted—is likely to be one of relative stagnation.

The assumption of those who are advocating the watering down of the programme is simple. Make the programme so like the Liberal programme that we will win the support of those who are at the present moment supporting the Liberal Party. The Socialist voters, who do the donkey work at local and national

elections, will continue to do this work for Labour no matter what the programme is. Such is the calculation. It is false in two respects. The watering down of the programme to make it like the Liberal programme may strengthen certain groups of Liberals in their intention of remaining in the Liberal Party, while, at the same time, it may drive the active workers in the localities into a condition of apathy.

Wiping out Liverpool

If the Labour Movement is to be united in view of the early general election, then the principal task is to heal the split which has already taken place in the local Labour movement through the application of the Liverpool decisions. Only comparatively ignorant people think that the havoc wrought by the Liverpool decisions is confined to the disaffiliation of twenty or so local Labour Parties and the expulsion of Communists as individual members and from official positions in the local Labour movement. The results of this policy are much more serious. It has disgusted and driven out of the Labour Party hundreds of good workers who were not Communists, but who were not prepared to take part in the cowardly, capitalist inspired, disruptive heresy hunt. It has placed in charge of local Labour Parties individuals who would not be in charge of them if a free field were given to Communists to stand for official posts in those Labour Parties. It has encouraged the Right Wing in some districts to go beyond the Liverpool decisions and get rid of their Left Wing opponents by arbitrary measures. Two instances of this may be cited: the refusal of the Cardiff Trades and Labour Council to accept Communist trade unionists as delegates from the local N.U.R. branches, though this refusal goes far beyond the Liverpool decisions; and the refusal of the Aberdeen Trades Council to allow non-Communist members of the Minority Movement to run for the Executive Committee of the Trades Council or to allow affiliated branches to the Trades Council to put forward for election the names of members, non-Communist and non-Minority Movement, simply on the ground that these members belonged to trade union branches affiliated to the Minority Movement.

This going beyond the Liverpool decisions has the tacit approval of the bureaucracy. They do not advise trades councils to do these things, but wherever the trades councils do them the bureaucracy turns a blind eye and wishes the trades council good luck in its endeavours. This splitting policy, together with the policy of repressing local initiative, is weakening the Labour Party in regard to the next general election. The main hope in the Labour Party with regard to the general election lies in healing the split which was caused by the Liverpool decisions.

1928 will be the year to wipe out Liverpool, and it is to be hoped that the Labour Party Conference will be forced to do so by the workers. In order that this shall be accomplished and the Labour Movement preserved in 1928 from further degeneration on the lines of 1927, it will be necessary for all who stand for progressive policy in the Labour Party, for all who stand for an advanced programme in the Trade Union Movement, to get together with the Left Wing Movement and the Minority Movement, strengthening those bodies in their work of fighting bureaucratic reaction. The hope that 1928 will be a better year for the Labour Movement than 1927 lies principally in the development of the initiative of the rank and file of the Labour Movement, and the strengthening of those bodies which represent that rank and file opinion.

CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

(Concluded)

By CLEMENS DUTT

Exploitation by Moneylenders

ON top of the heavy exploitation of the present cultivators by the government and the landlords comes a third enormous toll in the shape of interest on debts. In recent times rural indebtedness has grown to gigantic proportions, the total in British India alone being estimated at about 600 crores of rupees.* Since most of this sum is lent at high rates of interest, from 10 up to 100 per cent. and even more, the annual drain on peasant production must amount to some 60 crores at least, or nearly twice the amount of land revenue. The following illustrative facts on indebtedness in different provinces of British India give some idea of the burden of this debt.

In the Madras Presidency, Sir F. Nicholson estimated the total debt of the rural population in 1895 at 45 crores of rupees. At an average interest of 15 per cent. this would involve an annual charge of 6.75 crores. He considers that 8 crores of rupees is a more probable figure and that at least another crore can be added for stamps, fees, commission brokerage, costs in litigation, &c. Reckoning the gross annual produce at 60 crores, the annual charge of 9 crores would mean a drain of 15 per cent. of the total.

A detailed study of rural indebtedness in the Punjab has recently been made by Mr. Darling. He concludes that "for the province as a whole, debt is twelve times the land revenue, which means that the total debt of the proprietors of the Punjab is about 55 crores of rupees." His figures refer to 43,733 proprietors, 80 per cent. of whom were found to be in debt. Mortgage debts, *i.e.*, on the security of the land, were found to be 45 per cent. of the total. He says further that in 1921 the total mortgage debt of the

* One crore = 10 millions. A crore of rupees = (approx.) £750,000.

province was ascertained to be 34½ crores of rupees, so that on this basis, assuming that this represents 45 per cent. of the total debt, the latter must amount to some 77 crores.

For Bengal, the registrar of co-operative societies, giving evidence before the Royal Agricultural Commission, declared that rural indebtedness amounts to about 60 crores of rupees.

Every one of the recent intensive studies of the economy of selected villages, most of them based on the example of the classic work of Dr. H. Mann, makes mention of the prevalent and onerous burden of rural debts. Some investigators, notably Mr. Darling, draw the conclusion that the most important cause of rural poverty is to be found in the extortions of the moneylenders, and that the weight of Government land revenue is of slight influence in comparison. It is probable that this standpoint reflects chiefly the official position of the British administrator. It must be emphasised that the exploitation of the peasants by the moneylenders is not an isolated specific form of exploitation, but is intimately bound up with the whole of the process of exploitation involved in capitalist production and is part of the economic machinery of exploitation which is headed and dominated by British imperialist finance-capital. The significance of the moneylender lies in his association with the rest of the apparatus of exploitation. He is very rarely merely a usurer, he is usually a combined moneylender, landlord, and capitalist trader. The mortgaging and expropriation of the peasant proprietors and the transfer of their holdings to non-cultivating buyers, which has rapidly been taking place all over India, is mainly the result of the operations of moneylenders. These moneylenders appear as capitalists who prefer to invest their money in land rather than in any other form of capitalist enterprise. Marx has a description of this process which is now markedly applicable to Indian conditions. He says:—

As soon as rent assumes the form of money rent and with it the relation between rent-paying peasants and landlords becomes a relation fixed by contract . . . a development which is not possible until the world market, commerce and manufacture, have reached a relatively high level . . . the leasing of land also puts in an appearance. . . . When the capitalist tenant steps between the landlord and the actually working tiller of the soil, all conditions have

been dissolved which arose from the old rural mode of production. The capitalist tenant becomes the actual commander of these agricultural labourers and the actual exploiter of their surplus value, whereas the landlord has any direct relations only with the capitalist tenants, the relation being a mere money form fixed by contract. (Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 929. Kerr edition.)

Exploitation by Traders

The moneylender in India, as the capitalist tenant in the sense meant by Marx, is also the chief trader and immediate disposer of the agricultural commodities in the market. He not only has possession of the land and finances the cultivation, but buys the crop cheap and sells it at a higher price. The description given by Mr. Subbarama Aiyar of the situation in Malabar is typical of all parts of India. He says:—

The moneylender who is generally a grain dealer, cloth merchant, and jack-of-all-trades, is an indispensable figure in the village economy. Every typical village has at least one usurer who finances the local cultivation and local trade.

The collection of Government kist in money soon after the harvest compels the small ryot to sell his paddy at once instead of waiting for a more favourable time. Whatever may be the cause the price of paddy is comparatively low at the time of harvest and gets higher as the season proceeds. The necessitous cultivator is thus at a disadvantage in that he cannot afford to wait.

The trading capitalist-moneylender exploits the actual tillers of the soil as much as if the latter were actually hired agricultural labourers. He advances money for the purchase of seed, &c., and he buys the agricultural commodities that they produce leaving them a bare minimum of subsistence. In many cases the crop is already mortgaged or sold to the trader before it is even sown. The helplessness of the peasant cultivator lies in the fact that he is not working for local needs, but is a producer of commodities for the world market.

Capitalism in Village Economy

The tendencies in the development of Indian agriculture are only explicable on the basis of a study of the penetration of capitalism under the influence of British imperialism. The preceding sections have described the increasing process of capitalist exploitation of the cultivators engaged in agricultural production,

the first and foremost feature of capitalist agriculture. This exploitation is based on the development of a money economy in place of the old feudal system of barter.

This development of money economy and capitalist relations is seen not only in production but also in consumption. The old self-sufficiency of the village has been destroyed in both these spheres. This is seen in the penetration of machine-made goods and the accompanying ruin of the old village handicrafts. Formerly every village possessed its weaver, potter, leather worker, blacksmith, brazier, oil-presser, &c., who, as Sir William Hunter remarks in his book *The Indian Empire*, were "members of a community as well as inheritors of a family occupation." They were paid in kind or directly supported by the village community, and not producers of commodities on a money basis. Now their livelihood has been seriously undermined by the breakdown of the village communal system and by the introduction of factory products from the towns. Already, for example, it is becoming impossible for the handloom weavers to compete with factory-made cloth, and in spite of the enormous increases of Indian-produced yarn and cotton goods, there has been a steady decline in the number of spinners and weavers. Some illustrative quotations from just one of the recent intensive studies of Indian villages (*Economic Life in a Malabar Village*, S. S. Aiyer, 1925) will be sufficient to indicate the importance of the changes that have been taking place.

The increasing use of machine-made cloth in place of hand-woven fabrics, kerosene for castor oil, vessels and implements of iron and copper, scissors, knives, and mirrors which pour in from abroad; the use of bicycles, watches and clocks, power-lamps and chimneys, and folding umbrellas among the well-to-do classes, and motor cars among the very rich; the demand for sewing machines and machine-tools of several kinds, matches, cutlery, and soap . . . these factors, assisted by the railway and post office, have combined to break down the old self-sufficiency in Malabar as in the rest of India.

In Malabar, as in the rest of India, the blacksmith has lost his chief business of making new ploughshares, hoes, and big knives, which are now imported from foreign countries.

Kerosene oil and power lamps are gradually displacing castor and other country-made oils for lighting purposes. People of several castes have begun to use soaps, and the consumption of coffee and tea is on the increase year by year.

Capitalist exploitation of the peasant cultivators and the effects of the penetration of factory-made products into the villages are two important aspects of the development of capitalism in Indian village economy. An even more important aspect which remains to be dealt with is the growing unequal distribution of wealth and the development of class differentiation and class struggle in the country side.

The Class Struggle in the Village

Class division in the village does not arise for the first time with the introduction of capitalism, but it does take on a new character, for whereas previously the two chief classes occupied with agriculture were the feudal lords and the peasants cultivating the soil in a state of serfdom, under capitalism the two chief classes are the capitalist landlords and the landless agricultural labourers. While the presence of wage labour is the outstanding mark of capitalism in agriculture, it is not necessary for the dominance of capitalist relations that there shall be an immediate expropriation of the peasants. Lenin has declared that:—

The basic and chief tendency of capitalism consists in the squeezing out of small production by large, both in industry and in agriculture. But this squeezing out must not be understood as meaning solely immediate expropriation. Under this squeezing out must also be understood the more powerful destruction and deterioration of the conditions of economy and the petty cultivators continued through years and decades.

This description can be very aptly applied to the Indian situation. As already described, the conditions of existence of the mass of poor peasants are such that, while large numbers are actually being driven into the ranks of the agricultural proletariat, the remainder are wholly occupied in producing surplus value for the various classes of exploiters, retaining for themselves the equivalent of the barest minimum of subsistence wages. The economists speak as if, with a few conspicuous exceptions, a dead level of poverty reigned in the villages. On the contrary there are rich and poor in every village, and even in the towns a large section of the bourgeoisie owe a considerable proportion of their income to rents from agricultural property.

The gulf between rich and poor is larger in India than in any Western capitalist country. The disproportion between the wealth of even the only moderately well-off sections and that of the lowest classes or castes is enormous. The figures of house property in the villages, such as those given by Mr. Aiyer, in his study of a Malabar village, show this contrast in a striking form, and, as he says, they "convey a fair idea of the economic status of the several castes." The relatively well-to-do castes of Nambisan, Brahmin, and Nair families in this village own house property worth on the average from 660 down to 143 rupees, but that of the artisan castes is worth only 50 to 20 rupees, while the average for the depressed classes is 10 rupees or even less. The better off cultivators are fifty to sixty times as rich as the poorest.

The general deterioration of the economic conditions of the poorer cultivators and the existing unequal distribution of wealth comes out very clearly in the figures relating to sub-division of holdings. Studies of Indian villages in all parts of India have confirmed the existence of the serious and critical position so graphically described by Dr. H. Mann for the Deccan, where a large proportion of the cultivators (85 per cent. in the village of Jategaon Bruk) are unable to live on their earnings even on their own meagre standard. Everywhere the number of small and uneconomic holdings is on the increase. In the village of Jategaon, mentioned above, more than half of the holdings are less than ten acres, and 77 per cent. are below twenty acres. In the village of Nelluvaya, in Malabar, out of 105 holdings under private ownership no less than seventy-five are below five acres. Yet the average size for the whole is about nine acres. Several big landlords exist in the village, and the author declares:—

Owing to the existence of a few big landowners whose estates are impartible and of vast stretches of land in the hands of temples, absentee landlordism is the inevitable result.

In the village of Vazhamangalam, in the Madras presidency, 147 out of 181 holdings are below five acres in extent. The average size of holding is about four acres. In 1910 there were only 143 holdings altogether, and of these 106 were below five acres.

The report published by the Labour Office of the Government of Bombay on *An Inquiry into Agricultural Wages in the Bombay Presidency* gives some interesting statistics on the size of holdings in the presidency. Out of a total of nearly 2½ million holdings, over a million are less than five acres. Yet the total acreage amounts to nearly 34½ million acres, and the average size for all the holdings is 15.4 acres. There are 3,369 holdings over 500 acres, most of them in Sind, with an average size of 1,024 acres.

This is the situation in Bombay where large landowners are much more infrequent than in the regions under zemindary tenure. In the zemindary areas the contrast between big and small ownership is much more marked. In Bengal, with its crowded population of small cultivators, the average size of a holding is hardly three acres. Professor Mukherji gives the average size of a holding in the district of Dacca as 2.88 acres, and in that of Bakarganj as 2.51 acres. Yet there are in Bengal 92,508 estates under permanent settlement with an area of 37½ million acres, *i.e.*, with an average size of over 400 acres per estate. Professor K. T. Shah declares:—

In the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and Assam, the zemindary estates number 223,920 embracing a total area of 89,080,811 acres, or an average size of an estate of 400 acres in round figures.

(Wealth and Taxable Capacity of India, 1925, p. 303.)

It is true that the over-pressure on agriculture is the basic fact in Indian poverty. Nevertheless, the unequal distribution of wealth and the heavy toll taken by the exploiters is a very important factor in driving down the masses of small cultivators below the subsistence level. Even with the admittedly excessive agricultural population in India to-day, an equal distribution of land would give an economic holding for all the peasants. The cultivated area in British India amounts to about 660 million acres, and the total number of ordinary cultivators is about 193 millions, or say 35 million families. That gives an average of nineteen acres per family, or 3.4 acres per head. The unequal distribution of land is reflected in the unequal distribution of wealth. Professor Shah concludes that the distribution of the national dividend is as follows:—

More than a third of the wealth of the country is enjoyed by about 1 per cent. of the population ; or allowing for the dependents, about 5 per cent. at most ; slightly more than another third (about 35 per cent. of the annual wealth produced in the country) is absorbed by another third of the population allowing for dependents, while 60 per cent. of the people of British India enjoy among them about 30 per cent. of the total wealth produced in the country.

Thirty per cent. of the annual production of wealth is distributed among 60 per cent. of the population. This section, which represents the poorer peasants, together with the proletariat, therefore get only half the wealth that it should have if the distribution was on an equalitarian basis. The various tolls taken from the peasant, in the shape of land revenue, rents, interest on debt, profits of shopkeepers and traders, and the upkeep of religious institutions must amount to at least 150-160 crores of rupees. This is nearly 10 rupees per head of the agricultural population in British India. Actually, the value taken from the cultivators must be much greater than this, for Professor Shah and others have estimated the value of the agricultural production of British India at 1,300-1,500 crores. This represents about 80-90 rupees per head, but the actual income per head as found in the various investigations of different villages is usually below 50 rupees. Professor Gilbert Slater declares:—

The poverty of India is a grim fact. In the main it is the result not of unequal distribution of what wealth is produced, *excessively* large incomes being very few though conspicuous, *as of a very small* production *per capita*.

(Preface to Pillai, *Economic Conditions in India*, 1925.)

While this may be true "in the main" as far as absolute figures of wealth production are concerned, it must be emphasised that relatively to the amount of wealth produced the effect of exploitation and unequal distribution is very important.

The bulk of Indian agricultural cultivators still belong to the class of peasants. They differ from the class of proletarian workers in that they are still producers of commodities, and that they sell commodities and not their labour. Nevertheless, it is common knowledge that more and more of them are being converted into landless labourers. In 1882 Sir William Hunter remarked that "the increase in the population has developed a large landless class," and he reported that there were in India "7½ millions of

adult day labourers" engaged in agriculture. The All-India Census report for 1921 estimates the number of agricultural labourers and dependents to be thirty-eight millions, of which twenty-two millions are actual workers. Mr. N. M. Joshi, the General Secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress, has recently stated that there are twenty-five millions actual wage-workers in agriculture, and that a further fifty millions, at least, are so engaged for some part of the year. He says:—

The wage earning agricultural workers number 21.6 millions, and they support a total population of 37.9 millions. Besides these there are 5.2 millions of actual workers, including those who work for wages in allied occupations, maintaining a total population of over eight millions. Thus it is safe to estimate that there are about twenty-five millions of persons who are mere agricultural wage-earners. . . .

Out of the total number of 100 millions of actual workers in agriculture, at least fifty millions should be working as wage-earners from four to eight months in the year.

(*The Trade Union Movement in India*, N. M. Joshi, 1927.)

These latter fifty millions are already practically converted into proletarians. Thus the effective numbers of the proletarianised agricultural class already amount to some seventy-five millions, forming with their dependents a majority of the actual cultivators.

The conditions summarised in the above statistics are confirmed by the descriptions of individual villages. The following is a typical example:—

In a village of Bengal (Murshidabad) of forty peasant families of which only five were solvent (these had three-acre holdings, and their rent had increased from 7 to 17 annas in twenty years).

Six families earn their living by day labour on lands at one time owned by them, but now relinquished to usurers. The rest earn a precarious livelihood either on their own lands or as hired farmers on a half-to-half share basis.

(Professor Mukherji, *Modern Review*, November, 1925.)

The most fully developed capitalist exploitation of agriculture occurs in the big plantations worked by limited liability companies for the production of industrial crops. There are some 800,000 workers on the organised tea, coffee, rubber, and sugar plantations, including men, women, and small children. The profits of these companies are very large, while the wages of the labourers are low even for India.

The growth of the agricultural proletariat gives rise to a class struggle in the countryside between this class together with the poor cultivating peasants and the landlord and rich peasant class. This conflict threatened to reach the dimensions of an actual upheaval in the turbulent period of non-co-operation.

This class struggle shows also the connection of the agricultural working class with the industrial working class. Further, it demonstrates the importance of the whole peasant and agricultural proletarian struggle against exploitation for the struggle of the whole people against imperialism.

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THE BANKRUPTCY OF AMERICAN TRADE UNIONISM

The Forty-Seventh Convention of the American Federation of Labour

By EARL BROWDER

"**T**HE most reactionary convention on record." This judgment of the A.F. of L. Convention which ended recently was written not by a Red, but by the reporter of a local capitalist newspaper. It is an accurate judgment. Even all former records of the A.F. of L. were outdone in the shameless, openly-reactionary proceedings here in Los Angeles. From the time the Convention opened on October 3, until it closed on the 14th, it joyously, exultantly demonstrated its loyalty and subserviency to the capitalist class. It was an orgy of reaction.

The keynote of the gathering was the same slogan which unites all reactionary elements throughout the world—"Down with Communism." Although all Communists had been carefully excluded from the Convention, yet the Credentials Committee, headed by Mathew Woll, submitted the list of delegates for approval of Police Inspector Hynes before it was allowed to go to the Convention.

Collaboration with the Police

Close connection with the police is not a new development of trade union officialdom's policy. It has become a commonplace since 1917, when the A.F. of L. bureaucracy became a part of the war machine for mobilising the workers and suppressing discontent. Never before, however, has it come out so boldly before the whole world. In addition to giving the police a place on the Credentials Committee, they were given a free hand to decide who should be present as spectators. And when a local trade unionist, Sydney Bush, known as a Left Winger, took the

invitation to the public seriously and entered the hall to watch the Convention, he was arrested by Mr. Hynes, thrown in jail, and only released on bail after two days. He was charged with the crime of "vagrancy."

Abandoning the Miners

When the Convention opened, the United Mine Workers had been on strike in the bituminous fields for over six months. Yet the 100-page report of the Executive Council contained not a reference to the struggle. On the second day, the omission having caused much comment, the Executive brought in a "supplementary report," which noted the plight of the miners and provided that on November 14 (1) a meeting should be held to see if anything can be done for them. By the time this matter arose for action, news had already come of the betrayals in Illinois and Indiana. The report which was adopted expressed itself as "pleased" with the separate peace in those States which has ruined the strike and destroyed the Union as a nationally-operating body.

One of the miners' delegates was Cappelini, president of the anthracite district and a renegade progressive. When he addressed the Convention he said not a word about the struggle of the miners. He was in full harmony with this convention of business men, to whom the word "strike" is very distasteful. Instead, he talked against the Communists, whom he described as terrible monsters who use the most wicked and inhuman methods. He concluded: "We in the anthracite fields take pride in saying to you that a Communist may come in and make one or two speeches, but that is the end, he makes no more. We meet the Communists with the same tactics they use, we use the same methods they do."

Economic Conditions and Programme

Enough facts were brought before the Convention to shatter the myth of "prosperity" of the American working class. But these facts received scant attention in debate, and none at all in programme. Some of these facts, unchallenged in the Convention, were:—

The United States is one of the few civilised countries where there exists no general state-operated system of protection for the masses against the common misfortunes of life.

Labour supply is far beyond our means of steady employment.
(Resolution No. 14.)

A critical time in the realm of industry lies ahead of us. . . .

There are 300,000 more miners in the industry than the industry can support.

The death toll from industrial accidents alone is not under 23,000 per year, non-fatal injuries are probably not under 2,500,000, over 227,000,000 days of productive labour are lost through such accidents, and there is a wage loss of \$1,022,000,000.

Considering the increase in population in the last eight or ten years, it should now take 140 men to supply the needs of the country where 100 could formerly do so. Instead of that, and in spite of our having 20,000,000 more people, the needs of the country are fully supplied with 7 per cent. fewer workers than we needed in 1919.

There are more than a million unemployed workers, and over 3,500,000 partially employed.

What we call common labour in America is paid little higher than the same type of labour in England, and not much higher than common labour is paid in Germany. Wages for common labour in this country are all out of scale.

(J. J. Davis, Secretary of Labour.)

Taking our workers as a whole in industry, they are producing almost 50 per cent. more as a result of each day's work than they did in 1899 . . . while the real wage paid to the American working man has only increased approximately 5 per cent. during the same period.

(J. P. Frey, Metal Trades Department.)

In the face of conditions indicated by the above confessions, what was the programme of the Convention? With added emphasis, it reiterated the old programme: no strikes, peace and collaboration with the employers; help to increase production in the hope that a few crumbs of the increase may fall to the workers; no independent political action for protective legislation or any other objects, but only the petitioning of the old capitalist parties. No provisions whatever for the unemployed, for raising wages of common labour, for organising the unorganised workers.

The So-called "New Wage Theory"

The old reformist theory of "identity of interest between capitalists and workers" is brought forward in a new dress by

the A.F. of L. leaders. It is called the "new wage theory," but upon examination it proves to be substantially the same theory that reformism has always held. Even the form is but slightly changed. Its argument runs along the following lines. The reason that employers fight against labour, is that they are weak and poor and cannot afford to pay high wages. Therefore, before making demands upon them, the unions must help to increase production, cut down costs, decrease the working force, make the employer rich, powerful, and prosperous, and then, out of the kindness of his heart, he will grant an increase in wages from his overflowing coffers. If the unions should fight against the employers, then this would decrease production, impoverish the employers, and make it impossible for them to pay high wages.

From this theory flows all the practices of the A.F. of L. officialdom to-day. It cropped up in every speech in the Convention, and in every resolution adopted. It permeated every aspect of the Executive Council's report. Uncritically, ignoring the facts under their noses which refute such a theory and make it impossible for any intelligent person to analyse the facts and still accept the theory, the class-collaboration philosophy is accepted without debate. All "achievements" claimed by the Executive Council are achievements in union-management collaboration, trade union capitalism (banks, insurance companies, &c.), relations with the American Bar Association, American Legion, the U.S. Army, efficiency engineering institutes, and capitalist politicians.

The principal achievement of the year, according to the Report, is the drawing closer to the employers that has taken place. They have convinced "many of the employers," "that it is a better business policy to have the co-operation of the trade unions than it is to fight them." They have established joint committees with the legal profession in the American Bar Association. They attend the military training camp manœuvres as guests of the War Department. They have joint bank-ownership with big financiers. They join together with the "open shop" employers in the National Civic Federation. What is the result of all this fraternisation? Who are the dominating partners in this combination? Do the A.F. of L. officials gain influence over the capitalists, or is it the other way?

The answer is found in every work and act of the A.F. of L. Convention. "The business advantage of unionisation has become more generally accepted," the Executive reports. "Formerly, Labour has allowed spectacular incidents of strife to overshadow the more important events of constructive development and service. The Federation has taken the initiative in reversing this attitude." They boast of "shifting attention away from problems of defence or aggression," and towards class-collaboration.

Legal Status of Trade Unions

If the economic programme of American trade unionism has been corrupted, so that surrenders are listed among the "achievements," the same is also true of the political phase of the movement. Immediately before and during the Convention, the U.S. Courts had handed down a series of injunctions against the Labour Movement, in connection with the miners' strike and the stonecutters' union, which practically place trade unions outside the law the moment they take any trade union action, by strike, boycott, picketing, or otherwise. The results of these decisions are in many respects more far-reaching than the provisions of the recent British Trade Unions Act.

International Relations

Relations of the A.F. of L. to Amsterdam (I.F.T.U.) remained as they were last year. The industrial secretariats have surrendered completely to the demand of the A.F. of L. unions that in affiliating they assume no duties or responsibilities. The metal workers' secretariat even assured the A.F. of L. Metal Trades Department that they asked for no financial contributions, whereupon the American metal workers joyously affiliated. What practical meaning such an affiliation has in solving any problems of the working class is purely negative.

This Convention reiterated the A.F. of L. conception of an International Federation, a powerless thing without authority or discipline, a sort of international post-box for exchange of letters. The Committee report said:—

The A.F. of L. demands, and rightfully so, self-determination of all political matters and the abolition of all authority of the executive

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committee and the management committee (of the I.F.T.U.) except in instructions issued by the regular convention of the I.F.T.U., and that no decision be regarded as conclusive unless the same has been adopted by unanimous vote.

The Convention listened sympathetically to Arthur Pugh, when he said:—

International trade union organisation and policy in Europe at the present time is somewhat disordered. In my view it is a case of a machine, the form and operation of which is unequal to meet the international needs of to-day. I venture to express the doubt whether the one big international is likely to be the most effective form of organisation.

This quite definite abandonment of the very principle of international unity endeared the British delegates to Green, Woll & Co. The British delegates were showered with affectionate attentions.

The Mexican Federation of Labour (C.R.O.M.) had been attacked at the Detroit Convention last year as a "revolutionary" body and therefore unworthy of being associated with. The C.R.O.M. is the junior partner with the A.F. of L. in the Pan-American Federation of Labour. Here in Los Angeles a report was submitted to the convention to clear the C.R.O.M. of the stigma of Socialism or any form of revolutionary taint.

The terrible charge had been made that the C.R.O.M., in supporting Calles' Government, had obtained an agreement that the old army should be dissolved and its place taken by a proletarian army, the staff of which should be appointed by C.R.O.M. Mr. Woll investigated this, and in the report declared that he and his colleagues are convinced that all charges of the C.R.O.M. being revolutionary are false, and therefore the A.F. of L. can continue to associate with that body. Because the Mexican Government is *not* a Labour Government in any sense, says the report, therefore it is all right for the C.R.O.M. to support it. But the A.F. of L. would be unable to have relations with the C.R.O.M. if the latter had even a hope at some later date of establishing a Labour Government. The report especially applauds the fact, which it notes, that the C.R.O.M. is now even abandoning its old Socialist phrases which have distressed the A.F. of L. bureaucracy. This report on Mexico might almost

have been written by some department of the U.S. Government or by the Oil Trust.

A special resolution was adopted, designed to prevent Canadian workers, living in cities on the border, from working in the U.S. during the day time and returning across the border at night. Another resolution called for complete exclusion of Filipino workers from the U.S. These "international" union leaders want to save all jobs for 100 per cent. Americans.

Mr. Woll's report on the Pan-American Commercial Conference showed that he had been appointed by the State Department together with a group of bankers and big business men. He had worked in unanimous accord with these representatives of capital, and therefore was congratulated by the A.F. of L. Convention.

The final item on international Labour relations dealt with by the Convention was approval of the Executive Council in its reception of the Australian Industrial Commission. This was a body supposed to represent Australian labour, but the labour unions of Australia protested against it, the appointments having been made over their heads and against their protests. The Australian unions had asked the A.F. of L. not to receive the Commission, but Mr. Green declared that such little "differences of opinion" could not be allowed to disturb State affairs, received the Commission, and now has the blessings of the A.F. of L. Convention.

"Down with Communism!"

Just as reaction works all over the world, in England, China, Mexico, &c., so in the A.F. of L. Convention the unifying slogan was "Down with Communism."

This began with the report of the Executive Council and continued until the last moment. Among the eight "achievements" of the past year, the one with greatest emphasis next to establishing mutual understanding with the capitalists, was the extermination of the Communists. Especially endorsed were the sabotage of the Passaic strike, the smashing of the garment workers' unions, and the destruction of the fur workers' union. The attitude on this question was best expressed, not by an

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A.F. of L. official, however, but by a visiting Britisher, 'Mr. Sherwood, when he told what they are doing in Britain. Sherwood said:—

Branches of our organisation in London, over 15,000 strong, refused to comply with the instructions of our General Council. Well, Mr. President, *we simply smashed the branches*. . . . We had on our General Council two men who *represented great areas* in our country, but they were going to Minority meetings, and we said, "Sign a declaration or get out." Well, *they had to get out*.

William Green, responding to this statement, declared:—

We were made happy when we listened to those words. We felt that our own position had been thoroughly vindicated, that the traditional course of the American Federation of Labour had found additional approval from our older brothers across the sea.

All the big guns of the Convention were turned in the same direction. A few quotations will show how the whole Convention was attuned to this keynote:—

We know that you, stronger than any other force in this nation, are the enemies of anything that approaches radicalism.

(C. C. Young, Governor of California.)

The Communists have been driven out of Passaic. . . . For a year or more our organisation has kept two men there constantly on guard against the onslaughts and the boring from within of the Red element.

(Sara Conboy, United Textile Workers.)

Again I would praise this body for keeping out of its ranks men who would try to improve us by Russian or Communist methods. You have ever been a mighty bulwark to keep this country free from those who would seek to destroy it.

(J. J. Davis, U.S. Secretary of Labour.)

Almost every other principal speaker before the Convention sounded the same note. The Canadian delegate spent a large part of his time denouncing the Left Wing and the Communists. Spencer Miller cited as the supreme achievement of the Workers' Education Bureau, that it had been instrumental in destroying the Left Wing in Passaic.

Other Problems Evaded

Pages could be filled with a record of the omissions of the Convention. The problem of organisation of the unorganised was merely noted in passing, and a vague hope expressed that

something might be done. The problem of the highly trustified and basic industries was noted, their unorganised condition and the inability of the existing craft unions to do anything; but the only note of anything new was a recognition that the local central bodies might furnish a unifying element where the craft unions have failed. The complete collapse of the much-heralded auto-industry organisation campaign was not mentioned. A retreat was registered on the question of company unions, even the pretence of militant struggle being abandoned; on this question the report said, "the question at issue here is not one that should be decided by conflict." The recent collapse of Labour banking was registered only in the warning for "extreme caution" in launching any more such schemes. Proposals to open the doors for Negroes in those unions that still exclude them were rejected. The menace of injunction rule was noted, but nothing was proposed to overcome it, the Convention relying upon persuasion of the capitalist political parties to change the law. The resolution demanding a pardon for Tom Mooney was "referred to the Executive Council" for whatever action that body might see fit. The scandal of Convention headquarters being established in a hotel which excludes union members from its working force was repeated again this year as in past conventions; this time it brought a resolution of protest from the hotel workers, but the resolution was quietly shelved. Not a word of protest was uttered in the whole Convention against the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Such utter and complete reaction as was displayed in this Convention has aroused misgivings even among the bourgeois masters of these "leaders" of Labour. Instances were to be noted even during the course of the Convention.

One of the major "crimes" of the Communists has been that they have constantly urged amalgamation of the craft unions along industrial lines. Time and again the A.F. of L. officials have rejected this and persecuted its advocates. But now, even the employers themselves, since the union leadership is so completely in their control, wish to modernise the union structure. So we find the millionaire Secretary of Labour, Davis, urging:—

May I add, isn't there some way by which we could have a better fitting of the structure of union organisation to the new indus-

trial organisation? Couldn't we have some sort of supplemental organisation in which craft autonomy would be merged into industrial grouping, at the same time leaving craft unionism alone in the smaller and older plants where it still fits more or less?

What if some national concern, such as I have in mind, should say to me that they would recognise one organisation in their entire system, but would not recognise forty or fifty separate organisations? Some of our older unions, like some of our older industries, need to realise that times and conditions have changed.

The second instance of bourgeois influence seeking to moderate the extreme reaction of the Convention, was shown in the speech of Hiram Johnson, former Governor of California and now United States Senator. Johnson is himself a reactionary, being responsible for the imprisonment of Tom Mooney for the past ten years. But being a politician he knows that the very exaggeration of Green, Woll & Co. in their reaction tends to defeat its own ends; he knows that it is necessary to play demagogically upon popular anger against Wall Street, and thus conduct all protest into safe channels. Thus we find the speech of Johnson contains the only quotable sentences that show a tinge of radicalism, often directly contradicting the speeches of Green, Woll, &c. For example, when a resolution was reported on which contained the charge that the actions of the U.S. Government in China and Latin-America "are plainly not in the interests of the common people, but serve the interests of Wall Street, and bring our country into disrepute as a despotism used in the interests of big capital," the answer of Green and Woll said:—

The committee feels it necessary to point out the fallacies of the resolution. . . . It is unfortunate that the manner in which resolutions of this sort are frequently drafted for introduction in state federations of labour, &c., inevitably leads to the conclusion that their authors are more concerned in pointing the finger of criticism at the Government of the U.S. than they are in ascertaining the facts regarding the subject they attempt to discuss.

Senator Johnson is a more clever reactionary. When he spoke he gave a militant tone, calculated to attract the support of all the vague discontent which he knows exists. Quite in contrast with the above open apology for and defence of the Government, Johnson said:—

Ours is a government to-day, founded in its national philosophy as perhaps no other government in all the ages has been founded,

upon the philosophy of business. . . . I would have you here remember the strife of the past, the necessities that brought it about, and the essentials that are required for strife in the future, in order that what has been so hardly won may not be lost in this singular and remarkable age. . . . I have yet to read of any man in power in this great nation denouncing either the theft of oil from the U.S.A. or the use of money to buy the electorate in Illinois and Pennsylvania.

Senator Johnson's attempt to teach the reactionaries of the A.F. of L. how to do their work intelligently did not produce results. The bureaucracy are too stupid to learn such a lesson. As for the main body of the delegates, they rarely participated from the floor in the discussions, leaving all talking to the big boys on the platform.

The Convention Ends

On Friday, October 14, closing the second week, the Convention came to an end. There had been many excursions, entertainments, drinking parties (safely protected from prohibition officers), and all the joyous trimmings of a regular "he-man's" convention. The Government had been zealously protected from even the slightest hint of attack; the officials had earned another increase in salaries, and safeguarded their control of the treasuries; the Communists had been suppressed again for the hundredth time; the capitalists had been shown there is not the slightest reason to fight against trade unions which are led by such men as William Green, Mathew Woll, and their friends.

The bourgeoisie of America have only one fear about the A.F. of L. leaders; that is, that they overdo their rôle and make it so palpable that it becomes ridiculous even to the most ignorant worker. As for the working class, the largest part is still apathetic and will pay no attention to the Convention; a small group of aristocrats of Labour will applaud it; the increasing numbers who are awakening will again be forced to recognise that the only forces that make for a healthy, fighting, militant trade union movement are organised in the Trade Union Educational League. In the disillusionment that will come from watching the Los Angeles Convention, will come new strength to the growing Left Wing Movement in the American working class.

The World of Labour

INDIA

The Bengal-Nagpur Railway Lockout

THERE has been a lockout affecting some 12,000 men of the railway workshops at Kharagpur belonging to the Bengal-Nagpur railway, since the middle of September, 1927.

The present dispute has a long history. For more than a year there has been unrest due to ill-treatment, indiscriminate dismissals, and other grievances. On October 2, 1926, there was a strike lasting for two days, which came to an end on a promise of redress and inquiry. Nothing was done and on February 2, 1927, the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Union issued a manifesto setting out the grievances of the workers. Still nothing was done, and on February 12, 1927, a great strike broke out at Kharagpur in spite of the attempts of the railway union officials to prevent it. Over 25,000 railway workers downed tools, and many others were affected. Armed police patrols were sent to Kharagpur and serious conflicts took place, during which guns and bayonets were used and many workers injured.

The strike ended in the middle of March on the assurance of the Agent that he would sympathetically consider all the grievances of the workers provided that the strike was called off immediately. Included in the settlement terms were conditions that no victimisation should take place.

In spite of this, no inquiry into the grievances of the workers has been instituted and instead during the summer the railway managing agent announced that 2,000 men from the Kharagpur workshops would be dismissed on grounds of economy. The general secretary of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Union, after an interview with the Agent, issued a statement reporting that all the proposals and suggestions put forward by the Union for meeting the situation were unceremoniously rejected and declaring :—

In spite of the denials of the railway authorities, the workers are not convinced that this move is not connected with the last strike, and there are, indeed, reasons to suspect that some officials are trying to wreak their vengeance on the workers.

On September 7, discharge notices were served on about 1,700 workers (about 350 had submitted voluntary resignations, but in many cases it is alleged their signatures had been obtained by force or without their consent).

The next day, the workers resorted to passive resistance, coming to the shops but refusing to work, whereupon on September 12 the authorities declared a lockout affecting some 10,000 workers.

It is a striking commentary on the widespread indignation occasioned by the action of the railway management that the situation was discussed in the

Legislative Assembly on September 14, and in spite of the opposition of the Government, a vote of censure was passed by the Assembly on the Government. Mr. N. M. Joshi declared during the debate that it was well known that the works manager had given instructions that in carrying out the retrenchment proposals non-strikers should not be dismissed. Mr. Parsons replied that those instructions had been withdrawn. Mr. Chaman Lal said that he was in possession of documentary evidence showing that the dismissals were directed against the strikers, the object being victimisation, the breaking of the strength of the railway union.

Since September the lockout has continued in force. The locked-out men have little or no funds, and their position is desperate. Their hardships have been aggravated by the refusal of the Agent to pay wages for August to those men who were on the contemplated reduction list. (It is customary in India for wages to be paid monthly, and only after a delay of two weeks.)

Other workers of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway have come out in sympathy with the locked-out men, and altogether over 12,000 are now affected. The action of the authorities, together with the sense of long-standing grievances, which exists very strongly on all railways in India, and the report that similar dismissals are contemplated for the Southern Indian Railway and elsewhere has caused widespread unrest among all railway workers in India, and there has been talk of calling a general strike of all railway workers.

In October the secretary of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation attempted to send a telegram to other railway centres asking the unions "to prepare for final action; for general strike if necessary." But transmission of this was refused by the telegraph officials, who state that the contents of the telegram were "considered to be objectionable." Nevertheless, agitation for a General Strike of railway workers continued to spread.

Relief centres for starving workers have been opened and some remittances have come from abroad. Up to the middle of November the lockout was still in existence.

BOOK REVIEW

THE NATURE OF BRAIN PROCESSES

Conditioned Reflexes. By I. P. Pavlov, Director of Physiological Laboratories in the Russian Academy of Sciences, Leningrad. (Oxford Univ. Press. 28s. 440 pp.)

THE conclusions arrived at in this important work—published for the first time in English—will be of interest to all those in the Labour movement whose socialism is based on a scientific study of the appropriate materials and not on mere sentiment. The book itself is too technical for the layman. Here we find summed up the researches—lasting nearly twenty-five years at Leningrad—of Professor Pavlov and some one hundred co-workers, and the results obtained so far indicate that at long last an accurate scientific method of investigating the functions of the brain has been elaborated.

During the last fifty years the study of the functions and minute structure (*i.e.*, the physiology) of the various organs of the body has made tremendous

strides. Not so, however, in the case of the brain ; since the 'seventies, when certain crude methods of study were employed, little or no advance has been recorded.

Since that time, work in this field has largely fallen into the hands of the "psychologist"—the result being the mass of vague, conflicting and ill-digested material which constitutes the psychology of to-day. Professor Pavlov has clearly stated his attitude :—

In fact it is still open to discussion whether psychology is a natural science, or whether it can be regarded as a science at all." (P. 3.)

The reason for this impasse is clear :—

Nervous activities have never been regarded from the same point of view as those of other organs. . . . The activities of the hemispheres ("the grey-matter") have been talked about as some kind of special psychical activity whose working we feel and apprehend in ourselves and by analogy suppose to exist in animals." (P. 3.)

As a result of this inquiry, an unqualified conviction of the futility of subjective methods of inquiry was firmly stamped on my mind." (P. 6.)

It is here that the greatness of Pavlov's work becomes evident. He has, by long and patient study, developed a purely scientific objective method of studying the functions of the brain, and this has already given, and will give, results of far-reaching importance. A brief and simple description of his method is necessary.

The duct of a salivary ("spittle") gland in a dog is, by a minor operation, transplanted so that it opens into the cheek instead of into the mouth. If food is placed in the mouth of the animal, saliva ("spittle") passes along the duct from the gland, and can be measured accurately as regards quantity and time. This is a true "reflex"—the result after the application of the "stimulus" (food) to the "skin" of the mouth is definite and inevitable : a break anywhere on the "telegraph lines" from mouth to central nervous system, and thence to the gland, or in the "exchange" (the central nervous system) will result in its abolition. It is also "inborn"—it is present in all the dogs at birth. Another "neutral stimulus" is now applied to the animal immediately before and during the operation of the above "inborn reflex." After a sufficient number of applications (varying with the "educability" of the animal), this "neutral stimulus" (any stimulus applied to any sense organ, *e.g.*, light of given colour, a note of given pitch, a pin prick applied to the foot, &c.) establishes a "conditioned reflex." That is, the animal responds (by pouring saliva from the duct) to the formerly neutral stimulus (now a "conditioned stimulus") without the unconditioned stimulus (food) being applied at all. Such a "conditioned reflex" is quite specific—a variation in the "conditioned stimulus" (*e.g.*, a change in the pitch of the note, or in the intensity of the light often indistinguishable to the human sense organs) renders it inactive. Conditioned reflexes of the second and third order can be established. The mere removal of a stimulus or alteration in its intensity may become "conditioned." Inhibition of such reflexes can be brought about in several ways, *e.g.*, by introduction of outside stimuli. Beyond this point the technicalities cannot be discussed.

The immense possibilities, however, are obvious. Brain processes of a most involved character can, by various elaborations of the above technique, be built up and studied, and that under most rigid test conditions—in special laboratories so designed that no stimuli—light, heat, sound, smell, &c.—other than those desired by the experimenter can fall upon the animals.

If a conditioned reflex is called forth a number of times without reinforcement (without the re-application of the unconditioned stimulus—food) “internal inhibition” develops: less and less result is obtained, and finally the animal becomes drowsy and sleeps. In one experiment (p. 252) “powerful electric shocks,” which had been established as a conditioned stimulus—through this process of “internal inhibition”—“became most effectual agents in inducing sleep.” Internal inhibition during the alert state is nothing but scattered sleep—sleep of scattered groups of structures: sleep itself is nothing but internal inhibition which is widely irradiated.”

The phenomena of “disassociation,” “irradiation,” “hypnosis,” &c., cannot be discussed here. It remains to mention Pavlov’s remarks on the application of his results with dogs to man.

His introduction is important and worthy of the attention of many who indiscriminately transfer observations from man to animals and *vice versa*. “It would be the height of presumption to regard these first steps in elucidating the physiology of the cortex (read “grey matter”) as solving the intricate problems of the higher psychic activities in man when, in fact, at the present stage of our work no detailed application of its results is yet permissible.” Nevertheless, certain generalisations are legitimate.

“It is obvious that different kinds of habits based on training, education, and discipline of any sort are nothing but a long chain of conditioned reflexes.” Conditions analogous to some of the mental disturbances in man can be established in the experimented animals by arranging a sharp clash of exciting and inhibiting conditioned stimuli.

A complete discussion of a work of this character is obviously impossible here. In general it may be said that the results obtained so far suggest (no more definite term is possible at the moment) that, ultimately, the whole of the mental processes will be explained in terms of elaborations of the simple conditioned reflex: this, in its turn, is a factor of the actual existing nerve structures and of the environment in which they have existed. Pavlov rejects the term “instinct” as superfluous, there being no evidence of any essential difference between the phenomena so described and the simple reflex. He speaks of the “inborn reflex” as the foundation of the nervous system of the new-born.

“Physiologists are succeeding more and more in unravelling the mechanism of these machine-like activities of the organism (the reflex) and may reasonably be expected to elucidate and control it in the end.”

The importance of the work to Marxists will be evident. We have here the possibility of a complete materialist conception of mind to the exclusion of foundationless theories of “soul,” “life-force,” “universal idea,” and such sentimental imaginings.

H. C. B.

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74 Swinton St., Gray's Inn Rd., London, W.C.1

Telegrams: Edcalopres, Kincros, London Telephone: Museum 1311 & 7777

*Published by the Proprietors,
the Trinity Trust,
162 Buckingham
Palace Road,
S.W.1,
and Printed by the London Caledonian Press Ltd.,
74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road,
W.C.1
w 15880*

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